President's Corner

As another school year comes to a close, this is a wonderful time for reflecting about the past and looking to the future. For many years now, the focus of teaching and the focus of learning have been centered around the SOLs and improving student test scores on the Standards of Learning Tests. Our principals, our state, and our country have asked for standards of accountability and challenged us to "leave no child behind." The majority of our schools and our teachers have successfully met that challenge. In the past few years we have created a stronger curriculum at all grade levels, we have realized the importance of assessment in teaching and learning, and we have gotten involved in discussions about what mathematics education needs to look like. Communication among teachers, among schools, among school systems has never been stronger than it is today, and yet something is still missing.

Unlike other nations who educate only the smartest children beyond the 8th grade, we are blessed to live in a country that believes in all children and wants to provide every child with the opportunity to reach higher ground in education. The real problem comes in trying to find a successful way to do that for all children. It requires training, materials, and dedicated teachers who are willing to explore new ways to reach students. We need to move "beyond the SOLs," as Dr. Cannaday has expressed it, in order to provide students not only with a strong foundation in mathematics, but to provide them with an opportunity to be prepared for the future as members of a global society.

For mathematics education, this means that we need to help our students become problem solvers. We can look to the NCTM Standards for some help in achieving this goal. There are many resources provided by NCTM that can help provide teachers with ideas for teaching mathematics. In the state of Virginia, we now have courses being offered across the state for elementary and middle school teachers who want to become Math Specialists or simply want to learn how to become a better teacher. In the Richmond area, we are blessed to have the Mathematics & Science Center which provides us with instructors and lessons that incorporate problem solving and technology as well as interdisciplinary connections. GRCTM and VCTM can help too, but we can't do it without your help. Become actively involved in your local organization, the Greater Richmond Council of Teachers of Mathematics. You can make a difference and your opinion and your ideas matter to us. Contact any one of the officers or committee chairpersons and share your ideas or volunteer to help. Offer to speak or simply come and listen to others speak at the next conference in October. I challenge all of you to become active in the educational change that must happen if we are to keep up with the rest of the world.

Diane Leighty

A Unique Triad[1]

Prove that there is only one set of three distinct positive integers, having no common divisor greater than unity, such that each is a divisor of the sum of the other two. [Answer on p. 6]

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[1] Charles W. Trigg, *Mathematical Quickies*, Dover Publications, ©1967, 1985, #144, p. 41.