

The Journal of Mathematics and Science:

COLLABORATIVE EXPLORATIONS

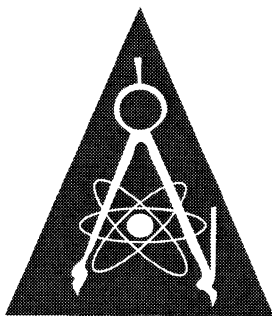
Volume 7 Fall 2004

PART I: SPECIAL ISSUE

Harrisonburg Conference, October 2003

Statewide Conference on the Preparation of Middle School
Science and Mathematics Teachers

PART II: REGULAR JOURNAL FEATURES



Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition

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Editor's Note

This special issue of *The Journal of Mathematics and Science: Collaborative Explorations* is devoted to the proceedings of the Harrisonburg Conference “Statewide Conference on the Preparation of Middle School Science and Mathematics Teachers” hosted by James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia October 24-25, 2003. The Conference was conducted by the Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition and the project “Preparing Future Middle School Mathematics and Science Teachers: An Opportunity for Virginia” supported by the United States Department of Education, Funds for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE) program.

The Conference was directed by Sharon Lovell, Associate Dean, College of Integrated Science and Technology at James Madison University. She also serves as coordinating editor of this special issue. Attendees of the Conference included 115 participants representing all FIPSE partner institutions, as well as a majority of Virginia institutions of higher education offering teacher preparation programs in mathematics and science.

The Conference was conducted to highlight activities of the FIPSE partner institutions over the past several years towards developing curricula and degree programs aimed at preparing many more middle school mathematics and science teachers. The FIPSE partners include Virginia Commonwealth University (lead institution), College of William and Mary, Longwood University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, Radford University, University of Mary Washington, Virginia Intermont University, Virginia Tech, and Virginia Union University.

The Conference focused on meeting Virginia's need for an extremely large increase in the number of middle school mathematics and science teachers. An update from the Virginia Department of Education was presented by Thomas Elliott, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Teacher Education and Licensure. Stephen Thornton, University of Virginia, linked past efforts with future initiatives. National trends were presented by Donna Sterling, George Mason University, while a proposed Virginia certification for K-8 Mathematics Specialists was presented by Vicki Inge, Stafford County Public Schools. A discussion of the PRAXIS II Middle School Teacher Assessments was held along with the process for standard setting and establishing qualifying scores.

Conference presentations focused on special curricula and degree programs offered at Virginia institutions for middle school mathematics and science teacher preparation, most of which were products of FIPSE partner initiatives. The program also addressed alternative licensure programs offered through the Virginia Community College System and other colleges and universities which provide pathways to middle school teaching roles for “career switchers.” The articles contained in this issue are among those selected from Conference presentations and peer reviewed by both Conference and *Journal* editors.

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