

Minutes for the TOPSS Committee Meeting
March 17-18, 2023
Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel, Washington, DC

Participants: Terri Lindenberg, MA (Chair); Virginia Welle, MS; Dana Melone, MAT; Natasha Alston, MPS; Julie Gowans, Emily Polacek, Melissa Rogers, MEd; Antonio Puente, PhD; Jennifer Thompson, PhD

Guests*: Thema Bryant, PhD, APA President; Arthur Evans, Jr., PhD, APA CEO and Executive Vice President; Frank Worrell, PhD, APA Past President; and Alissa Fogg, PhD, Special Assistant to the CEO

APA Staff: Emily Leary Chesnes, MBA; Aliza Epstein*; and Sue Orsillo, PhD*.

*Partial attendance

1. National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula

The TOPSS Committee has made the broad dissemination of the *National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula* a priority in both 2022 and 2023. The TOPSS Subcommittee on Promoting Psychology and TOPSS Resources was asked to build a list of priority actions to take on this initiative in 2023. Priority actions discussed included the following:

- Drafting and sending a letter of support to identified contacts at state boards of education in the states TOPSS prioritized for outreach,
- Disseminating the May 2022 recorded webinar on the National Standards via social media,
- Contacting regional network leaders about sharing the webinar and requesting hard copies of the National Standards to share with teachers, and
- Creating a checklist to track which states have been contacted, the name of a contact person(s) in the state, what has been done to date to implement and disseminate the National Standards within that state, and what next step(s) are for each state.

ACTION: Terri and staff will follow up the state letters; staff will disseminate the National Standards webinar on the TOPSS Facebook page; and the subcommittee will agree on a plan to do outreach to the regional network leaders.

2. TOPSS Resources

The TOPSS Subcommittee on Promoting Psychology and TOPSS Resources was asked to identify key TOPSS resources that will be the focus of updating and/or dissemination in 2023. Priority actions discussed included the following:

- Planning for new lesson plans on Intelligence and Language (e.g., considering funding and planning for in-person work time),
- Identifying a committee to review the Motivation lesson plan,
- Rebranding the TOPSS Canvas course template as a Resource bank,
- Drafting a lesson or article on TikTok and misinformation, and
- Updating the TOPSS vetting rubric.

ACTION: APA staff and Terri will follow up on the lesson plan recommendations after funding decisions have been made; the Canvas course rebrand was recommended to happen by May; the TikTok article or lesson could be drafted by Virginia in August; and the vetting rubric revision should be completed by this spring.

3. Regional Teaching Networks

The TOPSS Subcommittee on Promoting Psychology and TOPSS Resources was asked to discuss and consider regional teaching networks. The subcommittee recommended reaching out to TOPSS members in Texas, New York, and North Carolina with specific information about starting regional networks.

ACTION: Staff will work with the TOPSS chair to contact TOPSS members in Texas, New York, and North Carolina about regional networks and APF grant funding.

4. TOPSS Competition for High School Psychology Students

The TOPSS Subcommittee on Promoting Psychology and TOPSS Resources was asked to consider the TOPSS Competition for High School Psychology Students, confirm plans for judging the 2023 competition, and work to develop a proposed model for future competitions. Priority actions discussed included the following:

- A tentative list of judges was created (more may need to be recruited depending on the number of submissions that come in).
- The subcommittee agreed a preliminary review to determine if competition criteria were met was not needed.
- The number of rounds of review will depend on the number of entries received.
- No more than one hour of review time per reviewer was recommended.
- The subcommittee recommended using the April TOPSS call to refine the review process based on the number of submissions.

It was noted that having TOPSS members serve as competition reviewers is a way to engage members in the organization and encourage future leadership as well.

The subcommittee wanted to use the results (e.g., number of entries, quality of entries) from this year's competition format to review whether the present format meets the goals identified by the committee (e.g., the engagement of students in psychology). Possible future options include continuing with a video contest, changing to an infographic contest, and limiting the competition to studies published in the last 5-10 years.

ACTION: Subcommittee members and staff will work to secure reviewers for the 2023 TOPSS competition and judge the competition this spring. TOPSS will reconsider the future of this competition after the 2023 competition had ended.

