

HAMTE Crossroads

The Official Newsletter of the Hoosier Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators

Message from the President



Dear HAMTE Colleagues,

I write during what feels like a crucial time in mathematics education in our state. When I first became president, my biggest worry was the survival of smaller mathematics teacher education programs across the state. The precarious finances of many smaller institutions had me worried about a future filled with program cuts and over-burdened faculty. However, new legislation has shown that all programs, large and small, are not going to get by doing

business as usual. First, the legislature passed comprehensive legislation that defined and requires preservice elementary teachers use Science of Reading strategies. Furthermore, elementary preparation programs are prevented from presenting some competing strategies (see House Bill 1558). Second, the legislature has passed a bill that requires preservice elementary teachers to be equipped to teach mathematics topics "explicitly and systematically" (House Bill 1243). While the language in this latter bill is far vaguer than what is contained in the Science of Reading bill, it lays a foundation for the legislature to constrain our work.

As educators with decades upon decades of mathematics teaching and teacher preparation experiences, I'm sure we all feel a swift recoil to the idea of legislatures telling us how to do our jobs. Of course, this is certainly not the first-time politicians have tried to tell educators how to do their jobs. Some of us, myself included, had perhaps thought our work was immune from the concerns of politicians. Typically, teacher educators have more graduate degrees and work at institutions with more academic freedom, which puts us in a place of privilege. Our colleagues in literacy education have the same privilege but are dealing with strong interference from the state government. We must recognize the limitations of this privilege. In today's political climate, we cannot think it is enough to say, "Trust us, we are the experts." A distrust of experts is well-established in the current culture.

If HAMTE is going to make an impact on these issues, it will not be enough to simply say, "We as experts believe this is best." As distasteful as it may seem, we are going to have to play politics. This doesn't have to mean wading into an usversus-them mudslinging contest. What politicians want are political wins. Sometimes a win is advancing a bill despite strong opposition, but other times it is getting a bipartisan bill passed. Sometimes it is endorsements from vital constituents. We must be strategic if we are to be effective. I don't know what the best strategy is at this point, and I look forward to your support in guiding the HAMTE Board's statements and initiatives.

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To continue this work, we are going to need a strong HAMTE board. We have two important positions coming due for election (President Elect and Treasurer). If you want to be a part of this work, please consider self-nominating by sending me an email.

A Conversation between HAMTE President Andrew Hoffman and HAMTE Secretary Mike Steele

Below is a conversation between HAMTE President Andrew Hoffman and HAMTE Secretary Mike Steele, the latter of which was a co-author on the latest major publication from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM).

What is the title of the newest guidance document from NCTM and what was the primary impetus for its creation?

The title of the new guidance document is High School Mathematics Reimagined, Revitalized, and Relevant. (I call it HM3R, or Hammer, for short.) This document has an interesting origin story. Several years ago, an open letter was sent to ASSM [Association of State Supervisors of Mathematics], NCSM [National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics], and NCTM advocating for the need for better guidance about high school mathematics content and pedagogy. The three organizations then came together to form a writing team, set a mission for the document, and to write it. (Full disclosure, I was both a co-signer of the original letter and privileged to be asked to be on the writing team.) The goal of the document in its final form is to give clear, useful, and specific guidance for how we can and should structure students' high school mathematics learning experiences. The need here is great because high school has been far slower to change than any other grade band, with much of what we do in high school mathematics tracking back to policy documents that are over a century old.

That makes for an intriguing origin story and I think many HAMTE can resonate with the slow-to-change nature of high school mathematics teaching. Who is the intended audience for the book? Is it written to in-service teachers to read and enact in their classrooms while navigating existing structures? Or is it written to those who have the power to change those structures, e.g., administrators and policy makers?

The book is written very broadly to a wide range of audiences – teachers, coaches, mathematics specialists, district leaders, administrators, and teacher educators. In a way, it's a follow-up to Catalyzing Change in High School Mathematics – and that volume had important messages for all those constituencies. What NCTM hopes to do next is to create materials (both written and engagement opportunities) that will more specifically support those populations and more. For example, I have been really pressing for some dedicated materials for high school guidance counselors as they are often the first people that students have conversations with about their future goals and how to use high school coursework to make progress towards them.

You said that a goal was for the document to offer "specific guidance." Can you provide an illustrative example of what constitutes specific guidance?

