



(T a l k i n g L e a f)

South Dakota Council Teachers of Mathematics Newsletter

Presidential Ponderings

"I have an idea..." These four words can strike fear in a principal's heart (I get that a lot.) But keeping the math curriculum fresh is essential for students *and teachers*. A new strategy, a different activity, a fresh approach—these add depth and interest to the mathematics classroom. Students benefit when their teachers engage in effective professional development. Teachers benefit when they try something new and exciting in their classrooms. When we share good ideas, everybody wins!

Where can you find innovative ideas and professional support to improve your classroom? Each February, a fantastic professional development opportunity takes place in Huron. There, South Dakota's math and science educators gather to learn, laugh, and share at the annual SDCTM/SDSTA Joint Professional Development Conference. The 17th annual conference will be held Feb. 5-7, 2009, at the Huron Event Center. This year's national speakers include Murray Siegel from Arizona State University, and Don Balka from Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana.

The conference kicks off with a math sharing session on Thursday night, hosted by Yours Truly. Imagine *Show and Tell* for math teachers of all grade levels. Bring your favorite idea or classroom activity to share. I'm looking forward to it!

South Dakota's best—our talented classroom teachers—will present over 100 math and science sessions on Friday and Saturday. Grade bands ranging from K-2 to 9-12+ guarantee something for everyone. Some of my favorite activities and teaching games have come from the many quality sessions that I've attended over the years. Have you ever used an activity called *"I have, who has?"* I learned it in a great session a few years ago. My perennial favorite, *"Equations Bingo"* also came from a conference sharing session. And who could ever forget *"Mathematical Idol?"* (I think some of you may still be *trying* to forget that one!)

Friday night's banquet program, always a highlight of the conference, features Dr. Ed Porthan. A lifelong educator, Dr. Porthan strives to make a positive difference in the lives of students and teachers. I've heard Dr. Porthan speak, and I know that he will educate and entertain with his presentation titled, *"Boats, Streams, and Dreams."*

For me, visiting with like-minded educators remains the very best part of the conference. It feels like a family reunion as South Dakota's math and science teachers gather from around the state. I enjoy hearing about all of the great things happening in South Dakota classrooms. I love the energy and excitement found in every session. I always return home with a spring in my step, my spirit refreshed, and my enthusiasm renewed.

I guarantee that you will come back from the conference with great ideas. See you in Huron!

Cindy Kroon,
SDCTM President

WINTER 2008-2009

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Calendar Notes:

- SDCTM/SDSTA Joint Conference
February 5-7, 2009
- PAEMST Applications due May 1, 2009



“This \$5,000 grant is awarded annually to a select science or math teacher in South Dakota...”

Kelly Lane Earth and Space Science Grant

Science and math teachers at public, private, or tribal schools in South Dakota may now apply for the 3rd annual **“Kelly Lane Earth and Space Science Grant”** provided by the NASA South Dakota Space Grant Consortium. This \$5,000 grant is awarded annually to a select science or math teacher in South Dakota to recognize and support outstanding teachers and innovative educational programs at the pre-college level. **The application announcement for the 2009 grant is posted at the website below.** The submission deadline is 4:00 p.m. MST on January 16, 2009. The winner will be announced at the science and math teacher’s joint conference in Huron on February 5-7, 2009!

<http://sdspacegrant.sdsmt.edu/KellyLaneTeacherGrant.htm>

We encourage your applications! Please forward this announcement to any science or math teachers in SD that you think may be interested. My address list is not comprehensive.

Sincerely,
Tom Durkin

=====
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Teachers: Looking for classroom-tested ideas for math and science?

- National Speakers
- Grade-level Sessions in Math
- Grade-level Sessions in Science
- Demonstrations
- Regional and SD Speakers
- Sharing Sessions
- Vendor Exhibits
- Graduate Credit Available

17th Annual SDCTM/SDSTA Joint Professional Development Conference

February 5-7, 2009



All indoors at the newly remodeled Huron Events Center in Huron, SD

Visit www.sdctm.org or www.sdsta.org for complete program and hotel information. Speaker Proposal and Advance Registration forms are also available on the websites.



Return this coupon with your advance registration form to be eligible for a special drawing!



Nominations for 2009 PAEMST

Know a Great 7-12 Math Teacher? Nominate him or her to receive the Presidential Teaching Award!

