

Mathematics Council NEWSLETTER

The Alberta Teachers' Association

Volume 16

Number 1

September 1997

Providing leadership to encourage the continuing enhancement of teaching, learning and understanding mathematics.

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"Doing Mathematics"

Mathematics Council of The Alberta Teachers' Association Annual Conference
The Edmonton Inn, Edmonton
November 1-2, 1997

Friday, October 31

7:00-9:00 p.m. Registration
9:00-10:00 p.m. Informal Gathering

Saturday, November 1

8:00-9:00 a.m. Registration
9:00-10:15 a.m. Opening Session—Keynote Speaker
10:30 a.m. -4:00 p.m. Sessions and Workshops

Sunday, November 2

8:30 a.m.-on Information Desk
9:00-11:10 a.m. Sessions
11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Keynote Speaker and Draws

Highlights

Math Leader Symposium—Friday, October 31

This is an informal gathering where conference delegates (and guests) can mix and mingle and talk to friends and colleagues. A cash bar and complimentary snacks will be available for everybody's convenience and enjoyment. After you register Friday evening, join us from 7:00 p.m. on to prepare for the conference.

Come and See!

Publishers' Displays and Exhibits
Bright Ideas . . . Mini-Sessions . . . Computer Sessions
New Curriculum . . . Draws and Prizes

From the Editor



A special greeting from the MCATA executive to all our colleagues. We wish you a successful, enjoyable year with all of the challenges ahead.

I thought that my editorial should focus on success. So here is the recipe. Good luck!

—Art Jorgensen

Success

To laugh often and much, to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children, to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends, to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived.

This is to have succeeded! ▲

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Teachers' Rally

October 4, 1997

At the 1997 Annual Representatives Assembly, teachers from across the province passed an emergent motion directing Provincial Executive Council to plan a teachers' rally on the eve of World Teachers' Day, October 4. This gathering will be held in Edmonton at the Legislature grounds. Plans are complete and every teacher in Alberta is urged to attend. For one historic day, teachers are asked to set aside their family and community obligations to attend this rally. This is not a protest rally and has nothing to do with political stripes. This is a rally to get the attention of the people of Alberta, to show them our solidarity and pride in being teachers and to show our commitment to public education. Please plan to attend. Bring your families or supportive friends. Now is the time for you to make a difference. ▲

—Carol Henderson, PEC Liaison

From the President's Pen

Welcome to an exciting new school year! Colleagues who teach K-6 and Grade 8 are in their first year of implementing a new curriculum; colleagues who teach Grades 7 and 9 are in their second year of implementing a new curriculum; and colleagues who teach Grades 10-12 are preparing to implement a new curriculum in 1988-99. Fascinating how change cannot only be described using mathematics but that we as teachers are always immersed in change by learning about new idea for teaching mathematics.

This summer a subcommittee of the executive met to discuss issues surrounding the use of calculators in provincial assessment programs; in a couple of weeks you will receive a copy of the Interim Position Paper. Consider discussing the position paper with your colleagues and returning the attached comment sheet. The calculator policies for the provincial assessment programs are continually under review—I urge you to read the policy as soon as the Achievement Test and Diploma Examinations Bulletins arrive in your school. If the policy does not support the use of calculators as identified in the curriculum, then I believe that we, as individual teachers, should write to Alberta Education. For example, suppose calculators were not allowed on the Grade 3 Mathematics Achievement Test. This would clearly not support the curricular documents in which there are specific learning outcomes identified as technology and in which children are expected to make decisions about when technology is appropriate to use.

Please let any of the executive members know about any ideas you may have for MCATA—remember that this is your organization! ▲

—Florence Glanfield

Executive Summary

The MCATA executive met September 5-6 at the Nisku Inn. We were joined by our NCTM Regional Representative, Ivan Johnston, from Whistler, BC.

First of all, welcome to our new executive members: Rick Johnston, a Kindergarten teacher in Edmonton; Elaine Manzer, a high school teacher in Peace River; and Dick Pawloff, a technology

consultant in Red Deer. Rick and Elaine have both agreed to help out with PD their areas, and Dick has agreed to become the Web Master. So keep an eye out for more material on the MCATA Web Site.