Absolutely! With respect to content, the document identifies a set of five cross-cutting concepts that frame high school mathematics. The document provides illustrations of how these cross-cutting concepts manifest in the content of high school mathematics — both content we typically teach and revitalized content such as data science. Examples are provided of how to integrate mathematics modeling across the curriculum and use that idea as an organizing structure for high school mathematics. And the document and supporting materials give examples of how contemporary technology should be positioned and used as an everyday tool in high school mathematics. There are also district and state-level examples of how different jurisdictions have reorganized

their mathematics offerings that are available in the supporting materials online. https://www.nctm.org/hsreimagined/

I'm excited to see how we can use this resource to facilitate the important conversations that need to happen. Last question: Is there anything that you would want HAMTE members, in particular, to know about this resource? For those that teach secondary methods courses, what role do you imagine this book might play?

One of the biggest messages in the book is that we can't continue with business-as-usual in high school mathematics, as it's been failing kids across the achievement spectrum. So for our secondary methods courses, I think there are a number of things to consider. From a content and pedagogy perspective, we've got to think about how we prepare preservice teachers for a world that isn't just the AGA sequence that they likely experienced themselves as a learner. What does it look like to prepare preservice teachers to meaningfully integrate modeling work using high cognitive demand tasks every day in their classrooms? The cross-cutting concepts and the 11 mathematical and statistical processes should be pervasive in the work with teachers around both content and pedagogy. From a systemic perspective, the preservice teachers we work with today are the ones who will be supporting and leading change in the field tomorrow. So we need to help them understand the historical legacy of high school mathematics and why change is needed in both our classroom practice and in our district and state structures. I'm excited to introduce these sets of ideas to the next generation of Hoosier high school math teachers!

Upcoming Events

- **AMTE 2025**: February 6-8, 2025, Reno, Nevada.
 - o For more information visit: https://amte.net/content/2025-annual-amte-conference
- IMERS 2025: April 4, 2025, IUPUI School of Education, Indianapolis, Indiana
 - o For more information visit: https://hamte.org/imers-2/
- HAMTE/KAMTE Virtual Conference Spring 2025 TBD
- **AERA 2025:** April 23-27, 2025, Denver, Colorado.
 - For more information visit: https://www.aera.net/Events-Meetings/Annual-Meeting/2025-Annual-Meeting
- PME 48–2025 Conference: July 28-August 2, 2025, Santiago, Chile.
 - For more information visit: https://eventos.cmm.uchile.cl/pme48/
- NCTM Annual Meeting 2025 Conference: October 15-18, 2025, Atlanta, Georgia
- PME-NA 46 2025 Conference: October 26-29, 2025, Penn State College of Education
 - More information coming soon!

Addressing Issues of Equity in Mathematics Education Courses for Prospective Elementary Teachers

Jonathan D. Watkins

Mathematics teacher educators (MTEs) are charged with exploring issues of equity with their prospective teachers. Equity in mathematics education "rests on beliefs and practices that empower all students to participate meaningfully in learning mathematics and to achieve outcomes in mathematics that are not predicted by or correlated with student characteristics" (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2014, p. 60). Through class discussions, activities, and assignments, MTEs should help their students consider the various aspects/ dimensions of equity and how they might address issues of equity in their future classrooms.

However, it is equally important for MTEs to attend to equity-related issues in their **own** courses and teaching. In this article, I will discuss how a group of MTEs at one institution redesigned their mathematics content and pedagogy courses for prospective elementary teachers with careful attention to issues of equity and equitable teaching. The discussion will be framed by Gutiérrez's (2009, 2012) four dimensions of equity in mathematics education—access, achievement, identity, and power—and connections to Aguirre and colleagues' (2024) five equity-based mathematics teaching practices will be highlighted.

Elementary Mathematics Content and Pedagogy Sequence: Before and After

Prior to the 2021-22 academic year, prospective elementary teachers at our institution were required to take a two-course elementary mathematics content sequence followed by a mathematics methods course. (Before starting this math education sequence, some students were required to take a prerequisite intermediate algebra course.) There was a common "primary syllabus" for each of these courses, but instructors had the freedom to select their own course readings and class activities and to design their own assessments. Given the major differences across courses and within sections of the same course, prospective elementary teachers' experiences in our math education sequence varied immensely. This made it challenging for students who were less confident in

their mathematics ability to make important mathematical connections across the courses in our math education sequence.