We're looking for outstanding 7-12 math teachers for the 2009 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. The awards are sponsored by the White House and administered by the National Science Foundation.

Every year up to 108 National Awardees each receive a \$10,000 award, a paid trip for two to Washington, DC to attend a week-long series of networking opportunities and recognition events, and a special citation signed by the President of the United States.

The program is now accepting nominations of 7-12 teachers for the nation's highest honor for mathematics and science teachers. Anyone can nominate a teacher. Teachers should submit completed application materials by May, 2009. **For more information, including nomination and application forms, please visit www.nsf.gov/pa or www.sdctm.org and click on the awards link.**

Nominate an outstanding secondary teacher for 2009 PAEMST.

Math Haiku

Matrices

*Row reduction aids
Solving simultaneous
Equation systems*

Fractals

*Mandelbrot, Julia
Producers of amazing
Self-similar shapes*

Inspired by SDCTM's own Cindy Kroon's geometry haiku published in the newsletter, Mike Catalano, DWU, submitted these selections.

*Mike Catalano
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“I love reading these books and my students love listening to them.”

Literature Corner

By Samra Trask

Children’s picture books are not just for entertainment any longer. There are innumerable books available today that can enrich a child’s mathematical understanding. Any Literature-in-Math aficionado worth his or her salt has heard of the classic Math Curse by Jon Scieszka or any of the Gregory Tang works such as The Best of Times and The Grapes of Math, to name just a few. These and dozens more classic children’s math books belong in your mathematics library along with those dusty tomes you keep expecting to use as resources. (Any day now someone will surely ask to borrow that \$200 calculus book that you can’t bear to part with.)

I love reading these books and my students love listening to them. I have heard students comparing the relative merits of Lady Di of Ameter and her short but resourceful son Radius whom they met in Sir Cumference and the First Round Table by Cindy Neuschwander. The lessons to be found are blatant but delightful nonetheless.

My favorite books, however, are those in which the lessons aren’t transparently masquerading as prose. These are the volumes in which the math is so hidden that the authors themselves aren’t fully aware of the richness of the mathematical content they are offering these fertile young minds.

The First Marathon: The Legend of Pheidippides by Susan Reynolds is a delightful picture book, which would enhance any library. On the surface it is a history lesson about young Pheidippides and his run from Athens to Sparta to bring help for the upcoming war. He runs to Sparta and then back again before joining the battle and fighting all day with the Athenian army. When the battle is over he is asked to return to proclaim the news. Khirete! Nikomen! (We have won!) The strenuous activity of his day was too much for him and he dropped over dead.

I recommend reading this book aloud to the students in history or social studies class. You would be amazed at the discussions which could arise. This story took place in 490 B.C. *How many years ago was that? What a fabulous introduction into negative integers!* Not only did this young man run the 140 miles to Sparta, he ran back again, ran 25 extra miles to Marathon, and then ran back to Athens. *How many miles was that?* It takes a car two or three hours to drive from Athens to Sparta over the mountains but it took Pheidippides almost thirty-six hours. *Can you set these up as unit rates to compare the speeds?* The Athenian army was vastly outnumbered. For every soldier from Athens, there were four soldiers from Persia. *How about working with proportions?* At the end of the battle sixty-four hundred Persians were dead while fewer than two hundred Athenians had been killed. *And more proportions!*

A section has been added to this book detailing the history of the modern day marathon starting at 24.8 miles in 1896 and evolving to its present day 26.2 miles. *Build a time line.* Much data has been added about finishing times through the years.



Literature Corner *continued*

Find people in your community that have run a marathon. Believe me; they are obsessive about keeping data. Imagine the statistical work possible! My personal favorite is the urban legend about the runner from England that decided to run 26.2 only to realize the distance was referring to miles instead of kilometers. How many miles did he think he was going to run? How many miles did he have remaining when he had run 26.2 kilometers?

There are countless other math topics in this captivating children's book. It is a wonderful opportunity to bring the math out of the math class and into the light of day. Enjoy!

The First Marathon: The Legend of Pheidippides

- Author: Susan Reynolds
- Illustrator: Daniel Minter
- Reading Level: Ages 4-8
- Publisher: Albert Whitman and Company
- Copyright date: March 30, 2006
- ISBN: 0807508675

Samra teaches Title 1 math to grades K-8 at Wall School. Contact her at Samra.Trask@k12.sd.us.

Share the Wealth!