Second, we have "greatness" in our midst! The recently elected Canadian Director of the NCTM's Board of Directors is our very own Dick Kopan. Daryl Chichak was recently awarded an award in APEGGA's "Who Makes School Cool" promotion. Both Richard and Daryl continue to demonstrate their support of mathematics education in our province by their involvement on our executive. Congratulations to both.

Third, executive members were busy this past summer. Sandra Unrau and Cynthia Ballheim were our representatives at the NCTM Canadian Leadership Conference in Moncton, New Brunswick; Marge Marika was our representative at the ATA Summer Conference; and a subcommittee of the executive worked to prepare a position paper (see president's message).

The executive is madly planning for the 1997-98 school year. Our first event will be the annual conference and Mathematics Leaders' Symposium. This year the conference will be held at the Edmonton Inn, Edmonton, November 1-2. It will begin Saturday morning at 9 a.m. with a keynote speaker. At that time, you will also be introduced to the winners of the 1997 Alberta Math Awards. For those checking in on Friday evening, there will be a social event beginning at 7 p.m. The conference committee, chaired by Marge Marika, is lining up great speakers and activities, so keep an eye out for more information in your school and in this newsletter. We hope to see you all there.

The AGM will held at 4 p.m., on November 1. This is the time for discussing the Council's budget and activities for the following year.

Other events in the planning stages include the following: the 1998 annual conference/NCTM Canadian Regional Conference, in Calgary; the 1999 annual conference, in Jasper; mini-conferences in Edmonton, Calgary and Red Deer in spring 1998; mathematics education week activities, April 1998; study groups in Edmonton and Calgary for both elementary and high school teachers; the Mathematics Leaders' Symposium in spring 1998; five issues of the newsletter with special issues as required; a special newsletter to share the MCATA Executive Interim Position Paper on the Use of

Calculators in Provincial Assessment Programs in fall 1997; two issues of *delta-k*; and Web site activities. This list is not exhaustive—we are investigating many possibilities for events. Keep an eye out for more information!

You will be able to find a summary of each executive meeting in the newsletter following each meeting, and on the Web site. We welcome your comments and suggestions. ▲

MCATA Grants Criteria

Grant applications from members of MCATA up to a maximum of \$500 must be made in writing to the Conference Director, MCATA. They must be received by December 1 or May 1, in order to be considered for the following six-month period. Grant applications will be approved for mathematics education initiatives which are in support of

- ▲ current learning and teaching practices; or
- ▲ current priorities as outlined by or through Alberta Education, local school districts, the MCATA, NCTM, ATA or other reputable educational associations.

The institutes/projects will be judged on

- ▲ the nature of the project,
- ▲ the audience which will participate or benefit and
- ▲ diversity in regional development opportunities for teachers.

Grants are to be used for professional development, research directed toward mathematics education, or other initiatives which promote and enhance mathematics education in the province. They are intended to be applied directly to costs incurred in facilitating professional development opportunities. These include defraying the costs of presenters and participants to attend, and print materials required to facilitate the professional development. Grants shall be used for the purchase of equipment and/or capital expenditures or honoraria.

Special consideration will be given to first-time applicants.

Upon completion of the institute/project, a written summary must be sent to the MCATA Conference Director. Successful applicants must be willing to share their results and experiences via the *Mathematics Council Newsletter*, mini-conferences and/or conferences.

Acknowledgment regarding funding from MCATA should be made where appropriate.

Applications will be considered by the MCATA executive at the January and June meetings each year. Applicants will be notified of the decision by February 15 (for the December 1 applications) and June 15 (for the May 1 applications).

Application forms are available from the MCATA Conference Director. ▲

Congratulations

Congratulations are due to Michael Dzwiniel of Harry Ainlay School, Edmonton. He won a national \$7,000 Prime Minister's Award in recognition of his superior teaching, which has had a major proven impact on students' interest and performance in science, technology and mathematics.