Starting in AY 2021-22, we moved to a four-course math sequence for elementary majors (three content courses followed by a methods course) and removed the intermediate algebra prerequisite for the first content course. We also redesigned each of the courses in our elementary math sequence to increase consistency across sections and vertical alignment across courses, to focus more on children's thinking about mathematics, and to address issues of equity. Groups of MTEs at our institution collaborated to develop new primary syllabi (which included updated student learning goals and objectives) for the redesigned courses, to select common textbooks/readings for each course, to select common class activities, and to develop common assessments. Ultimately, we wanted to provide all prospective elementary teachers with a consistent and equitable experience throughout our math education sequence.

Addressing Issues of Access

Access in mathematics education involves ensuring that all students have the necessary resources and support to fully participate in mathematics (Gutiérrez, 2009, 2012), and it begins with students having access to the mathematics courses they need to be successful. Prior to AY 2021-22, many prospective elementary teachers at our institution were required to pass an intermediate algebra course (that was not particularly helpful or relevant for elementary majors) before beginning our elementary math sequence. Unfortunately, this course served as a barrier that delayed or prevented many students from taking the math education courses required for their program. So, when we redesigned our course sequence, we removed this prerequisite from our first content course to ensure that all prospective elementary teachers could immediately begin the mathematics coursework

required for their program.

We also transitioned from a two-course to a three-course math content sequence, which has provided students with more opportunities to learn the content an important aspect of access (Gutiérrez, 2009) because there is more time to explore foundational elementary math concepts. For example, our first content course only focuses on the following core concepts: counting, place value, base ten and other bases, and operations with whole numbers. Previously, the first content course also included content related to fractions, operations with fractions, and algebra. Our focus on fewer topics—but in more depth—is directly related to the equity-based teaching practice of going deep with mathematics (Aguirre et al., 2024). Helping prospective elementary teachers develop understandings of the mathematics they are going to teach is a major goal of our redesigned content sequence.

Outside of the classroom, we have attempted to support our students by ensuring that all sections of our courses are taught by experts in mathematics education. More specifically, all of our math education courses are taught by instructors in the Department of Mathematical Sciences who have experience as K-12 mathematics teachers and at least a Master's degree in mathematics education or a closely-related field. (Graduate assistants do not teach any of these courses.)

Additionally, we have partnered with our learning center to provide instructional support in the form of Supplemental Instruction (SI) sessions for our first content course. In the SI model, a former student who was successful in the course serves as an SI leader, holding weekly study and review sessions for current students in the course. In short, prospective teachers have a variety of support options available to them, including SI sessions, traditional tutoring, and instructor office hours.

Addressing Issues of Identity

In addition to access, another important dimension of equity is identity (Gutiérrez, 2009, 2012). A student's mathematics identity can be defined "as the dispositions and deeply held beliefs that students develop about their ability to participate and perform effectively in mathematical contexts and to use mathematics in powerful ways across the contexts of their lives" (Aguirre et al., 2024, p. 14).

Throughout our redesign process, we carefully

considered how we could affirm our students' mathematics identities in our content and methods courses (Aguirre et al., 2024). As a result, we have added many new assignments to these courses that address various components of identity, including writing assignments that ask students to reflect on their previous experiences with mathematics in the form of a mathematics autobiography and to articulate both short-term goals and a long-term vision for their mathematics learning in our content and pedagogy sequence and beyond. In our content sequence, we also attend to identity by allowing students to explore a wide variety of reasoning strategies and to use algorithms and strategies that make sense to them. In other words, we leverage the multiple mathematical competencies of our students, allowing them to showcase their varying mathematical strengths (Aguirre et al., 2024). We also explore nontraditional algorithms including transitional algorithms (such as the partial-products method for multiplication) that promote conceptual understandings of standard algorithms, as well as algorithms that are commonly used by students in other countries (such as the equaladditions method of subtraction and the lattice method of multiplication).

Addressing Issues of Power

The power dimension of equity is multifaceted and includes empowering students and giving them voice in the classroom (Gutiérrez, 2009, 2012). We have attempted to shift the balance of power in our content courses by transitioning to a more studentcentered teaching approach in our courses. There is minimal lecturing in our redesigned content courses; instead, our students generally explore two to three class activities (e.g., problem-solving tasks) in small groups and then share their findings with their classmates in a whole-class discussion facilitated by the course instructor. These activities generally challenge students to explore the whys behind mathematical procedures (to help them develop conceptual understandings) or to analyze children's thinking about mathematics.

