
PCSM NEWSLETTER

Leaders in Mathematics Education

January 2001

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

From the President

- Bernie Schroeder

Greetings from the beautiful winter vacation spot of Hilton Head, S. C. I hope that everyone has enjoyed a happy holiday season.

Many thanks to Jim Bohan for his excellent double session presentation on the leadership issues related to bringing the NCTM Principles and Standards to life at the NCTM Regional Conference in Philadelphia on October 12, 2000. For those unfamiliar with the situation - Jim was an emergency stand-in for Grace Kelemanik - with about a week to prepare.

The 24th Annual Meeting of PCSM in Pittsburgh on Thursday, March 15, 2001, will feature Joan Ferrini-Mundy as the keynote speaker, followed by Frank Marburger and Frank Reardon. Joan's presentation will focus on NCTM's Principles and Standards for School Mathematics. Frank and Frank will focus their dog and pony show on PDE (Pennsylvania Department of Education) issues and topics.

Please check the date on the mailing label on the last page of the newsletter. If the date is Mar 01 or earlier, it is time to renew your membership. Save money by renewing for three years. If each of us signs up a new member, our membership will double!

Please think about the following prior to our general meeting on March 15, 2001: in order to increase participation and decrease expenses, I would like to propose that PCSM change from snail mail voting to electronic (e-mail) voting. Don't forget to mail in the ballot that is included with the newsletter.

Be sure to strongly urge your colleagues to participate in one of the two Governor's Institutes on Mathematics Education at the Penn-Stater (just outside State College) - either July 16-20, 2001, or July 30-August 3, 2001.

Gotta run - golf is calling.

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PLEASE COMPLETE AND MAIL YOUR BALLOT BY FEBRUARY 9, 2001. JUST FOLD IN HALF, TAPE OR STAPLE, AFFIX POSTAGE, AND MAIL. (Remember that postage is now \$0.34.)

In this Issue:

- President's Message
- PCSM 1999 Annual Meeting Announcement
- PCSM Membership Form and Conference Registration
- NCTM Representative Report
- Upcoming Conferences

... and more

NCTM REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Key Topics of Interest from NCTM
<www.nctm.org>

TIMSS-R shows U.S. eighth graders are above the international average in mathematics. (See page 5 for resources on TIMSS-R and an enclosed announcement of a conference sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Eisenhower Consortium.)

Register on line at <www.nctm.org> for the NCTM conference in Orlando.

Johnny Lott is NCTM President-elect.

Mathematics Education Dialogues are online. The current topic is Teacher Preparation. (See page 3 for more information.)

Spring Professional Development Institutes are scheduled for Orlando, April 3-4, 2001 and Green Lake, WI, May 2-3, 2001. TeacherLine, a result of a grant with NCTM, PBS, and the Department of Education, is an interactive program to connect NCTM Academy participants to education experts and peers.

WLME7 (World's Largest Math Event), "Mathematics at the Fair," will be held April 27, 2001.

NCTM's two new position statements are "Mathematics Program Leaders in Elementary, Middle, and High Schools" and the Evaluation of Teaching Performance and Effectiveness."

Carolyn Marchand, NCTM Representative
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From the Editor
- Arlene Dowshen

I wish all of you a happy and healthy New Year and look forward to seeing you in Pittsburgh in March. Remember that you need to pre-register for the conference and have your membership be current. Kathy Hebert, our treasurer and membership chair, requests that the enclosed membership and conference registration form be sent to her by February 23, 2001.

Please return the enclosed ballot to Gen Battisto, Nominations Chair, by February 9, 2001.

Contributions to the newsletter are encouraged and welcome.

Any correspondence can be sent to me at:

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Upcoming Conferences:

PCSM 24th Annual Meeting, March 15, 2001, Pittsburgh, PA.

PCTM Annual Meeting, March 15-17, 2001, Pittsburgh, PA.

Teachers Teaching with Technology International Conference, March 16-18, 2001, Columbus, OH. Information and registration go to <<http://www.t3ww.org/t3/confoverview.htm>>

2001 ASCD Annual Conference and Exhibit Show, March 17-19, 2001, Boston, MA. <www.ascd.org>

NCSM Conference, April 2-4, 2001, Orlando, FL. <<http://www.ncsmonline.org>>

NCTM 79th Annual Meeting, April 4-7, 2001, Orlando, FL. <www.nctm.org>

Mathematics and Science Education Conference, April 23-24, 2001, Cherry Hill, NJ. Sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Eisenhower Consortium at RBS. (See conference announcement at end of newsletter.)

Understanding by Design, April 28-29, 2001, Philadelphia, PA. <www.relearning.org>

Showcasing Middle-Grades Standards-Based Mathematics Curricula, May 10-12, 2001, St. Louis, Missouri. Sponsored by the NSF Show-Me Project. <<http://showmecenter.missouri.edu/conference2001>>

2001 Conference on Applications of Computer Algebra, May 31-June 3, 2001. <www.math.unm.edu/ACA/2001/2001.html>

International Math Olympiad, July 1-14, 2001, Washington, D.C. <<http://imo2001.usa.unl.edu/>>

International Conference on New Ideas in Mathematics Education, August 19-24, 2001, Australia. Information is available on the "Meetings" page at <www.ncsmonline.org>.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

ENC Focus: Making Schools Work for Every Child. Practical approaches that will help you make educational equity a reality in your classroom. Available online at <<http://www.enc.org/focus/index.htm>>. Previous issues of Focus are also available there. Print copies are available free of charge from the Mid-Atlantic Eisenhower Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education <<http://www.rbs.org/eisenhower>>.