Ernie Paholek of Londonderry School in Edmonton, is also to be congratulated upon receiving a \$300 Regional Award. ▲

Membership Is Increasing

Membership to MCATA is on the rise. As of September 1997, our membership is up by 100 compared to this time last year. I encourage all members to promote membership in our Council. Following are the three winners of the quarterly draw of members who renewed their memberships or purchased a new membership in the months of April, May and June of 1997:

1st Prize One MCATA Conference registration for the Edmonton Conference on November 1-2, 1997:

Francis Timoteo, Edmonton

2nd Prize One-Year Membership to MCATA:

Victoria McCaig, Medicine Hat

3rd Prize \$25 NCTM Gift Certificate to be redeemed through MCATA:

Denise Schweitzer, Sedgwick

The next draw will be held at the end of September 1997. Is your membership up-to-date?

I am open to any suggestions or ideas you may have to promote membership to our Council. Please do not hesitate to call me at 450-1813. ▲

*—Daryl M. J. Chichak
Membership Director*

Conference Report

In early July, Cynthia Ballheim and Sandra Unrau attended the NCTM Canadian Regional Leadership Conference on behalf of MCATA in Moncton, New Brunswick. Highlights of the meeting included the following discussions: the Affiliated Group (AG) and the NCTM connection, the AG as a service organization and the development of strategies to cope with the simultaneous changes in content, methodology and assessment occurring today in mathematics education.

Activities concerning the promotion of leadership, the availability of NCTM grants and the development of action plans helped to fill three jam-packed days in sunny New Brunswick. Our hosts, the New Brunswick Mathematics Council, took hospitality to new heights. Their warmth and friendliness set the stage for meaningful sharing by all. Look for some of the ideas gleaned from the conference to show up in your own organization! ▲

—Cynthia Ballheim

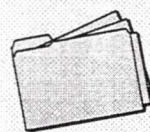
NCTM Regional Conference October 22-24, 1998—Calgary

All indications are leading up to a wham-bang conference with the Program and Chairs Committee working hard to make this a success.

We are still in need of speakers at all levels, especially at the primary level. The number of workshop proposals falls short of our target. If you can help by suggesting someone or by putting in a proposal yourself, it would be appreciated. Please make copies of the speaker proposal form and don't leave home without them!

Speaker request forms were included in the May 1997 newsletter. They are also available from Richard, Cynthia or Art. We will be counting on the locals to fill the sessions at the math fair. ▲

—Cynthia Ballheim and Richard Kopan,



Please note that the executive list will be published in the fall issue of the newsletter only. Retain this copy for your files.

School Achievement Indicators Program

The School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) program sponsored by the Council of Ministers of Education was initiated in 1989. Objectives for the program include the collection of information about achievement levels in mathematics content and problem solving, reading, writing and science of 13 and 16 years olds. The first mathematics assessment was done in April 1993. In May 1997, approximately 3,700 Albertan students completed the 1997 SAIP Mathematics Assessment. Students were also surveyed about their attitudes, values and habits regarding mathematics. Student work was coded in July in Montreal and report writing is occurring this fall.

Watch for the detailed report on this assessment and what it can tell us about how well the mathematics education system in Alberta is performing. ▲

—Cynthia Ballheim

The Right Angle French Math Programs

Elementary: In early March, teachers from francophone and French immersion schools across western Canada and the Territories met in Edmonton to evaluate the resources submitted in the all-call. As a result, the series "Interactions" was recommended for translation for Grades 4–6. The same series is now authorized for K–Grade 3. Translation has begun on the Grade 6 student and teacher materials. It is expected that all the materials will be available for the 1998–99 school year. Consequently, provincial implementation of the Grades 4–6 math program based on the Protocol framework is delayed by one year for francophone and French immersion schools only. Grade 6 students in these schools will write an Achievement Test based on the interim program of studies in June 1998. Principals of these schools were advised to keep secure the June 1997 test.

The French edition of the elementary Classroom Assessment Materials Project (CAMP) math materials is at the printers. These materials should be available for purchase from the Learning Resources Distributing Centre (LRDC) or the

publisher, Education Advantage Inc., by mid-October.

