

# AMTE-TX Newsletter

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF ASSOCIATION OF  
MATHEMATICS TEACHER EDUCATORS OF TEXAS  
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY IN SEPTEMBER,  
JANUARY AND MAY



## GREETING FROM THE PRESIDENT

As mathematics teacher educators our organization provides the opportunity for a collective voice on state issues such as teacher certification, K-16 standards, and mathematics undergraduate and graduate programs. An example is the Elementary Mathematics Task Force led by Sandi Cooper (Past President) this past year. She discusses the work of the task force this month. Also, I encourage each of you to sign-up two additional mathematics educators as members by January. This newsletter includes the membership form to be completed and sent in to Trena Wilkerson (Treasurer).

I am honored to be your president for the next two years and know that I have big shoes to fill following Sandi Cooper as our first AMTE-Tx president. In just two short years our accomplishments are many. Including but not limited to a strand of special sessions at the Conference for the Advancement of Mathematics Teaching (CAMT), website creation, task force on Ele-

mentary Mathematics Specialist, and recognition as an affiliate of the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE).

This past July at CAMT over 200 people attended the sessions sponsored by AMTE-Tx. At the business meeting held at the end of the day, we recognized the service of outgoing officers: Sandi Cooper (President), Colleen Eddy (President Elect), and Sylvia Taube (Secretary). Also, recognized was our outgoing board member Barba Patton.

Please welcome our incoming officers: Sandi Cooper (Baylor University) as our Past President, Sandra Browning (University of Houston-Clear Lake) as our Secretary and Dusty Jones (Sam Houston University) as our newest board member. Barba Patton (University of Houston-Victoria) who just completed her term as a board member is our first newsletter editor.

Our goals going into this next year include:

- Continue to Host Special Strand of Sessions: CAMT 2011 in Grapevine, TX at the Gaylord Texan
- Increase Communication with a quarterly electronic newsletter
- Increase Membership
- Prepare for AMTE 2012 in Fort Worth: Sandi Cooper has agreed to chair the Local Arrangement Committee for AMTE 2012 when Texas hosts the conference.

There are opportunities for you to become involved in AMTE-Tx. Examples include volunteers for the Local Arrangements Committee for AMTE 2012, present at the AMTE-Tx strand of sessions at CAMT 2011, and a webmaster for the AMTE-Tx website.

Colleen

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## MEMBERSHIP 2010

We currently have 51 members of AMTE-TX. Although this is not a large number, we must remember that in the two years we have been in existence we have more than doubled our membership.

Please help us in identifying potential members and sharing information

about the organization with them. The membership form, which can be used for new memberships or renewals, can be found on our website at [www.amte-tx.org](http://www.amte-tx.org). E-mail reminders are periodically sent out to members who are up for renewal of their membership. In an effort to in-

crease membership and thereby increasing privation across Texan, we encourage you to invite at least 2 colleagues to join. This is an excellent way for mathematics educator across Texas to collaborate!



Trena

Sandi and Colleen

*"Local  
arrangement  
committee  
needs you ...  
let's make this  
an AMTE for  
all to  
remember  
when they  
came to  
TEXAS"*

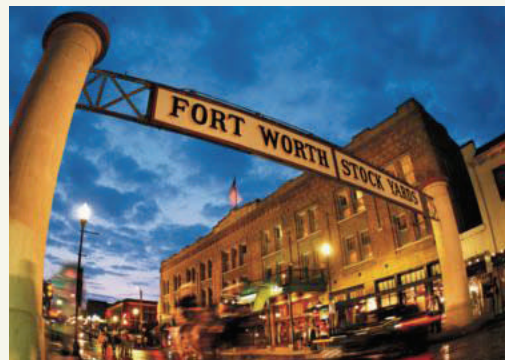
## AMTE 2012 in Fort Worth, Texas!

The 2012 national conference of AMTE will be held in Fort Worth, Texas. The scheduled dates are February 9-11, 2012 and will include presentations and keynote addresses by nationally recognized mathematics teacher educators. This will be a great opportunity for all members of AMTE-Tx to participate and host this national conference. Our affiliate will take the lead with organizing the Local Arrangements, so we need your

help. First of all, we will need to organize a Local Arrangements Committee with members designated as "chair" of various responsibilities. Then, we will need volunteers for the various "sub-committees" to help with on-site responsibilities.

If you are interested in serving on the Local Arrangements Committee, please contact Sandi Cooper via e-mail ([sandra\\_cooper@baylor.e](mailto:sandra_cooper@baylor.e)

du). We will need 5-6 AMTE-Tx members to serve on this committee to chair a particular area such as local restaurants, registration, AV and technology, and area events/attractions. After the committee is formed and has begun work, then we will send out a call for volunteers to serve on these sub-committees. Please think about how you can contribute to this exciting opportunity for our affiliate.



