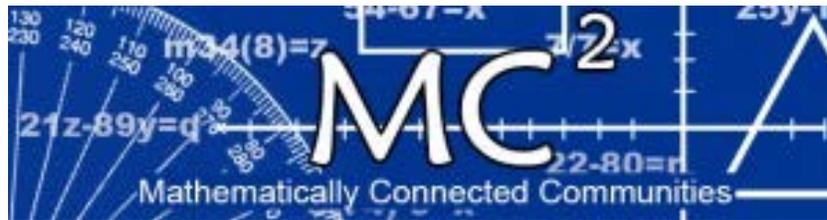


September 2015



eNewsletter

Volume 2 Issue 1

Mathematically Connected Communities (MC²) is happy to welcome you to the first in a year-long series of monthly eNewsletters for the 2015-2016 school year. Please Note: These are interactive newsletters intended to be viewed online in order to be able to access the embedded links to the multiple resources provided. Upcoming editions will be emailed to subscribers. Anyone not currently on our listserv may subscribe by emailing Sheila (sshills@nmsu.edu).

We would like to thank all those involved in the Summer 2015 MC² MathLab™, Leadership Academies, and Institute for making these events a success! A friendly reminder to this summer's MathLab™ participants: You should have received the postcard which you created in the mail, please check to see if you're on track with your goals.

This year's eNewsletters, along with a series of webinars, will serve as a follow-up to K-3 Plus and partner district teachers who attended the MC² summer professional development sessions. Those who did not attend can also benefit from these eNewsletters and webinars. The focus this year will be creating a standards-based learning environment (SBLE) including content, instruction, and assessment. The following SBLE pedagogical strategies for building productive student discourse were modeled and practiced during the Summer MathLab™, Leadership Academies, and Math Institute.

- Building classroom norms and routines
- Making learning targets clear and useful for students
- Engaging students in number talks



Upcoming Event

Our first webinar for this school year will be archived and posted on the MC² website during the week of October 19. The guidelines for SBLE implementation will be shared as reminders of important aspects of the SBLE classroom that support student learning and achievement in mathematics.

Why Focus on SBLE?

The classroom environment and discourse have a great impact on student learning – even greater than the role of mathematics activities or textbook resources. Great math discussions do not happen without purposeful planning by the teacher and classroom structures that promote productive discourse. Therefore, the establishment of a “Standards-Based Learning Environment” or SBLE is key.

In their study of the implementation of middle school curriculum, researchers (Tarr, Reys, Reys, and Chavez 2008)¹ found that student learning increased for all learners when the **classroom environment** fostered students

- making conjectures about mathematical ideas,
- explaining their mathematical reasoning and solution strategies, and
- valuing multiple perspectives and ways of knowing in daily practice.

Multiple other studies at all grade levels indicate the importance of fostering **student discussion** in the learning of mathematics. All students, particularly students of diverse backgrounds and language skills, benefit from purposeful discourse of students’ mathematical ideas (Turner, Dominguez, Maldonado, & Empson, 2013; Gutiérrez, 2009; Gutiérrez, 2013)².

Click [here](#) to download the MC² guidelines for establishing SBLE which serves as a reminder from MathLab™ and as a guide for creating a standards-based learning environment in your classroom. Your team may consider using sections of the guidelines to reflect on your implementation of an SBLE and consider strategies to increase student engagement in mathematics discussions.

¹Tarr, J.E., Reys, R.E., Reys, B.J. & Chávez, O. (2008). “The Impact of Middle-Grades Mathematics Curricula and the Classroom Learning Environment on Student Achievement.” *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 39, (3), 247-280.

²Gutiérrez, R. (2009). Framing equity: helping students “play the game” and “change the game.” *Teaching for Excellence and Equity in Mathematics*. 1(1), 4-8.

Gutiérrez, R. (2013). The sociopolitical turn in mathematics education. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 44 (1), 37-68.

Turner, E., Dominguez, H., Maldonado, L. & Empson, S. (2013). English Learners’ Participation in Mathematical Discussion: Shifting Positioning and Dynamic Identities. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 44 (1), 99-234.

For questions contact a [MC² Facilitator](#) or

Email [Sheila](#) or [Terri](#)

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