Junior High: The French edition of the student and teacher materials for "Interactions 7, 8 and 9" was delivered in July and August to the LRDC. The blackline masters for all three grade levels were delivered in early September. Provincial implementation of Grades 7 and 9 in francophone and French immersion schools is effective this year; Grade 8 will be implemented in September 1998.

Senior High: We expect to publish the French edition of the Math 10–13 and Math 20–23 CAMP materials by February 1998.

For further information on all French Math Programs, please contact Marcel Lavallee at Language Services Branch; phone 422-1888, fax 422-1947 or e-mail mlavalee@edc.gov.ab.ca.

From Student Evaluation Branch

Achievement Testing Program: Information Bulletins reporting the results of the Grades 3, 6 and 9 June 1997 Achievement Tests and providing information regarding the June 1998 tests are being sent to schools in October.

Development of the Achievement Tests will occur as they have for the previous three years. Between one-half and two-thirds of the previous year's items are reused on the test and the rest of the questions are new items.

In response to the changes in curriculum, the Grades 3, 6 and 9 Achievement Tests will be blueprinted to the Alberta Program of Studies for K–9 Mathematics, June 1996. Assessment Standards for the Grades 3 and 6 tests will be set in 1998 to ensure they reflect the dimensions of the program. For the Grade 9 tests, interim Assessment Standards will be set in 1998 and confirmed in 1999.

Mathematics 33 Diploma Examination Program: Detailed analysis of how students are performing on each examination, and what the current strengths and weaknesses are, can be found in examiners' reports (the most recent of which is the Examiners' Report for June 1997).

Of special note, more students appear to be writing the Mathematics 33 Diploma Examination with each administration; the averages for provincial teacher-awarded mark was 61.8 percent and the average Diploma Examination mark was 63.0 percent.

Of special interest to teachers of Mathematics 33 is an extra administration of the Mathematics 33

Diploma Examination on Thursday, November 6, 1997. This information, as well as other information and examination examples, can be found in the 1997-98 Mathematics 33 Information Bulletin, Diploma Examinations Program.

Mathematics 30 Diploma Examination

Program: The following items are of interest for the 1997-98 school year:

1. There will be an extra administration of Mathematics 30 Diploma examination in November 1997. For information, see the 1997-98 General Diploma Information Bulletin.
2. A guide for students writing diploma examinations is again available in the all the mathematics and science diploma examination subject areas.
3. The examination design for Mathematics 30 has changed slightly for 1997-98. A change in the style of some numerical-response questions is illustrated by specific examples in the 1997-98 Mathematics 30 Information Bulletin.

Please note that the Policy: Use of Scientific Calculators on Alberta Education Diploma Examinations is the same for all mathematics and science diploma examinations, and has not changed from the published policy of 1996-97. Copies are available in the 1997-98 General Diploma Information Bulletin and in all mathematics and science information bulletins.

Item-Writing and/or Diploma Technical Review

Committees: If you are currently teaching Mathematics 30, and would like to be involved in a variety of committees such as item-writing and/or technical review for diploma exam questions, please be sure to have your superintendent nominate you on the appropriate forms that were sent out earlier to your jurisdiction. We can always use new ideas and we value your input.

Curriculum Standards Branch

The 1997-98 school year sees the implementation of the K-6 and 8 mathematics programs in Alberta. The programs are the result of the development of the 1996 K-9 Alberta Program of Studies for Mathematics. Grades 7 and 9 were implemented in Alberta schools in 1996-97.

In May 1997, the Curriculum Standards Branch published a revised list of resources for the K-9 Mathematics program. The new list of resources is the result of the Western Canada Protocol resource review in March 1996 and March 1997. A copy of the *Kindergarten to Grade 9 Mathematics Resources, Annotated Bibliography* (Alberta Education 1997) was sent to all schools that deliver the K-9 mathematics program. Additional copies are available from the LRDC (product code is 34843 and the cost is \$17.05). The new mathematics program and lists of resources are also posted on the provincial Web site at <http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca> under the "Student and Learning" section.

