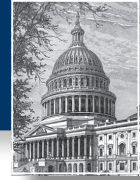




2009 NCTM Legislative Platform



National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

A strong K–12 mathematics education for all students is increasingly important to our nation’s economic stability, future national security, and workforce productivity. An economically competitive society recognizes the importance of mathematics learning to adult numeracy and financial literacy, and it depends on citizens who are mathematically literate. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) believes that teachers and what they do in the classroom are at the heart of making this vision a reality.

NCTM supports investing in teachers at every stage of their development and welcomes the additional emphasis that the new administration is placing on early childhood education and the growing interest in national standards. NCTM has identified the following legislative priorities for the 111th Congress and supports them in broader contexts.

Invest in teachers at every stage of their development to ensure the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers

- Invest in the preparation of mathematics teachers by supporting the development and expansion of exemplary programs for preservice teacher education.
- Support early-career teachers through mentoring programs, incentives, and ongoing long-term professional development.
- Invest in the preparation and ongoing support of middle and high school teachers of mathematics and math specialists or coaches and mathematics teacher leaders in elementary schools, as well as the development of the best strategies for attracting career changers for the skills these professionals bring to the classroom.
- Improve and increase professional development for all teachers by creating opportunities that focus on improving their knowledge of mathematical content, strengthening their skill in teaching mathematics, and deepening their understanding of how mathematics is learned.
- Support policies that offer tax credits for in-service teachers in urban, rural, and high-need schools and offer loan forgiveness for beginning teachers as a means of retaining and attracting effective teachers.

- Support “Math Skills for Secondary Students” in the America COMPETES Act, which would provide for the development or selection and implementation of the following research-based resources:
 - mathematics programs, including those for students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency
 - instructional materials
 - mathematics assessments
 - evaluation and assessment strategies
 - high-quality professional development for mathematics teachers and coaches.

Support greater focus and coherence in standards, curriculum, assessment, and accountability, grounded in research

- Increase efforts to make curriculum and assessment coherent and aligned with learning goals, ensuring that assessment data serve as meaningful guides for decision making about schools and programs.
- Support the growing call for constructive discussion of national standards or common instructional benchmarks for mathematics education as tools for addressing the inconsistent and often overwhelming lists of learning expectations in many state standards.
- Support curricula in prekindergarten through grade 12 that are organized to emphasize a well-defined set of the most critical topics and their connections to other mathematics in these grades.
- Emphasize the importance and value of assessments and accountability systems that base critical decisions about students and instruction on multiple measures rather than the results of any single summative test.
- Support curricula based on how children learn, especially the discoveries that (a) having a strong start gives children significant advantages (b) conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and problem-solving skills mutually reinforce one another, and (c) effort, not just inherent talent, counts in mathematical achievement.

Realize the untapped potential of all of America's children by ensuring equitable mathematics learning of the highest quality for all students

- Advocate for all children of poverty, English language learners, urban and rural students, students of all races and ethnicities, students with learning difficulties, students who are female, and students who are mathematically gifted as equal claimants to a mathematics education of the highest quality.
- Engage families to support the efforts of classroom teachers as well as the overall goals of public education, including expanded learning opportunities and resources.
- Advocate for the inclusion of mathematics educators on the proposed Presidential Early Learning Council.

Support expanded research in mathematics education

- Encourage research that brings together the educational research community, the mathematics community, and classroom-based mathematics education practitioners in producing research results and building on findings with immediate and long-term applications for teachers and students.
 - Support the development and identification of high-priority mathematics education research and foster the growth of a base of both descriptive and experimental findings that are methodologically sound and balanced.
 - Support an increased federal investment in more rigorous mathematics education research that can inform education policy and practice effectively.
 - Support the proposed “Invest in What Works” Initiative to double the investment in educational research and development in four years to expand much-needed research in mathematics education.
-

Increase funding for the Department of Education (ED) and National Science Foundation (NSF)

- NCTM strongly supports a doubling of the NSF budget over the next 10 years, with NSF education programs receiving budget increases that are at least commensurate with those of the overall NSF budget. This funding will support programs in the NSF's Directorate for Education and Human Resources that directly address several important issues:
 - The need to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers with strong knowledge of content and pedagogy in the STEM disciplines
 - The need to increase the number of students interested in and educated for careers in STEM fields as well as to educate a more scientifically literate citizenry
 - The need to educate all students in the use of mathematics as scientifically literate citizens.
- Maximize and leverage federal investments in research and teacher professional development across federal agencies, particularly at the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation, to inform and improve instructional practice.
- Support the NSF's competitive, peer reviewed Mathematics and Science Partnerships, designed to develop model reform initiatives that will improve teacher quality, create challenging curricula, and increase student achievement in mathematics and science.
- Support the Mathematics and Science Partnership program established by the Department of Education (ED) to improve students' academic achievement in mathematics and science by channeling funds directly to states through formula grants.
- Support adequate investments of resources in both the NSF and the ED Math and Science Partnership programs, which together afford important professional development and resources to pre-K–12 teachers in all 50 states, with the express purpose of serving the students, schools, and teachers who most need this support.
- Support the expansion of Mathematics and Science Partnerships to create more state-based STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) projects.

(Approved by the Board of Directors February 20, 2009)

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics is the world's largest professional organization dedicated to improving mathematics education for all students. The Council's *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics* provides guidelines for excellence in mathematics education. Its *Curriculum Focal Points for Prekindergarten through Grade 8 Mathematics: A Quest for Coherence* is the next step in implementing the Standards and identifies the most important mathematical topics for each grade level that form the foundation for understanding and lasting learning. The Council is committed to a constructive public dialogue to ensure a mathematics education of the highest possible quality for all students.