PBS TeacherSource for Math. A source of information about math grants, conferences, recommended books, Web sites, and Mathline, plus dozens of math lessons. <<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/math.htm?default>>

Mathematics Education Dialogues is an open forum for the exchange of points of view about issues in mathematics education. It provides essays about compelling, complex, and timely topics in mathematics education that transcend grade levels. Dialogues does not present official policies of NCTM. The Editorial Panel strives to have many viewpoints represented and invites responses to each issue. <www.nctm.org/dialogues/>

To support the design of effective professional development opportunities for teachers, the Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Consortia and ENC developed the **Blueprints CD-ROM and Web site** <<http://www.ncrel.org/tools/bp/>>. Blueprints is a practical toolkit to help schools, districts, and other providers design and facilitate effective professional development.

Middle School + Mathematics = A Challenge

Here is the challenge: how does one help an urban middle school become a mathematics success story? The answer certainly will not come quickly or easily, but five schools in the Mid-Atlantic region are betting on a partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Eisenhower Consortium to help make it a reality.

Dubbed the Middle School Mathematics Project (MSMP), this endeavor kicked off in the spring of 2000 and plans to continue and expand over the next five years. With direct technical assistance from the staff of Research for Better Schools and its partners, the project intends to raise student achievement through the application of research, school site analysis, and intensive professional development activities. The initial background information collected for each school indicates that there is much work to be done.

In Pennsylvania, Philadelphia's Wilson Middle School is a part of the MSMP. Wilson has over 1100 students (grades 6-8), 19 teachers involved in teaching mathematics and a mathematics goal to improve student achievement. But those are the easy numbers. Last school year over half of its students qualified for free or reduced lunch, and over 42% of its students scored below basic level in mathematics on the SAT-9 test.

The School District of Philadelphia recommended Wilson Middle School as a good candidate for the Middle School Mathematics Project, and the other four Mid-Atlantic schools joined in a similar fashion. They are: Northeast Middle School in Baltimore, MD; Kramer Middle School in Washington, DC; Paterson School #2 in Paterson, NJ; and Woodbury Middle School in Woodbury, NJ.

In addition to these Mid-Atlantic schools, other middle schools across the nation are participating in a parent project as coordinated through the Eisenhower Regional Consortia. Eventually the project intends to share its findings broadly in order to support improvement efforts in other schools and districts.

Inquiries about the Middle School Mathematics Project can be directed to Janie Zimmer at zimmer@rbs.org or 215-574-9300, x329.



Summer 2001 Pennsylvania Governor's Institutes and Academies for Educators

June - August, 2001

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has announced the 2001 institute and academies, as well as their proposed dates and locations. Advance applications for Pennsylvania educators interested in attending these institutes and academies held throughout the state are available and online in portable document format (PDF).

Educators participating in these professional development institutes must also commit to presenting or participating in workshops relating to the institute for at least two days during the 2001-2002 school year or during the summer of 2002. Several of the institutes also encourage and prefer educators to apply and participate with other members of school teams. An application is available on line at <http://www.rbs.org/ec.nsf/pages/PAGIA2001>. Please note that the application is not valid after March 1, 2001.

TIMSS-R RESULTS RELEASED

U.S. Eighth Graders Above International Average in Math and Science

Compared with students in 37 other participating nations, U.S. eighth-grade students are above the international average in mathematics and science performance, according to TIMSS-R. "Our students are successfully learning more math and science every year they're in school," said U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley, "but we can do better." (December, 2000)

The Third International Mathematics and Science Study-Repeat (TIMSS-R) examines information on mathematics and science achievement, schooling, curricula, instruction, and the lives of teachers and students from 38 nations. TIMSS-R continues the tradition of U.S. participation in international comparative education studies and allows the United States to chart trends in eighth-grade mathematics and science achievement over time.

TIMSS-R is a collaborative effort by NCES, NSF and the Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Copies of the results are available on the NCES Web site at <<http://nces.ed.gov/timss>>.

Other Resources related to TIMSS-R

"Paying the Price of NO CHANGE," comments on the TIMSS-R results by William H. Schmidt, National Research Coordinator for TIMSS are available online either in PDF (<<http://ustimss.msu.edu/dec5press.pdf>>) or in HTML format (<<http://ustimss.msu.edu/dec5press.htm>>).

The Mid-Atlantic Eisenhower Consortium has dedicated a full section on its Web site to the TIMSS Resource Center at <<http://www.rbs.org/ec.nsf/pages/L2TIMSS>>

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Characteristics of Effective Professional Development

, prepared by the National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching, outlines nine key design principles for professional development programs, presents examples of their use, and reviews some of the recent related literature. Read the full text of this new E-Primer on the ERIC/SP Web site at <<http://www.ericsp.org/digests/eprimers.html>>.

ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS-BASED STAFF

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE - Program Nomination. The National Staff Development Council (NSDC), in cooperation with the financial support of NEA, is launching a continuation of its Results-Based Staff Development Initiative for the Middle Grades that resulted in *What Works in the Middle: Results-Based Staff Development*. The continuation will focus on identifying both elementary and high school staff development programs that increase student achievement. The Council and NEA are seeking nominations of content-specific staff development programs in the core content areas. For more information visit the NSDC Web site <<http://www.nsd.org>>. Program nominations will be accepted through June 1, 2001.

"Time to Think: The Missing Link in Professional Development" by LeRoy Hay appeared in **EDUCATION UPDATE** (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development), Vol. 42, No. 5, p. 2, August, 2000.

