



# Mathachusetts

Massachusetts Mathematics Association  
of Teacher Educators

Affiliate of the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators

Spring 2008

Volume 2, Issue 2

## Message from the President: Jenny Tsankova Take a Stand!

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It is hard to believe that the end of this school year is around the corner, that the summer is coming and we have to look for professional development opportunities! Soon it will be time to reflect, to share our difficulties and our victories, to be validated and to validate others, in other words - to step back. It is also time to rejuvenate ourselves, to get excited about teaching mathematics, about coaching, mentoring, supervising, and energizing ourselves!

That is exactly how I felt after returning from the annual NCSM (National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics) and NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) conferences in Salt Lake City - rejuvenated! The NCTM conference started with Malcolm Gladwell's inspirational talk about the value our culture and our society places on perseverance. He argued that to be successful in a mathematics class, one has to be talented in a particular cultural context. To explain that, Mr. Gladwell compared the lives and works of two master artists - Picasso and Cézanne. While Picasso's talent seemed to have appeared overnight, Cézanne worked very hard on constantly improving his style of painting and persevered for decades in order to be recognized. Malcolm Gladwell pointed out that our culture values the Picassos more than the Cézannes. A child is considered smart mathematically if more of Picasso's features are detected - the student is fast in producing correct answers or in other words "gets" the concept right away. The message that the rest of the students receive is that if results are not achieved quickly enough they are not as rewarded and therefore not as valued. On the other hand, mathematics teachers are struggling to convince students of the benefits of persistence and hard work, of the importance of wrestling with a problem to make small but important gains. There is no doubt in mathematics educator's minds that we need more Cézannes in our schools, more students eager to invest time and energy to grapple with challenging problems. We have our work cut out for years to come and we love it!

This talk and many others energized and rejuvenated me! And now I am looking forward to our second annual MassMATE symposium in Roger Williams University in June! It will be a time to come together with our fellow teacher educators, hear inspirational and educational speakers, share our ideas about the changes in mathematics education, and learn from each other's experiences. And we have lots to talk about ...



Since the publication of the NCTM Curriculum Focal Points (September 2006), every state has slowly but steadily considered analyzing their mathematics frameworks in view of the Focal Points. Mathematics teacher educators, teachers, administrators, publishers, and parents are holding their breath for a new and improved national agreement about what students at each grade level will have to learn and on what they will be assessed. It is our responsibility as mathematics teacher educators to prepare the ground for successful implementation of the Focal Points, and to make sure teachers get all of the support they need on a daily basis.

The work of the National Math Advisory Panel concurs on the significance of mathematics teacher preparation and professional development. The Panel emphasizes the different aspects of mathematics teaching such as content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, the ability to make connections between conceptual understanding and computational mastery and flexibility as well as the importance of problem solving.

Continued on Pg2.



Visit us at  
[www.MassMATE.net](http://www.MassMATE.net)

## Board of Directors of MASSMATE:

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## MASSMATE'S Purposes and Goals

The Massachusetts Mathematics Association of Teacher Educators (MassMATE) is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to provide a forum for mathematics teacher educators to communicate with each other and collaborate with other groups interested in the teaching of mathematics in the state of Massachusetts. Specifically, the goals of MassMATE are to:

- promote leadership among mathematics teacher educators;
- serve as a forum for ideas and resources in mathematics teacher education;
- encourage research related to mathematics teacher education;
- promote quality undergraduate and graduate programs in mathematics education;
- encourage and support professional development programs for in-service teachers;
- encourage and support professional development programs for postsecondary faculty involved in mathematics education;
- facilitate communication and collaboration among professionals involved in mathematics education and mathematics teacher education at all levels;
- facilitate communication and collaboration among members of educational administrative units, such as departments of mathematics and departments of education;
- coordinate activities and work collaboratively with other associations and organizations concerned with the preparation and professional development of mathematics teachers;
- work cooperatively with the federal and state agencies to enhance the mathematical, pedagogical, and clinical preparation of teachers of mathematics at all levels with respect to criteria for credentialing and licensing teachers in Massachusetts.