The high school program that will be derived from the Western Canadian Protocol Common Curriculum Framework is still being planned for implementation in Alberta starting with Grade 10 Applied and Pure courses in the 1998-99 school year. This implementation will be delayed if suitable resources are not available. The western jurisdictions are discussing options to provide resources for the Applied courses. The resource review for high school resources submitted to Alberta Education by February 2, 1998, is planned for early March 1998. We will be asking superintendents to nominate teacher reviewers later in the fall. ▲

—Kay Melville

The distance between a hero and a zero is about one centimetre and the time frame about one second.

—Brian Tober

I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody.

—Bill Cosby

MCATA Executive 1997-98

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Mathematics Council

of The Alberta Teachers' Association

**Providing Leadership to Encourage the Continuing Enhancement of Teaching,
Learning, and Understanding Mathematics**

Date: July 2, 1996

To: The General Membership of the Mathematics Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association (MCATA)

Re: **Proposed New MCATA Executive Structure and the Proposed Revisions to the Constitution of the Mathematics Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.**

The MCATA is an association of mathematics teachers of Alberta who provide leadership to encourage the continuing enhancement of teaching, learning, and understanding of mathematics. As a member of MCATA you are a part of the association. We have a critical role to play in ensuring and promoting the outstanding standards of teaching and learning in mathematics that is a part of our tradition.

The MCATA executive is a group of individuals who voluntarily contribute their time to fairly represent you, the membership of MCATA. In an attempt to more effectively carry out the mandate, a proposed change in the MCATA Executive Structure and proposed revisions to the MCATA constitution are to be considered at the next Annual General Meeting. This meeting will take place at the Annual MCATA Conference, 1-3 November, 1996 in Red Deer. By requirement, this information is to be shared with the general membership 90 days prior to the meeting. In keeping with this stipulation, the attachments are for your information.

We look forward to seeing you in Red Deer in November.

Sincerely,


George Ditto, President



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Teachers of Mathematics



Providing Leadership to Encourage the Continuing Enhancement of Teaching,
Learning, and Understanding Mathematics

MCATA EXECUTIVE

TABLE OFFICERS Treasurer Past President Vice President President Vice President Secretary ATA Staff

DIRECTORSHIPS

- PUBLICATIONS**
 - Newsletter-editor
 - Delta K-editor
 - Monographs
 - Special Publications
- PUBLIC RELATIONS**
 - Membership
 - Promotion
 - NCTM Liaison
- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
 - Conferences
 - Regionals
 - Mini Conferences

REPRESENTATIVES

- Provincial Executive Council
- Faculty of Education
- Department of Mathematics
- Department of Education
- Alberta Colleges or Technical Institutions
- Other

***BOLD** print represents positions

*REGULAR print indicates functions, ie: activities to be carried out by committee members as selected by Table Officers and/or Directors and who, where possible, geographically represent MCATA membership



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Mathematics Council

of The Alberta Teachers' Association

**Providing Leadership to Encourage the Continuing Enhancement of Teaching,
Learning, and Understanding Mathematics**

96-06-19

DRAFT

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION OF THE MATHEMATICS COUNCIL ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

1. **NAME:** The name of this organization shall be the Mathematics Council of The Alberta Teachers' Association (MCATA).
2. **OBJECTS:** The object of MCATA shall be to provide leadership to encourage the continuing enhancement of teaching, learning and understanding mathematics.
3. **MEMBERSHIP:**
 - a) Regular - Members of The Alberta Teachers' Association, (ATA) as specified in ATA bylaws, are eligible for regular membership in this council. All such members shall be entitled to full privileges of Council membership including the rights to vote and to hold office.
 - b) Affiliate - Persons who are not ATA members as specified in ATA bylaws may join MCATA as affiliate members. Such members may receive all the benefits and services of MCATA membership except the rights to vote and to hold office.
 - c) Student - Student members of the ATA may join MCATA and shall be entitled to all benefits and services of Council membership except the right to hold office.
 - d) Life - A Life Membership may be awarded to a person who has made an exceptional contribution in the field of mathematics. If awarded, a life membership shall be presented at an Annual Conference of MCATA.
 - e) Honourary - An Honourary Membership may be awarded to an individual in recognition of outstanding contributions to education, mathematics, citizenship or humanity. If awarded, an honorary membership shall be presented at an Annual conference of MCATA.