## HAPPENINGS IN AUSTIN CINDY SCHNEIDER

It appears that the legislature will be considering teacher quality issues in the next session. They will be taking a systems look at these issues (meaning from pre-service through in-service evaluation). If you have not yet read the report *Ed School Essentials: Evaluating the Fundamentals of Teacher Training Programs in Texas* by Julie Greenberg and Kate Walsh for the National Council on Teacher Quality

(April, 2010), you may want to review it to understand what information the legislators will be considering. You can download the report at:

<http://www.nctq.org/publications/reports.jsp>

With the budget crunch, some issues that may be discussed include reviewing teacher pay for master's degrees and longevity.

There is also some concern about the lack of sub-scores on the composite test.

Items which were on the SBOE meeting in September included criminal history processes, CTE certificates, assignments rules and training of educator appraisers. You may review the agenda and view the archived video of SBOE meetings online. <http://www.texasadmin.com/tea.shtml>

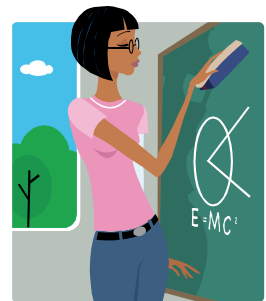
### MATH SPECIALISTS TASK FORCE UPDATE

#### MS Task Force Update

Recently, AMTE released *Standards for Elementary Mathematics Specialists: A Reference for Teacher Credentialing and Degree Programs* (see <http://www.amte.net/publications>). In response to this document, the leaders of AMTE-Tx organized a Task Force to study the current status of the Master Math Teacher for EC

-4, the current structure for certifying Elementary Mathematics Specialists in our state. The Task Force is working to align the Texas Master Math Teacher Standards for EC-4 with the AMTE EMS Standards to determine "gaps" or areas that might need to be strengthened. In addition, this group plans to communicate with TEA in regard to

the current status of the Master Math Teacher program. After gathering this information, the Task Force will organize a report to share with the membership in Spring, 2011. The Task Force members include Sandi Cooper, Lymeda Singleton, Trena Wilkerson, Barba Patton, Shea Culpepper, and Sandra Browning.



### NAME OUR NEWSLETTER

AMTE-Tx needs your help! We are embarking on a new phase in our organization and we do not have a name for our addition.

Just think of the honor it would be to submit the selected title of the AMTE-TX newsletter.

Deadline for submitting suggestions is December 1, 2010.

The Executive board will select three names from the submitted suggestions. Those three will be listed in the January newsletter. Members will be given an opportunity to select the winning title.

The person submitting the selected title will be recognized in the next newsletter and will also be recognized at CAMT in 2011 in Dallas.

"We need a name, be the one who submits the winning name"

**Certification of Middle School Mathematics Teachers in Texas**  
**Bill Jasper**  
**Sam Houston State University**

In Texas, the EC-4 grade level certification was recently eliminated, and this was replaced by the new EC-6 certification. Although this seems to help provide highly qualified teachers for grades 5 and 6 in accordance with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, in fact most teacher preparation programs did not add additional content area training (in mathematics, science, social studies, and reading/language arts) even though the grades 5 and 6 content is more demanding than at the EC-4 level. Perhaps this was mainly because degree plans were limited by the state in the total amount of college hours for a program. So, in reality, grade level certification was raised to sixth grade but the content levels were not raised in most programs, and new elementary teachers do not have sufficient content knowledge to teach the higher-level concepts in their content area. In our third mathematics course for EC-6 elementary teachers at SHSU, we added more algebraic reasoning to better prepare our teachers for grades 5 and 6.

With the advent of the EC-6 certification in Texas, unfortunately many existing 4-8 certification programs lost students, as there was a false perception that they would be more marketable with the EC-6 certification. In fact, some universities no longer offer some 4-8 programs due to low enrollment – this is what happened to the science 4-8 teacher preparation program at our university. We have been successful in recruiting prospective middle school mathematics teachers from the EC-6 elementary teacher pool, so our mathematics program is doing well. Without good recruiting and a viable middle school program, where will we find the future mathematics teachers for grades 7 and 8?

What do principals (especially in rural districts) do when they have to find someone to teach mathematics in these grades? Often they are forced to select the most qualified teacher and require (or at least encourage) her to take the certification test so that they can be “highly qualified.” Educators who prepare teachers frown on this approach, realizing that passing a test does not provide the deep content knowledge needed to teach mathematics. Yes, they can prepare lectures and pass out worksheets. But how can they create exciting, challenging lessons to engage students when they do not fully understand the mathematical concepts themselves?

