
PCSM NEWSLETTER

Leaders in Mathematics Education

February 2005

PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF SUPERVISORS OF MATHEMATICS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

From the President

- Mary Foley

The holidays are behind us and we are looking forward to spring, warm weather, flowers, birds, PSSA tests, budgets, schedules, and of course No Child Left Behind. Now is a good time to identify the mathematics leaders in your district and encourage them to become members of PCSM. A word of encouragement from a member and a personal invitation to join means more than all the brochures we could send out.

Those of you who missed the Erie meeting in October, 2004, will be happy to know that in spite of the small number of attendees the meeting was excellent. Carolyn Marchand and her committee did an exceptional job of making everyone feel welcome. We are all looking forward to returning to Erie for another meeting in the future.

Please check the date on the mailing label of the newsletter. If the date is 2005 (05) 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!

Kathy Hebert, substituting for Janie Zimmer, did an outstanding job of introducing IMAGES (Improving Measurement and Geometry in Elementary Schools), a project of Research for Better Schools (RBS) and provided us with the second edition of *IMAGES, A Resource Guide for Improving Measurement and Geometry in Elementary School*. (See p. 2 for more information about IMAGES resource materials.) She led the group in a few of the activities and I must say it was quite a lively group who not only enjoyed it, but discussed its value in the classroom.

Frank Marburger (PDE) spoke on how collegiality is necessary to meet the requirements of PSSA and Anchor Standards. Frank was very informative and forthright in expressing his concerns and ideas.

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Matt White from Casio spoke to the group about Casio's program that works with schools to provide calculators. John Neral, Mathematics Supervisor from Oakland, NJ, gave a presentation entitled "Wouldn't It Be Nice If Everyone Had Technology" which included many ideas on incorporating calculators with a limited budget.

Breakfast was provided by McDougal Littell/Houghton Mifflin and lunch by Scott Foresman. Portfolios were courtesy of Macmillan/McGraw Hill. We are most appreciative of the generosity of these publishing companies, their representatives, and for their support of PCSM.

Gen Battisto, Awards Chairperson, presented the Outstanding Contribution to Supervisors Award to Jim Bohan and Outstanding Contribution to PCSM Award to Mary Foley. She encouraged members to nominate worthy recipients for these yearly awards.

I look forward to working with you during the coming year and hope you will let me know any of your concerns or areas you feel we should address.

HAPPY SPRING!

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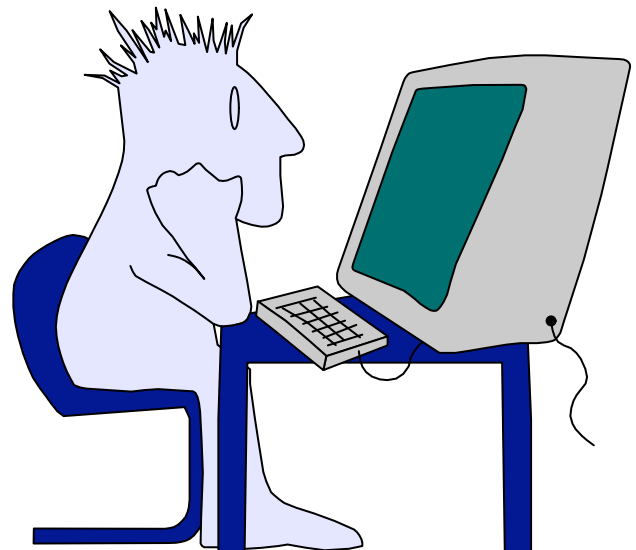
IMAGES, A Resource Guide for Improving Measurement and Geometry in Elementary Schools is available at <http://images.rbs.org> or can be purchased from Research for Better Schools (RBS). For information and additional resources, visit <http://www.rbs.org>.

From the Editor
- Arlene Dowshen

I encourage all of you to read NCTM's summary of the results of the 2003 PISA math results. (See page 3.) As leaders in mathematics education it is important that we be well informed about how U.S. students perform in mathematics as compared to students in other countries. In an article that appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* (December 7, 2004), Michael Casserly, Executive Director of the Council of the Great City Schools, points out that countries that have higher scoring students, also have a very focused curriculum. Those of us in leadership positions need to advocate for changes that will make our students more successful.

