Testimony

President’s Commission on Moon, Mars, and Beyond

Statement of
Dr. Gerald Wheeler
Executive Director
National Science Teachers Association
The NSTA …

★ Is the largest science teachers organization in the world

★ Through our journals, conventions, newsreleases, and Internet connections we directly reach over a quarter of a million teachers each month.

★ Our sciLINKS™ initiative gets over 10 millions hits per month from students.
And, reform in science education depends on three strategic actions...

- Engaging more teachers of science
- Increasing the support for science
- Enhancing Professional Development
Moon, Mars, and Beyond

★ Can have an impact on all three strategic actions.

- Engaging more teachers of science
- Increasing the support for science
- Enhancing Professional Development
Where We Are Now?

★ TIMMS results for 8\textsuperscript{th} graders is “average” and for 12\textsuperscript{th} graders “poor”

★ According to the 1996 NAEP results less than 1/3 of U.S. students in grades 4, 8, & 12 performed at or above “proficiency.”
Where We Are Now?

★ In the 2000 NAEP tests only 3% of black students achieved “proficiency” or above compared to 23% of white students.

★ Fewer than half of all 2003 high school graduates took 3 or more years of science.
NSTA Recommends …

★ Establish STEM education as a core component of the President’s vision for space exploration.

★ Develop a unifying vision to guide all education contributions of exploration activities
NSTA Recommends …

★ Significantly increase the number of teachers and university faculty engaged in high-quality professional development through space exploration

★ Enhance the content knowledge of educators through their intellectual engagement
NSTA Recommends ... 

★ Create a compelling national understanding of the importance of STEM using the President’s space vision

★ Explicitly include the science-teaching workforce into all workforce considerations and discussions.
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