

From the President's Pen

As Christmas approached, we were all busy with school and family activities. Whether your life was filled with preparing for concerts, trying to finish concepts before the break, preparing students for diploma exams or just trying to survive until the holidays, I hope you were able to reflect on the spirit of the season. School breaks are meant to be a time of rejuvenation, a time to reflect on why we do what we do and how we can make student learning meaningful.

The past year has been a busy one, especially for those who are delivering the new curriculum in kindergarten and Grades 1, 4 and 7. Although a new curriculum usually means a lot of extra planning, it also gives us a sense of renewal and opportunities for networking. The program of studies for K-9 mathematics has been adopted and is now available on the Alberta Education website (<http://education.alberta.ca>). If you haven't had a chance to look at it yet, I encourage you to do so.

The Mathematics Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association (MCATA) has sent out a needs assessment for K-6 and 7-9 to help in preparing for future conferences. I thank those of you who responded over the summer to our survey on the proposed new senior high curriculum. The responses gave us a sense of the future needs for senior high, and we have shared the results with Alberta Education representatives. The curriculum for senior high has not yet been finalized, but it is getting closer. Please take any opportunity you can to provide feedback now.

The MCATA executive enjoyed meeting many of you at our conference in October. With the new automatic specialist council membership offered by the ATA, we are hoping to see more teachers become involved with MCATA. If you have colleagues teaching math who are not MCATA members, please encourage them to join us. We all know that math teachers have the most fun! If you are already a member and would like to become more active, please contact any of the executive members (see the inside back cover for contact information). We have lots of opportunities for people to become involved.

From now until 2012, when the new curriculum is fully implemented, math teachers will be forming strong professional learning communities. We will be helping each other reach the necessary depths of knowledge that our students will require. Never forget that Alberta students are among the best math students in the world because of the expertise of Alberta teachers. You have a lot to share with each other, so please consider presenting at conferences, helping to organize miniconferences or forming regional learning communities.

As MCATA president this year, I look forward to working with and getting to know more of my mathematical colleagues. I hope you had a wonderful holiday and took some time to recharge!

Sharon Gach