Contributions to the newsletter are encouraged and welcome. Any correspondence can be sent to me at:

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PCSM AWARDS

At the PCSM Annual Meeting held at the Avalon Hotel and Conference Center in Erie on October 28, 2004, two PCSM leaders were honored.

The recipient of the Outstanding Contributions to PCSM Award was in-coming President, Mary Foley. She has served as PCSM Awards Chair, President Elect, and now as President. Mary has arranged the program and sponsors for the past three annual meetings and was a member of numerous other PCSM committees.

Mary is a retired mathematics chair from the North Pocono School District and is a part-time professor and supervisor of student teachers at Scranton University. She has led numerous classes and workshops for the Northeast Intermediate Unit.

James Bohan was recognized with the Award for Outstanding Contributions to Mathematics Supervision. He is mathematics coordinator for the Manheim Township School District and has led numerous instructional initiatives including "Flexible Grouping", "Action Research to Identify and Share Best Practices" and "Integrated Mathematics."

Jim is a regular presenter at PCTM, NCTM, and NCSM conferences and is the director on a national level for the NCSM Leadership Academies. He has been involved in key statewide programs to develop Student Outcomes, Mathematics Standards, and Assessment Anchors.

Jim was unable to attend the Annual Meeting, but sent a message warmly extending his appreciation for the award.

Gen Battisto, Awards Chair
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NCTM Reports Highlights of the 2003 PISA Math Results

The NCTM communications department recently shared with its public relations contacts information about the results of the 2003 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA is an international assessment designed to assess literacy in reading, mathematics, and science for 15-year-olds. In 2003 mathematics literacy was emphasized and the report of the mathematics results was released on December 7, 2004. Over five thousand U.S. 15-year-olds from 262 schools participated in the 2003 PISA.

NCTM has prepared a 10 page document that summarizes the PISA mathematics results. The document is available at http://www.nctm.org/news/release/2004_12pisa_highlights.pdf. The report, "Highlights of the 2003 PISA Math Results," includes:

What is PISA?

How did U.S. 15-year-olds do?

How did U.S. 15-year-olds do on two items dealing with change and relationships?

How did U.S. 15-year-olds do on an item dealing with uncertainty?

How did U.S. 15-year-olds do on two items dealing with problem solving?

Are there differences in how U.S. 15-year-olds do?

What else can we learn from PISA?

What can U.S. mathematics teachers do with the information from PISA?

References

The official site results can be found at <http://www.pisa.oecd.org>.

The U.S. site is at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/PISA/index.asp>.

Sample items can be found at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/PISA/Items.asp?SectionID+1&CatID+1&sub=yes>.

**PSCM Annual Meeting
27th Annual Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 28, 2004**

The 27th Annual Meeting was held at the Avalon Hotel in Erie, PA in conjunction with the 53rd Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of Mathematics. A complete breakfast was provided through the courtesy of **McDougal Littell** and **Houghton Mifflin**.

President M. Foley called the Annual Meeting to order and welcomed those present. She thanked McDougall Littell and Houghton Mifflin for their generosity in providing breakfast. The minutes of the 26th Annual Meeting were approved as distributed.

Treasurer K. Hebert distributed the Treasurer's Report. It indicated a balance of \$16,676.34 as of October 12, 2004, and that PCSM has 142 paid-up members. She indicated that there are people back to 2001 on the database for information purposes and that the report is somewhat atypical since it comes about 18 months since the last report to the membership. The report was approved.

NCTM Representative A. Massey expressed concern about the delegate caucuses. She reported that NCTM Board members attended the regional caucuses and spoke up when resolutions were made that they thought would not pass. Ann thought that they were trying to be helpful, but that their remarks discouraged discussion. It was suggested that the Executive Director be consulted for guidance in this matter.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 AM.

Joann Mullen introduced Kathy Hebert, the first general session speaker who presented IMAGES (Improving Measurement and Geometry in Elementary Schools), a project of Research for Better Schools (RBS).

The second speaker, Frank Marburger (PDE), was introduced by Jack Mowbray. His topic was "How Collegiality Is Necessary to Meet the Requirements of PSSA and the Assessment Anchors.

Matt Weiss from Casio made a brief presentation.

The last general session speaker, John Neral, Mathematics Supervisor from Oakland, NJ, was introduced by Gen Battisto. His topic was "Wouldn't It Be Nice If Everyone Had Technology?: Solutions for a Limited Budget.