5. New TOPSS project on EDI

The TOPSS Committee's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Subcommittee was asked to review draft materials prepared by four subject matter experts (SME) for a new TOPSS project on EDI and develop a plan for additional resources to be developed in 2023. The subcommittee expressed their thanks to the authors and their enthusiasm for the project. They reviewed the drafts and made specific line edits and comments to the submitted resources which will be shared with the SMEs. They also made multiple recommendations regarding guidance for teachers, feedback on the guiding questions, psychologist profiles, research summaries, and additional resources, and general other feedback on this project. The subcommittee recommended a focus on neurodiversity and disability for the 2023-2024 grant cycle.

A number of action steps were recommended:

ACTION: A preamble for this work will be drafted either now or when TOPSS knows what format this material will be made available to teachers. Tony offered to draft the preamble.

ACTION: Members of the subcommittee will draft brief instructions on how teachers can use the psychologist profiles and research summaries and share with the larger TOPSS committee in the April meeting for feedback.

ACTION: Sue volunteered to use the edited guided questions the SMEs submitted to create a draft of what the pool of guiding questions could look like for the committee to review in their April meeting.

ACTION: Natasha and Dana volunteered to create possible new guiding questions aligned to the National Standards integrative themes to share with TOPSS by June or July.

ACTION: The SME team will be told that TOPSS is still deciding on next steps for the guiding questions, but that they will not need to create any new questions.

ACTION: Staff will revise the templates for the psychologist profiles and the research summaries and share these new instructions with the SMEs.

ACTION: Staff and subcommittee members will meet to discuss recommendations regarding the additional/optional resources before sharing with the SMEs.

ACTION: The subcommittee will revisit this issue of how these materials will be posted online in spring TOPSS calls.

ACTION: The subcommittee will need to work with staff to create a schedule for the second phase of this work to be completed in 2023 and to choose SMEs.

ACTION: The subcommittee can consider a suggestion to turn this resource development project into a student assignment as a future action.

6. Increasing Diversity in TOPSS Membership, Leadership, and Programs

The TOPSS Committee's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Subcommittee was asked to develop a prioritized list of actions to take related to increasing diversity in TOPSS programs, leadership, and programs. The Committee did not get to this agenda item during the March meeting. It will be discussed on a later conference call.

ACTION: TOPSS will consider this item on a call later this year.

7. Infusing Anti-Racism, Social Justice, and Diversity Topics in TOPSS Work in 2023

The TOPSS Committee's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Subcommittee was asked to develop a prioritized list of actions to take to infuse anti-racism, social justice, and diversity topics in TOPSS work throughout the year. The Committee reviewed a draft "Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Activity Summary Worksheet for APA Boards and Committees" and was encouraged to submit any comments by the March 31 deadline. The Committee agreed to further discuss this agenda item on a later call.

ACTION: The Committee was invited to review the worksheet and submit any comments by Friday, March 24. This worksheet is due March 31. TOPSS will consider this broader agenda item on a call later this year.

8. TOPSS Priorities, Goals, and Capacity for Resources

The TOPSS Committee was asked to consider its priorities, goals, and capacity for developing new or revising available TOPSS resources to have the most impact on the teaching of high school psychology.

The TOPSS committee considered the following questions and made the following recommendations for priority items:

- What are the **most essential** teaching resources that new on-level psychology teachers need that APA/TOPSS is best positioned to offer (e.g., not available in textbooks or on social media)?
 1. Activities or lab exercises that are ethical and good use of student time and interest
 2. Access to current research studies that kids can read and/or diverse case studies

