

A Brief History of the Electronic Journal of Science Education

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In the early 1990s, the notion of moving print journals to electronic platforms was being debated and studied (Gasaway, 1995; Lancaster, 1995). Four logical steps were noted by Lancaster (1995):

- Computer use for preparation of printed publications
- Print publications moved to distribution in electronic form
- Additional features (such as searching) for electronic form not found in print
- New types of publications using features such as hyperlinks and embedded media

By the mid-1990s, the science education community was beginning to comfortable with printed material distributed in an electron form. Many members were looking forward to being able to use hyperlinks to provide additional information about their research. Two members of the Association for the Education of Teachers in Science (AETS), which later changed to the Association for Science Teacher Education (ASTE), were interested in providing an electronic platform for science education research. Dr. John Cannon dreamed of having a way to include additional features into publications. He invited Dr. David Crowther to join him and the *Electronic Journal of Science Education* (EJSE) was established in 1996 at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Dr. Crowther (2019) stated, "Full credit goes to Dr. Cannon as this was his brainchild and then I jumped in the design phase before we published the first issue. We programmed in HTML using large binders and none of this was done as part of our regular jobs ... meaning nights and weekend work!" Dr. Cannon and Dr. Crowther were the editors from 1996 to 2007.

The vision of the EJSE was not only to be the first electronic science education journal, but also to provide a professional journal that was not beholden to any particular organization. And in that sense – and being electronic - the journal could publish a wider variety of articles than any of the paper journals at the time. Dr. Cannon and Dr. Crowther believed that, by being electronic, they did not have to worry about page length and could publish quite a bit of qualitative research that could not be published traditionally. They could also include hyperlinks to databases and include pictures, video, and other media.

To carry out the work of the journal, they established a very diverse editorial review team and every article was reviewed by at least two reviewers. The platform that they originated ultimately was adopted by major publishers and now most science education journals are electronic. The first 10 years is still housed in the UNR library archives.

In 2007, Dr. Michael Kamen, Southwestern University, became the second editor of EJSE. With the change in editors, the journal was no longer housed at the UNR. The professional platform hired to host EJSE was the Scholarly Exchange Journal Hosting at the University Library System, University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Kamen continued to invite a diverse review board and associate editors. He continued the original mission of publishing high quality, peer-reviewed manuscripts and open access. The journal serves scholars from around the world with a platform to publish and a resource for up-to-date research at no cost. During this time, Associate Editor, Dr. Molly Weinburgh, was dedicated to supporting international contributors,

and the manuscript submissions, published articles, and readership from around the world grew significantly.

In 2011, Dr. Molly Weinburgh, Texas Christian University, became the third editor. Also in 2011, the paperwork was completed so the EJSE is indexed in Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and EBSCO. In 2017, it was added to the ERIC files. In 2018, Scholarly Exchange Journal Hosting changed the online system to make it more user friendly, reducing the typical review time to under three months and publication under four months.

The journal is entering another exciting transition. The next journal co-editors will be Sarah Quebec Fuentes, Texas Christian University, and Mark Bloom, Dallas Baptist University. This will bring some changes to the journal. First and foremost, the journal will now accept manuscripts focusing on both science and mathematics education. With this change, the journal name will become the *Electronic Journal for Research in Science and Mathematics Education* (EJRSME). The expanded focus of the journal will reflect its new affiliation with the International Consortium for Research in Science and Mathematics Education (ICRSME). ICRSME is an open group of educators, who hold consultations in Latin American and Caribbean countries to bring science and mathematics educators, researchers, and teachers together for academic presentations, workshops, and collaborative professional opportunities. In this time of growth, the journal will remain open access and free for readers and contributors.

Crowther, D. (2019). Personal communication.

Gasaway, L. N. (1995). Scholarly publications and copyrights in networked electronic publishing. *Library Trends, 43*(4), 679-700.

Lancaster, F. W. (1995). The evolution of electronic publishing. *Library Trends, 43*(4), 518-527.