*Share these with a colleague and have them join MassMATE today!*

### Message from the President. Continued from Pg1.

However, I cannot fail to address the following statement, which has already been the topic of heated debates in schools and colleges around the country; "It [computational facility] requires fluency with the standard algorithms for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division." (p.12) I know that thousands of mathematics educators have sworn into the methods of partial sums, partial products, and partial quotients, to name a few. It is my belief that the key to computational fluency is not the word "standard." Rather, it is the conceptual understanding of *an* algorithm, an algorithm that students would then be able to retrieve and apply. I have already spoken to administrators and coaches about this issue, and I have full confidence in the judgments teachers and mathematics educators make based on their classroom experiences and knowledge of best practices.

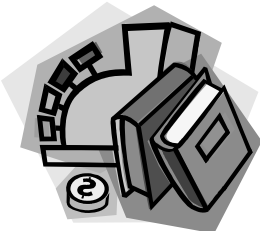
What do you think? Your opinions, knowledge, and experiences count! Share them with us, come to the symposium. The theme for this year's symposium is "The Need for Problem Solving." The theme is about the need for deep thinking, the need to take the time and explore, engage, and discover, to excite students and teachers about mathematics. Someone may argue that there is no time any more in the classroom because of state assessments and AYPs but we wouldn't be the math educators we are today without the love of problem solving and the need to pass it to the others!

## Treasurer's Report

Submitted by Howard Troughton, Treasurer

A brief update on our fiscal status: We currently have 23 paid members and a bank balance of \$340.64. We have incurred minor administrative expenses related to the printing and mailing of welcome letters and membership cards to new members.

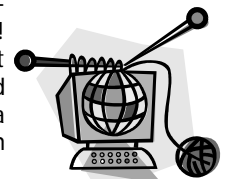
Fortunately, we did not incur any costs associated with setting up our website. The web space was provided at no charge because we allowed minor advertisements to the website sponsor, and the initial website development was conducted by Meaghan Smith, an undergraduate student at Roger Williams University as part of a course project.



## Unveiling our new Website:

[www.MASSMATE.net](http://www.MASSMATE.net)

We are proud to announce that MassMATE is now on line at [www.MASSMATE.net](http://www.MASSMATE.net)! Meaghan Smith, an undergraduate student from Roger Williams University, has helped set up our website and will work with Diana Cheng from Boston University to maintain it.



On the Website, you can find information about becoming a member, learn about professional development opportunities, register for the upcoming MassMATE Symposium, and more! Please visit [www.MASSMATE.net](http://www.MASSMATE.net) and let us know what you think!

# Summer Professional Development Opportunities

## Summer Content Institutes:

More than 30 graduate-level courses on topics including math, science, reading, and writing will be available at no cost to educators across the state this summer. These professional development institutes will be offered throughout the summer, and follow-up sessions will be held in the fall and winter to support implementation into the classroom. The institutes are sponsored by the Department of Education. The courses will be taught by educators and specialists from colleges, universities, and cultural institutions. Professional development points (PDPs) toward relicensure will be awarded, and graduate credits are also available.

A brochure listing course descriptions and registration information for the 2008 Professional Development Institutes can be found on the Department of Education's web site at: [www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/cinstitute](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/cinstitute).



## Other Summer Professional Development:

**Education Development Center (EDC)** is offering mathematics professional development using materials from two new National Science Foundation-funded curriculum programs developed at EDC. Graduate credit or 28 Professional Development points are available for both CME Project and Think Math! Workshops.