South Dakota Teachers have so much to offer one another! Please share an activity that "works" for you with SDCTM members!

Email submissions to: smcquade2@sfcss.org



"When you're in a professional position, especially one where you're interacting with children and parents, you need to be above reproach," Carr said.

5 TEACHERS DISCIPLINED FOR FACEBOOK POSTINGS

CMS MAY FIRE ONE OF THEM AFTER BEING SHOWN QUESTIONABLE CONTENT FROM SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE.

By Ann Doss *Helms*, ahelms@charlotteobserver.com

A Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools teacher faces firing for posting derogatory comments about students on **Facebook**, while four others have been disciplined for posts involving "poor judgment and bad taste," spokeswoman Nora Carr said Tuesday.

WCNC, the Observer's news partner, turned up questionable pages on the social networking site by searching for people who identified themselves as CMS employees. Superintendent Peter Gorman has recommended firing a teacher who listed "teaching chitlins in the ghetto of Charlotte" as one of her activities and drinking as one of her hobbies.

In her "About Me" section she wrote: "I am teaching in the most ghetto school in Charlotte."

Thomasboro Elementary, where most students are minorities from low-income homes, lists that teacher as a faculty member on the school Web site. She has been suspended with pay, Carr said; the dismissal is not final because teachers have a right to appeal. The Observer is not publishing her name, pending the district's final decision in her case.

Reporter Jeff Campbell of WCNC said he showed district officials pages involving seven CMS teachers. Carr said four faced unspecified discipline that is less than suspension or dismissal. She would not provide details about the offensive material, but the pages Campbell submitted included photos of female teachers in sexually suggestive poses and a black male teacher who listed "Chillin wit my n---as!!!" as an activity and had a suggestive exchange with a female **Facebook** friend" accompanying a shirtless photo of himself.

CMS is still reviewing the case of a high-school special-education teacher who used a **Facebook** "mood box" to post "I'm feeling p---ed because I hate my students!"

District officials are working on a memo reminding all 19,000 employees that information they post on the Web can be viewed by the public and should be appropriate. "When you're in a professional position, especially one where you're interacting with children and parents, you need to be above reproach," Carr said.

The teachers in question chose to identify their employer and skipped an option that blocks public viewing of their pages. "I think they just didn't think these things through," Carr said. "That's kind of mind-boggling."

CMS has an investigator who specializes in online issues, including reports of inappropriate material posted by students about teachers. Carr said "several" employees



FACEBOOK continued

a year are disciplined for inappropriate posts. CMS generally responds to complaints, rather than randomly viewing pages.

CMS and other districts also check Web pages, especially popular networking sites such as MySpace and **Facebook**, before hiring, Carr said.

Teachers across the country have faced similar situations - enough so that NEA Today, the journal of the National Education Association, published a roundup this year. It included a Colorado English teacher fired for posting her sexually explicit poetry on MySpace, a Florida band director fired for a MySpace profile that included "his musings about sex, drugs and depression," and a Virginia art teacher fired for posting photos of his "butt art," done by painting his private parts and pressing them onto canvas.

Last fall, according to NEA Today, the Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch found teachers writing about sex, drugs and drinking on their MySpace profiles.

"There's an old lawyer's saw that goes something like this: Never put in writing anything that you wouldn't want read in open court or by your mother," concludes the article, written by Michael Simpson of the NEA's legal office. "Maybe it's time for an updated adage: Never put in electronic form anything that you wouldn't want viewed by a million people, including your colleagues, students, and supervisors - and your mother."

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Share the Classroom Treasures

- What?** The first ever classroom supplies sharing!
- How?** An area will be set up at the conference for teachers to bring classroom items from your personal collection (NOT your school districts) that you no longer use or that you have duplicates of.
- Why?** You can help others, you can downsize, you can help the planet by recycling
- When?** February 5, 6, 7, 2009
- Where?** The Crossroads Convention Center in Huron, the site of the State Science and Math Conference
- Who?** Anyone coming to the conference will be able to bring items or take items. This is free. There will be no money exchanged. If you have a teaching friend who cannot come but has material to share, feel free to bring it.

"Maybe it's time for an updated adage: Never put in electronic form anything that you wouldn't want viewed by a million people, including your colleagues, students, and supervisors - and your mother."

PLEASE - No Textbooks or broken/non-working equipment. Although it may feel like yours, make sure it is. If it's marked "School Property", please leave it in school.