In our redesigned mathematics methods course, prospective teachers are empowered to develop their own mathematics activities (e.g., number talks) and units of instruction (with the guidance of a mentor teacher and their course instructor) and then implement their activities and lessons with students in

Call for Nominations for the 2025 Terry L. Wood Mathematics Teacher Educator Award

If you have any nominations for the board to consider, please send them to ajhoffman@huntington.edu. If you previously nominated someone and they did not receive the award, then they will be automatically considered in future deliberations. If you would like to make an addendum to a previous nomination, please use the same email address. Note the award may or may not be given out each year. Any nominations should address at least two of the following three criteria:

- a. significant contributions to the preparation and/or professional development of mathematics teachers in Indiana.
- b. significantly impacted the teaching of mathematics and/or preparation of mathematics teachers.
- c. served the mathematics education community through leadership in state, national, and/or international organizations.

elementary classrooms. These experiences are possible due to newly-formed immersive learning partnerships with local elementary schools. These partnerships have shifted the balance of power in our methods course, as prospective teachers are now learning from not only the course instructor but also practicing elementary teachers (who serve as mentor teachers) and the elementary students in their classrooms. In summary, our redesigned courses help us challenge spaces of marginality by deemphasizing traditional practices (e.g., lecture and individual seatwork) and emphasizing practices that embrace student competencies and value their mathematical contributions (Aguirre et al., 2024).

Addressing Issues of Achievement

The last dimension of equity that we will discuss is achievement, which is directly related to student outcomes in mathematics (Gutiérrez, 2009, 2012). When we redesigned our content sequence, we carefully and thoughtfully reconsidered our grading practices and chose to reduce the number of high-stakes assessments in our courses. Prior to redesign, about 75-80% of our students' grades in the content sequence were based on high-stakes assessments (e.g., exams). Now, half of our students' grades are based on high-stakes assessments, and the other half is determined by low-stakes assessments, including writing assignments, projects (in some courses), homework, short quizzes, and participation credit. Additionally, students have opportunities to revise and resubmit some assignments to support their learning.

So, how are prospective teachers performing in our redesigned content sequence? In short, the DFW rates (i.e., the percentage of students earning a grade of D, F, or W) in our content courses have fallen dramatically. In particular, prior to our redesign, the average DFW rates in our content courses were about 25-35% each semester. In comparison, the average DFW rates for our content courses for Fall 2022 (after redesign) were between 3.3-15.7%. These results clearly show that most of our prospective teachers are experiencing more success in our redesigned content sequence.

Next Steps

Despite the success of our redesign, we are not finished. The MTEs who teach content and methods courses in our elementary math sequence meet regularly (often weekly) to discuss how they will address course content; any changes they wish to make to class activities, content, course schedules, etc.; and how they can better attend to issues of equity. For example, the MTEs who teach our methods course have been considering the role of power in the classroom and exploring what equitable and diverse participation can look for the prospective students in the methods course as well as how the prospective teachers think about participation for their elementary students. Ultimately, our goal is to provide prospective

teachers with a cohesive and comprehensive mathematics education that is equitable and infused with equity-based teaching practices. We're not there yet, but we think we're headed in the right direction.

References

Aguirre, J., Mayfield-Ingram, K., & Martin, D. B. (2024). *The impact of identity in K-12 mathematics: Rethinking equity-based practices.* NCTM.

Gutiérrez, R. (2009). Framing equity: Helping students "play the game" and "change the game." *Teaching for Excellence and Equity in Mathematics*, *I*(1), 4-8.

Gutiérrez, R. (2012). Context matters: How should we conceptualize equity in mathematics education? In B. Herbel-Eisenmann, J. Choppin, D. Wagner, & D. Pimm (Eds.), *Equity in discourse for mathematics education: Theories, practices, and policies* (pp. 17-33). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-2813-4 2

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (2014). Principles to actions: Ensuring mathematical success for all.



The Author

Dr. Jonathan D. Watkins (jdwatkins@bsu.edu) is an assistant professor of mathematics education at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. His research interests have been shaped by his experience as a secondary and postsecondary mathematics teacher and include equitable teaching practices and strategies in mathematics, educational technology/courseware in mathematics, and mathematical knowledge for teaching.

IMERS 2025 Call for Proposals

The Indiana Mathematics Education Research Symposium (IMERS) 2025 will take place on Friday, April 4th, 2025, at the IU Indianapolis Campus. This year's theme is "Technology in Mathematics Education," spotlighting the latest research, tools, and strategies for integrating technology into mathematics teaching and learning.