### ↳ CME Project "Developing Mathematical Habits of Mind" August 4-8, Boston

In this five-day workshop, participants will engage in an approach to mathematics that centers on developing mathematical Habits of Mind. We welcome those who are interested in content-focused professional development as well as those who are planning to implement CME Project, a new four-year, NSF-funded high school curriculum. *Developing Mathematical Habits of Mind*—CME Project Workshops are for teachers, coaches, curriculum coordinators, and administrators. Workshops are facilitated by CME Project developers and experienced teachers. For more information: [www2.edc.org/cmeproject/workshops.shtml](http://www2.edc.org/cmeproject/workshops.shtml).

### ↳ "Building Number and Algebra the Think Math! Way" August 4-8, Boston

Using Think Math! materials, *Building Number & Algebra the Think Math! Way* Workshops will present effective approaches to elementary mathematics content areas across grades. In two workshops, one emphasizing grades K-2 and the other grades 3-5, participants will explore how to build skill and understanding in addition/subtraction, multiplication/division, fractions/decimals, and algebraic thinking/language. Workshops are facilitated by Think Math! developers and experienced teachers. For more information: [www2.edc.org/thinkmath/workshops.htm](http://www2.edc.org/thinkmath/workshops.htm).

**Northeastern University's Institute in Education** is offering professional development courses this summer. Graduate credit or Professional Development points are available for all courses. For more information and to register, visit: [www.spcs.neu.edu/pdp/](http://www.spcs.neu.edu/pdp/)

### ↳ *Classroom Technologies for the Middle and High School Mathematics Teacher*: July 7–11 at Northeastern University, Boston Campus

Technology has become an integral part of the modern mathematics classroom, including the almost universal use of the graphing calculator. In addition, two computer programs, Excel and the Geometer's Sketchpad have also been extensively used. All three of these technologies are meant to be tools that illuminate and enhance concepts and techniques in the math curriculum. This course will improve the teacher's skills in bringing together the curriculum and the technology to support student learning. Instructor: Michael Sherman

### ↳ *Algebra, Numbers and Geometry*: July 14–18 at St. Mark's School, Southborough, MA

This course will develop the principles of beginning and intermediate algebra. The goal is to help teachers develop clear understanding of the mathematical concepts involved, and to translate personal mathematical accomplishments into effective teaching strategies. Instructor: James Tanton

### ↳ *Functions and Trigonometry*: July 21–25 at St. Mark's School, Southborough, MA

This course serves as both a precursor to the course in calculus and as a stand-alone course in the methods of advanced algebraic thinking. The concept of "function" per se, is relatively new in the development of mathematics. The course begins with an introduction to the study of functions—their definition, application, and methods of manipulation, general notions and their algebra. The course will utilize innovative geometric insights to provide a sound and comprehensive perspective to the topic. Instructor: James Tanton

## Dates to Remember:

- ✦ **MassMATE Symposium**  
*Theme: The Need for Problem Solving*  
June 11, 2008  
Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI  
[www.MassMATE.net](http://www.MassMATE.net)
- ✦ **ICME 11**  
*11<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Mathematics Education*  
July 6-13, 2008  
Monterrey, México  
<http://www.icme11.org>
- ✦ **PME32**  
*International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education*  
July 17-21, 2008  
Morelia, Mexico  
<http://www.gpme.org>
- ✦ **MAA MathFest!**  
*Mathematics Association of America*  
July 31—August 2, 2008  
Madison, WI  
[www.MAA.org](http://www.MAA.org)
- ✦ **NCTM Regional Meeting & Exposition**  
*National Council of Teachers of Mathematics*  
October 16 - 17, 2008  
Cleveland, OH  
<http://www.NCTM.org/meetings>
- ✦ **ATMNE/ATOMIM Conference**  
*Association of Teachers of Mathematics in New England & Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Maine*  
November 6 - 7, 2008  
Portland, ME  
<http://www.ATMNE.net>
- ✦ **MAA/AMS Joint Mathematics Meetings**  
*Mathematics Association of America & American Mathematical Society*  
January 5-8, 2009  
Washington, DC  
[www.AMS.org](http://www.AMS.org)
- ✦ **ATMIM Winter 2009 Conference**  
*Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Massachusetts*  
January 8, 2009  
Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA  
[www.ATMIM.net](http://www.ATMIM.net)
- ✦ **AMTE Thirteenth Annual Conference**  
*Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators*  
February 5-7, 2009  
Orlando, FL  
[www.AMTE.net](http://www.AMTE.net)
- ✦ **ATMIM Spring 2009 Conference**  
*Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Massachusetts*  
March 26, 2009  
Marlborough, MA  
[www.ATMIM.net](http://www.ATMIM.net)
- ✦ **NCSM Annual Meeting**  
*National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics*  
April 20 - 22, 2009  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.NCSMonline.org](http://www.NCSMonline.org)
- ✦ **NCTM Annual Meeting & Exposition**  
*National Council of Teachers of Mathematics*  
April 22 - 25, 2009  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.NCTM.org/meetings](http://www.NCTM.org/meetings)