To further complicate teacher certification planning, there are some proposals for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that Congress is considering that may lessen the requirements for highly qualified teachers in rural schools and provide for other changes.

When preparing grades 4-8 middle school teachers, we also need to consider the TExES certification tests that these prospective teachers must pass. In mathematics, they take the 4-8 Mathematics Test, the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Test, and a generalist test - which is a new requirement for teaching in grades 4, 5, and 6. For more information see <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/taa/stanprog012210a.html>

At SHSU, we will have our middle school teachers take the 4-8 PPR, as we feel that they will do better on this test compared to the EC-6 generalist test (less reading emphasis). Our mathematics 4-8 program does not prepare them well for the generalist test, and we are struggling with how to help these students do well on this test. The degree program already has more than 120 hours, so adding additional courses is not an option. In addition to these three tests, school districts want new teachers to have the English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement, so this is the fourth test they should take. Some advisors tell students to take their tests during student teaching; however this is much too late. If future teachers do not have all of their certification tests passed when they submit job applications (several months before they graduate), then they are not employable in many districts. This was especially true this past spring, when the teacher job market was very tight. Our students take their mathematics 4-8 test about 1 year before graduation.

Another issue that sometimes is encountered is the teaching of Algebra 1 at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. Several years ago, the state allowed mathematics teachers who were certified 4-8 to teach Algebra 1 at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level (not in high school). Some districts however are not aware of this and may force teachers to take the 8-12 certification test (which they are unlikely to pass with their mathematics background). Of course, because of the importance of Algebra 1, some districts go beyond the state requirements and require a secondary certified mathematics teacher to teach Algebra 1 at any level, and that is certainly their option.

*AMTE-TX wishes to thank Bill for kindly contributing this article.*

### **AMTE=TX Officers**

- President:** Colleen Eddy  
(University of North Texas) 2010-2012
- Past President Sandi Cooper**  
(Baylor) 2010-2011
- Secretary Sandra Browning**  
(University of Houston– Clear Lake) 2010-2012
- Treasurer Trena Wilkerson**  
(Baylor) 2008-2011
- Member at Large Suzanne Nesmith**  
(Baylor) 2008-2011
- Member at Large Beth Cory**  
(Sam Houston) 2009-2012
- Member at large Dusty Jones**  
(Sam Houston) 2010-2013
- Newsletter Editor– Barba Patton**  
University of Houston -Victoria

### **Notes from the Editor:**

Please submit any news you wish to be considered for the newsletter to Dr. Barba Patton, at [pattonb@uhv.edu](mailto:pattonb@uhv.edu)

Articles about exceptionally good lessons for pre-service teachers are welcome.

Let us know if you are promoted, have an article published or make a presentation. Let us share the good news.

Pictures are also welcomed. If you go to Levine, be sure to take your camera. These would be especially good to include as we are preparing Fort Worth in 2012.

Please try to submit your information by August 1, December 1, or April 1 for the newsletters.



## JOIN US

By joining AMTE-TX., you become a member of a unique group of educators, all interested in the Mathematics Teacher Education in the state of Texas.

*Dues: 1-year \$20; 3-year \$50; Full-time Student \$10*

Members will automatically be added to the AMTE-TX membership.

If you have any questions, please email Trena L. Wilkerson at [Trena\\_Wilkerson@baylor.edu](mailto:Trena_Wilkerson@baylor.edu). Please mail the **form** (found at <http://www.amte-tx.org/id2.html>) and a check made payable to AMTE-TX to the following address:

Dr. Trena L. Wilkerson, Treasurer

Department of Curriculum & Instruction

Baylor University

One Bear Place #97314

Waco, TX 76798

## WHAT OUR MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT AMTE-TX

There are many professional organizations and conferences available for mathematics educators to attend. The larger the conference or organization, the larger the scope of concerns and issues. There is a need for focus on broad as well as local issues. A state affiliate of a national organization can serve both, focusing on local issues and successes, but have access to a broader audience and serve large concerns through the parent organization. I am proud to be a member of both the Texas section and AMTE.

Elaine Young

Texas A&M Corpus Christi

Why join AMTE-Tx?

To support a small association for math educators (P-16) in TX.

To share, disseminate research in a friendly, supportive environment;  
Affordable annual fee;  
Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues from different universities

Dr. Sylvia R. Taube,

Sam Houston State

"As a new Visiting Assistant Professor, I joined AMTE-TX to network with other math educators and to stay current with research and policy developments in the math education arena."

Shea Culpepper

University of Houston

Poster presentations at CAMT

