

From the President's Pen

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As I write my first message for *delta-K*, I think back on my growing involvement in mathematics education. Math was the most comfortable subject for me when I was a beginning teacher. I had been good at math in school and felt that I taught it well. In addition, math class gave me a period of peace and quiet each day (how times have changed). I gradually realized that, although I was teaching all of the children how to calculate, I was teaching only some of the children how to solve problems. There were always some children who couldn't understand word problems. I was not doing a good job of teaching these children to understand numbers and to know when their strategies and answers made sense.

This disheartening discovery made me re-examine my practice. I sought out a like-minded colleague and together we set out to teach by developing a stronger understanding in our students. This exciting and scary time taught me about the power of working together. We developed our own professional learning community. We joined MCATA and began attending conferences. The more I worked to understand children's mathematical thinking, the more fascinated I became.

I worked as a system math consultant with the Calgary Board of Education for several years before returning to a school-based leadership position. As I continued to learn, I realized how much more there was to know. I began to seek a wider involvement with others who were interested in mathematics teaching and learning.

I became involved in MCATA conference planning and committee work. When I joined the executive, I joined a group of teachers who were passionately committed to the improvement of mathematics teaching and learning in Alberta. With them I have had wonderful opportunities, including helping develop an MCATA brochure on mathematical literacy and, most recently, attending the Canadian Mathematics Society's (CMS) Canadian Mathematics Education Forum, held last May in Toronto.

As president of MCATA, I encourage all of you to become involved in the improvement of mathematics teaching and learning. Whether you team up with another teacher to examine an aspect of your practice, present a session on your findings at a math conference or become involved in local, provincial, national or international associations, you will be welcomed by an enthusiastic group of thinkers and doers.