- What, if any, teaching resources do experienced psychology teachers **most need** that APA/TOPSS is best positioned to offer (i.e., not Advanced Placement (AP) resources)?
 1. Resources to help teachers be less intimidated with the science and research methods emphasis in the revised standards, such as trainings on how to integrate research method across the standards pillars; could include resources on simple research studies that kids can understand
 2. Infographics for major studies, highlighting the independent and dependent variables and other parts of each study. The STP e-book template could be a model to follow here.
- Have teachers' needs for resources changed with the growth of AP psych and social media?
 1. When the vetting rubric is updated, it should be widely disseminated.
 2. Virginia mentioned that about half of the content on TikTok is false; she was asked to write a *Psychology Teacher Network* news digest article on dispelling myths on TikTok.
- Does TOPSS have the capacity to create, vet, review, regularly update, and disseminate resources for all of the content that is taught in a general psychology course? Or should we narrow our focus to a smaller pool (e.g., how to get started guides for those teaching on level courses, tips for teaching topics important to APA's mission (e.g., EDI; psychology as science) and/or not well covered in textbooks (e.g., positive psychology, I/O psychology)?
 1. Updating the oldest lesson plans or resources to align to new standards should be a priority.
- How frequently should existing resources be reviewed and updated? This is particularly relevant to the Summit resources and lesson plans.
 1. Members want to be involved in TOPSS work, with development, dissemination, and/or review. Involving members outside of the committee was recommended. Regional network contacts might be able to help review resources for TOPSS.
 2. New lesson plans on Intelligence and Language were mentioned.
- How can we improve dissemination?
 1. Regional networks
 2. Using member trees by asking TOPSS members if they would be willing to email 5-6 people they know about resources or announcements.
 3. The Canvas course could be rebranded as a "Canvas resource."

The Committee then engaged in a general discussion about TOPSS resources; discussion topics included:

- TOPSS should focus on new teachers with the ongoing teacher shortage.
- TOPSS should promote why psychology is important for students to know.
- A possible mentor network for new members was mentioned.
- The TOPSS chair eblasts are working and we should continue to promote resources in the eblasts and ask members to share information with at least three other teachers.
- The regional networks are valuable partners.
- Social emotional learning is being eliminated in some states.
- Addressing replication or how teachers can handle if an activity doesn't go the way they planned in class could be helpful to new teachers.
- APA's Project Assessment could be promoted to teachers in the place of test banks.

ACTION: TOPSS and staff will consider these recommendations on later TOPSS calls and meetings to prioritize next steps.

9. Membership

The TOPSS Committee was asked to consider and discuss issues related to membership in TOPSS to gain a better understanding the value of TOPSS membership and barriers to membership, for both experienced and new teachers. The following questions were discussed:

- *Currently, what is most valuable to you about your membership in TOPSS? Why did you initially join? What drew you to run for office?* Responses included:
 - Connections to other colleagues.
 - Colleagues encouraged current committee members to run for office.
 - The 2017 APA Summit was an important venue for connections and encouraging leadership.
 - Professional development opportunities (e.g., the APA/Clark University Workshop).
 - Several members noted they joined TOPSS for the resources.
- *There are some teachers who know about TOPSS, and who are active in the high school psychology teaching community, yet they are not TOPSS members. Why do you think that is the case?* Responses included:
 - TOPSS should promote the benefits of staying a member.
 - Involving members more and disseminating resources is important.
 - TOPSS promotes a sense of community.
 - Could membership offer a discount or free memberships to teachers at title 1 schools?
 - TOPSS hoped to track free memberships given at NCSS to see how many of these teachers retain their membership in TOPSS.
 - For some TOPSS members, their professional identity may not be as a psychology teacher or TOPSS member.
 - Could incentives be offered for renewals?
 - TOPSS should follow up with teachers whose students compete in the TOPSS competition to encourage these teachers to join TOPSS.
- *How can we cultivate the next generation of TOPSS leaders?* Responses included:
 - TOPSS should engage in more open calls (e.g., to draft, review, or revise lesson plans), and keep a running list of teachers to get involved.
 - TOPSS should cultivate future leaders by sharing with members, for example, that their name came up in a discussion.
 - TOPSS asked if it could review the NCSS Psychology Community membership list or list of AP readers.
 - TOPSS should promote leadership opportunities to teachers.
 - The regional networks are good places to cultivate leadership.
 - TOPSS materials could also be shared with AP summer institute (APSI) leaders.
 - TOPSS could ask members why they joined TOPSS.
 - An infographic about TOPSS could be shared at the regional psychological association meetings or regional network meetings.
- *How can we reach teachers who may be unfamiliar with TOPSS?* Responses included:
 - APSI's or working with the College Board or ETS.
 - Word of mouth and regional networks might help reach on-level teachers.
 - Each committee member could talk to their school district social studies content specialist. TOPSS should encourage members to contact their district social studies contacts.