Lunch was provided through the courtesy of **Scott**

Foresman. M. Foley thanked Scott Foresman for providing the lunch and introduced the Scott Foresman representative for remarks.

Awards chair G. Battisto asked that suggestions for future awards be forwarded to her. The Outstanding Contributions to Supervision Award was given to Jim Bohan and the Outstanding Contributions to PCSM Award was awarded to Mary Foley for her service to the organization. (See p. 3 for more details of the awards.)

**PCSM Executive Board Minutes
Thursday, October 28, 2004**

Present: M. Foley, Presiding, G. Battisto, K. Hebert, C. Marchand, J. Martin, J. Mowbray

The minutes of the previous Executive Board meeting, held in Philadelphia on April 21, 2004, were approved.

Treasurer K. Hebert reviewed her report from the general meeting. It was indicated that those who have not paid dues since 2001 will be dropped from the database. Treasurer Hebert agreed to ask Fred Stewart to audit the books and she will also check to see what happened to the CD-ROM that, it was thought, would be sent out to members.

It was announced that the pattern of fall meetings of PCTM will continue for an entire cycle of meetings, one at each of the usual locations. Afterwards, a decision will be made as to the locations of future meetings.

PCTM Representative, J. Martin announced that the affiliate dues of \$20.00 have not been paid to PCTM.

It was reported that Newsletter Editor, A. Dowshen, would like the organization to recruit a new editor.

Awards Chair, G. Battisto reported that she needs to have more nominations for awards. It was suggested that a flyer or form, to be returned to her, could be put in the newsletter.

Under old business, it was agreed that K. Hebert would ask PCTM President, M. Starkey for a copy of the PCTM constitution.

Under new business, C. Marchand was congratulated for an excellent job as president and was given a round of applause. The meeting was adjourned at 1:52 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
John S. Mowbray, Secretary

Upcoming Conferences and Events:

**NCSM 37th Annual Conference
Where Mathematics Lives**
April 4-6, 2005, Anaheim, CA
For more information visit: ncsonline.org.

**NCTM 83rd Annual Meeting
Embracing Mathematical Diversity**
April 6-9, 2005, Anaheim, CA
For more information go to www.nctm.org.

**17th Annual T³ (Teachers Teaching with
Technology) International Conference**
March 18-20, 2005, Washington, D.C.
To register visit education.ti.com/t3dc.

IAS/Park City Mathematics Institute
(Institute for Advance Study)
June 26 – July 16, 2005, Park City, Utah
For information visit www.ias.edu/parkcity.

NCSM Summer Leadership Academies
July 19-22, 2005, Park City, Utah
For more information contact Leadership
Academy Director, Jim Bohan, at
mathmanjfb@aol.com.

PCSM Annual Conference
October 26, 2005
Harrisburg, PA

PCTM Annual Conference
October 26-28, 2005, Harrisburg, PA
For more information visit: www.pctm.org

U.S. Department of Education will discontinue funding of the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse (ENC) on September 30, 2005. ENC is currently developing plans to deliver its products and services through subscriptions to schools and individuals beginning October 2005. (info@enc21.org or www.enc.org)

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Releases Studies of Mathematics Curriculum Evaluations. Visit <http://whatworks.ed.gov> and click on Middle School Math Curricula.

TIMSS 2003 Report
<http://nces.ed.gov/timss/Results03.asp>
http://www.nctm.org/news/releases/2004_12timss.htm

Free On-Demand Professional Development Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education
<http://www.paec.org/teacher2teacher/index.asp>

Schools that Use Hotmath.com Shine on California Math Tests. California school testing results support popular math Web site. Visit www.hotmath.com. A teacher survey about online worked solutions to math homework problems is viewable at http://hotmath.com/index_hm.htm.

Mathwords (Mathematics Formulas and Definitions)
<http://www.mathwords.com>

A comprehensive listing of formulas and definitions from algebra to calculus.

Free Newsletter from the International Organization of Women and Mathematics Education (IOWME)
<http://www.stanford.edu/~joboaler/iowme/index.html>
<http://www.maths.soton.ac.uk/EMIS/mirror/IMU/ICMI/index.html>

AMS Web Site Connects Math and the Public. *Math in the Media* is an online magazine posted monthly on the AMS Web site. It highlights coverage of mathematics in the mainstream media. Visit <http://www.ams.org/mathmedia>.