## Useful Links:

- Massachusetts Mathematics Association of Teacher Educators (MassMATE)  
[www.MassMATE.net](http://www.MassMATE.net)
- Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE)  
[www.AMTE.net](http://www.AMTE.net)
- Association of Teachers of Mathematics of New England (ATMNE)  
[www.ATMNE.org](http://www.ATMNE.org)
- Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Massachusetts (ATMIM)  
[www.ATMIM.org](http://www.ATMIM.org)
- National Council of Supervisors in Mathematics (NCSM)  
[www.NCSMonline.org](http://www.NCSMonline.org)
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)  
[www.NCTM.org](http://www.NCTM.org)
- Massachusetts Department of Education Professional Development  
[www.doe.mass.edu/pd](http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd)

## Getting involved in MassMATE

### Contribute to Mathachusetts

We value our member's thoughts and contributions! Please consider writing an article for Mathachusetts.

Also, let us know of any noteworthy events, projects, or programs occurring in your district or school, so that we may consider including it in Mathachusetts or on our website!

Please contact Polina Sabinin at [Polina@Sabinin.com](mailto:Polina@Sabinin.com) with your submissions.



### Advertising in Mathachusetts

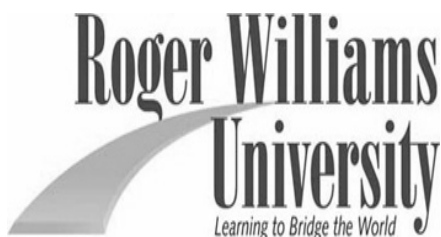


Mathachusetts will be publishing advertisements related to Mathematics Education. For more information, formats, fee schedules, and to obtain an application, please contact Polina Sabinin, the newsletter chairperson at [Polina@Sabinin.com](mailto:Polina@Sabinin.com).

Please note that by publishing an advertisement, MassMATE does not imply endorsement of the advertised product or the company.



Massachusetts Mathematics  
Association of Teacher Educators  
and



present:

## The Need for Problem Solving

Symposium and Luncheon

June 11, 2008 at 8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

Breakfast and lunch are compliments of Roger Williams University  
School of Education

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Paul Goldenberg  
Educational Development Center, Newton, MA

Early Registration fee (by May 26, 2008) \$15 current members, \$35 non-members  
Late Registration fee (by June 4, 2008) \$25 current members, \$45 non-members  
Space is limited, so register early. Registrations will close when capacity is reached.

### Symposium Schedule

8:30—9:15	Coffee & Registration
9:15—10:20	Welcome & Keynote Speaker
10:30—11:20	Sessions Group 1
11:30—12:20	Sessions Group 2
12:30—1:30	Lunch

For more information please contact Jenny Tsankova at [jtsankova@rwu.edu](mailto:jtsankova@rwu.edu) or (781) 354-0157  
or visit our website at [www.MASSMATE.net](http://www.MASSMATE.net)

If you'd like to join us, the registration form is on the next page.