ACTION: Committee members should revisit this list to develop priorities for future action this year and in the future.

10. Professional Development for Psychology Teachers

This item was provided to the TOPSS Committee for discussion on professional development opportunities for high school psychology teachers. The Committee was also asked to consider how it can promote the TOPSS sessions at APA 2023.

The Committee discussed topics to highlight in its professional development offerings this year. TOPSS also recommended promoting the National Standards and TOPSS membership at the Clark and Oregon State workshops this summer. Participant demographics should be shared with the presenters so they can plan for any targeted

programming for rural or new teachers.

TOPSS considered how it can increase the impact of the summer workshops. Dana suggested adding a question to both workshop evaluation forms to ask about participant interest in reviewing future lesson plans or helping TOPSS in various ways.

Action: Staff will work with committee members on these ideas as mentioned above.

11. Communications

This item was provided to TOPSS to discuss the opportunities to communicate with high school teachers and potentially students.

The Committee shared the following ideas for articles, book reviews, and teacher spotlights for the *Psychology Teacher Network* news digest:

- o Virginia offered to write an article on TikTok myths.
- o Melissa offered to write an article on the revised vetting rubric.
- o Dana may write an article on bringing Magination Press books to elementary schools.
- o When published, an article on the new TOPSS EDI project should be written.
- o The “How did you get this job?” series should be profiled in PTN.
- o Articles on careers could go in both PTN and the *Psychology Student Network*. The Applied Psychology Office might be interested in writing for the newsletters.

TOPSS also discussed an article on how to become a high school psychology teacher that appeared in the *Eye on Psi Chi* in 2008 and whether the article should be updated or a new article written. The Committee agreed this is not a current priority since the information is still relevant. It was noted though that the article is dated.

Several Committee members have not been receiving PTN. Staff will share PTN opt-in details with the Committee and membership.

ACTION: Staff and committee members will follow up on the suggestions mentioned above.

12. TOPSS Call Schedule for 2023

The TOPSS Committee was asked to consider how members want to balance full committee and subcommittee work and between meeting assignments for the rest of the year. The Committee previously agreed to hold TOPSS Zoom calls on the third Monday of each month.

The Promoting Psychology and TOPSS Resources subcommittee noted that asynchronous work was best for their work.

Using the Zoom breakout room feature has worked well in the past, and the Committee recommended using the monthly calls to meet in separate subcommittee breakout rooms, reporting out at the end of calls.

ACTION: The Committee agreed to start calls at 7:30 PM eastern starting in April. Calls will continue to be held on the third Monday of each month. There will be no June call.

13. Call for Nominations: 2023 Raymond D. Fowler Award - Member

TOPSS was asked to consider and recommend a potential nominee for the 2023 Raymond D. Fowler Award.

ACTION: The Committee agreed to nominate Lee Gurel, PhD, again by the March 31 deadline. Maria Vita will be asked if she can write a third letter of support.

14. TOPSS 2022 Annual Report

The TOPSS Committee's 2022 Annual Report was provided as information.

ACTION: None.

15. CBE 2022 Annual Report

The APA Committee of Associate and Baccalaureate Education's (CBE) 2022 Annual Report was provided as information.

ACTION: None.

Visitor Report

Visit with Thema Bryant, PhD, APA President; Arthur Evans, Jr., PhD, APA CEO and Executive Vice President; Frank Worrell, PhD, APA Past President; and Alissa Fogg, PhD, Special Assistant to the CEO

The TOPSS Chair shared a summary of TOPSS priorities and work plan goals with Drs. Bryant, Evans, Worrell, and Fogg. Dr. Bryant shared her focus on trauma-informed frameworks with TOPSS. Dr. Evans engaged TOPSS in a discussion on how APA and TOPSS can get more people to understand psychology. There are potential collaborations with the CBE group here.