SDCTM/SDSTA JOINT SPRING CONFERENCE

Crossroads Events Center, Huron South Dakota
February 5-7, 2009

Conference information and program booklets will be available online at www.sdctm.org and www.sdsta.org

ADVANCE REGISTRATION -- Please print clearly. Postmark by January 20, 2009

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
School/District _____ E-mail _____
Home phone _____ School Phone _____

Please check the appropriate categories for membership, conference registration, and payment.

1. SDCTM/SDSTA MEMBERSHIP(s) and DUES

Please check the appropriate categories. You may join one, both, or neither organization.

Begin/renew SDCTM (math) for one year	Begin/renew SDSTA (science) for one year
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary \$5	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary \$5
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle School \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Middle School \$10
<input type="checkbox"/> High School \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> High School \$10
<input type="checkbox"/> Post-Secondary \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Post-Secondary \$10
<input type="checkbox"/> Student \$5	<input type="checkbox"/> Student \$3
<input type="checkbox"/> Retired \$5	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired \$5

2. CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Please check the appropriate categories. Noon luncheon is included for each day that you register.
NOTE: The Friday night banquet is NOT included. Banquet tickets may be purchased for \$20 each.

I will attend the conference on (check one): Friday Saturday Both days

SDCTM or SDSTA Member	Non-Member	Student Member
<input type="checkbox"/> One day \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> One day \$70	<input type="checkbox"/> One day \$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Two days \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> Two days \$90	<input type="checkbox"/> Two days \$25

Check here if this is the first-time you have attended the SDCTM/SDSTA Joint Conference.

3. PAYMENT

Make checks payable to SDCTM.
Purchase orders will NOT be accepted.

Membership SDCTM	\$ _____
Membership SDSTA	\$ _____
Registration	\$ _____
Friday Night Banquet (\$20 each)	\$ _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED	\$ _____

Requests for refunds must be received by January 20, 2009

4. SEND THIS FORM WITH PAYMENT

Steve Caron
907 South 16th Street School phone (605) 725-8208
Aberdeen, SD 57401 Home phone (605) 226-2292

Email: steve.caron@k12.sd.us

Advance registration must be postmarked by January 20, 2009

Please check here if you have also submitted a speaker proposal form for the 2009 Conference.

“JIM GOEHRING SCHOLARSHIP FOR FUTURE LEADERS”

“The Jim Goehring Scholarship for Future Leaders” has been established to encourage new teachers of math and science to become professionally involved on the state level. The scholarship, which is good for a free one or two day registration at the Joint Conference of the South Dakota Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the South Dakota Science Teachers Association, is available to any teacher who meets each of the following criteria:

- Is a K-12 teacher of math or science who is in the first year of teaching in SD
- Belongs to SDCTM and/or SDSTA Applicants must pay their own dues to the chosen organization.

The application process is simple. Fill out the form below, have it signed by the building principal, and mail it to Steve Caron along with the regular conference registration form which is available at www.sdctm.org.

2008-2009 APPLICATION
“JIM GOEHRING SCHOLARSHIP FOR FUTURE LEADERS”

Name:

School District:

Teaching Assignment:

Membership Information:

_____ I am already a member of SDCTM SDSTA (Circle one or both)

_____ I am joining SDCTM and/or SDSTA (Circle one or both)

I am enclosing a check for

_____ \$5.00 for Elementary Math and/or \$5.00 for Elementary Science

_____ \$20.00 for MS/HS Math and/or \$10.00 for MS/HS Science

(Name) _____ is in his/her first year of teaching in SD at _____ School District during the 2008-2009 school year and is thus eligible for ‘The Jim Goehring Scholarship for Future Leaders.’”

Signed: _____, Building Principal



Print a copy of this form. Mail with check payable to SDCTM to:

Diana McCann
41876 Apple Tree Road
Springfield, SD 57062

Name _____

School Name _____

Subjects or Grades Taught _____

Addresses

Home _____

School _____

Mailing Address: _____ Home _____ School

Home Phone _____

School Phone _____

Fax Number _____

E-mail _____

Membership categories (Check only one)

- _____ Elementary School \$5.00
- _____ Middle School / Junior High \$20.00
- _____ High School \$20.00
- _____ Post Secondary \$20.00
- _____ Retired \$5.00
- _____ Student \$5.00



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www.sdctm.org

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