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4. **SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE:** MCATA publications shall be available to interested organizations at an annual rate larger than the fee for regular membership.
5. **FEES:** Membership fees shall be established by resolution at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of MCATA.
6. **FINANCES:** The Executive Committee of MCATA shall have power to collect fees and to make expenditures. A financial statement shall be submitted to the Annual General Meeting.
7. **REPORTING ACTIVITIES:** MCATA shall submit annually, not later than October 15: an audited financial statement, a statement of assets and liabilities, an annual report of program and activities, and a copy of MCATA's current constitution.
8. **OFFICERS:** The Officers of MCATA shall consist of:
 - a) A President, who shall be elected for a one year term of office, such term to begin on July 1 and terminate on June 30 of the year following. A president shall not hold office for more than two consecutive terms, but may be re-elected following an intervening term.
 - b) Two vice-presidents, a secretary and a treasurer to be elected annually.
 - c) A Past President
 - d) An ATA executive assistant appointed by Provincial Executive Council (PEC).
 - e) In the event of a vacancy occurring in an officer position during the term of office the executive shall appoint, from its membership, a member to complete the term.

9. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:** The Executive Committee shall be the executive and administrative body of MCATA, and shall consist of the officers and the following members:
- a) One member of Provincial Executive Council appointed by Provincial Executive Council.
 - b) Not more than 6 directors.
 - c) A representative, where feasible from each of the following:
 - i) The Department of Education
 - ii) An Alberta university Faculty of Education
 - iii) An Alberta university Department of Mathematics
 - iv) An Alberta college or technical institution
10. **COMMITTEES:** The executive committee may appoint from time to time such committees as are necessary to carry out the work of MCATA.
11. **LIAISON:** Any representation which MCATA wishes to make with any organization, government department or other agency, shall be conducted through Provincial Executive Council of the ATA.
12. **REGIONAL COUNCILS:** The Executive committee shall encourage the formation of regional councils and shall have the authority to grant recognition to, establish boundaries of, and develop regulations which are not inconsistent with this constitution or the policies of the ATA for governing the organization and operation of such regional council.

13. MEETINGS:

- a) Officers shall meet at least twice each year or as required at the call of the president.
- b) Executive: The Executive Committee shall:
 - i) meet at least once each year, or more often at the call of the president
 - ii) shall meet in situations deemed emergent at the written request of the majority of the executive
 - iii) conduct the affairs of MCATA between Annual General Meetings
- c) General: MCATA shall hold an Annual General Meeting, chaired by the outgoing president, the agenda of which shall provide for the following:
 - i) Adoption of minutes from the previous Annual General Meeting and any special general meetings held in the interim.
 - ii) The annual report of the president.
 - iii) The annual report of the treasurer.
 - iv) Receiving of committee reports.
 - v) An audited financial statement for the preceding fiscal year.
 - vi) An annual budget.
 - vii) Proposed revisions to the fees for membership in MCATA for which the required notice of motion has been given.
 - viii) Proposed amendments to the constitution for which the required notice of motion has been given.
 - ix) Other business.
 - x) Quorum at an Annual General Meeting shall consist of members present.

14. NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION: After three (3) months' notice of motion MCATA may, by a majority vote of those present at an Annual General Meeting and subject to approval by Provincial Executive Council:

- a) join or affiliate with a national or international organization representing the same special interest; or
- b) cancel its membership or affiliation with a national or international organization.

15. AMENDMENTS: After three (3) months' notice of motion to the membership of MCATA, this constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at the Annual General Meeting of MCATA, subject to the ratification of Provincial Executive Council of the ATA.

16. DISSOLUTION: In the event of dissolution of MCATA, all assets will be turned over to the ATA.