IMERS is a graduate student-organized conference, providing a unique platform for graduate students and early-career faculty to share their research, explore new ideas, and network with colleagues across Indiana.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Jennifer Lovett, Associate Professor of Mathematics Education at Middle Tennessee State University, will be our keynote speaker. Dr. Lovett, co-author of Exploring Math with Technology: Practices for Secondary Math Teachers, will bring her insights on technology's pivotal role in mathematics education to our audience. In addition to the keynote, the 2025 symposium will feature two engaging panel discussions:

Panel 1: Disseminating Research in Mathematics Education

Panel 2: Integrating Equity in Mathematics Education

Important Dates:

Call for Proposals Opens: November 15, 2024 Submission Due Date: February 1, 2025

All proposals will undergo a two-review process to ensure they align with the symposium's theme and standards. For more details review the Call for Proposals. If you have questions, feel free to reach out to us at contact.imers@gmail.com.

Technology Tips: Using GeoGebra to Represent and Model the Hidden Treasure Problem

José N. Contreras

Dynamic Geometry Software in general, and GeoGebra (GG) in particular, facilitates representing and modeling a variety of problems. In this short note, I describe briefly we can use GG to represent and model a classic problem: The Hidden Treasure Problem. A version of this problem follows:

An adventurous young man found a map showing the location of buried treasure on a remote deserted island. The directions were as follows:

On the island, there are an oak tree, a pine tree, and an old gallows. Start at the gallows and walk to the oak tree, counting the steps. At the oak tree, turn right 90° and take the same number of steps and put a spike in the ground. Return to the gallows and walk to the pine tree counting the steps. At the pine tree take a 90° turn to the left and walk the same number of steps. Place a second spike at this point. Behold! The treasure is halfway between the two spikes.

The young man and his friends embarked on an expedition to the island where they found the trees, but, to their dismay, the gallows had disappeared without leaving any trace. Desperate, the men dug randomly without any luck. They returned home heartbroken without the treasure. The task is to devise a plan, if possible, to find the treasure without knowing the original location of the gallows (Contreras, 2014).

As first step, we can use GG to representation of the Hidden Treasure Problem (Figure 1).

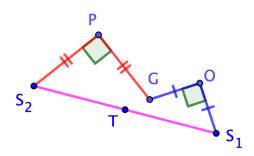


Figure 1

As second step, we drag the point representing the gallows, point G, to find out whether there is a relationship between the position of the gallows (point G) and the position of the treasure (point T). GG then reveals a surprising conjecture: The position of the treasure is independent of the position of the gallows (Figure 2). In other words, we can start at any point in the island, label the point G, and follow the directions. Behold! We have found the treasure.

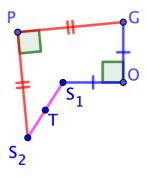


Figure 2

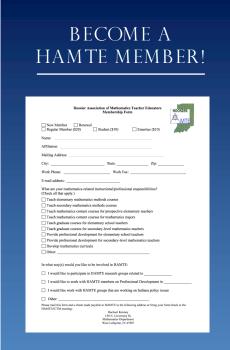
As third step, we develop a proof to justify mathematically our conjecture. For a proof involving analytic geometry and for further discussion of the role of GG to represent and model this beautiful problem, see Contreras (2014).

Reference

Contreras, J. N. (2014). Where is the treasure? Ask interactive geometry software! *Journal of Mathematics Education at Teachers College*, 5(1), 35-40.

Connect with HAMTE!

- http://hamte.org/ and purchase or renew your membership through the website (PayPal). There is a form to submit only if you are a new member or need to change your information. Memberships (new or renewals) are purchased in \$10-increments (which buys 6 months or 1 year each, depending on your status). You can change the quantity to buy by clicking in the box and then the arrows. Do this before clicking on the icon for the payment method you wish to use. The money will go to a HAMTE PayPal account, which the treasurer can then transfer to the HAMTE bank account. If you have questions, please contact Barbara Johnson, bj37@iu.edu.
- Join a Working Group/ Advocacy Group or suggest a new topic to connect and collaborate with others across the state to address crucial issues in the field of mathematics education!
 - o IMERS
 - Teacher Recruitment & Retention (Jean Lee, jslee@uindy.edu)
 - o Legislative Agenda (Erik Tillema, etillema@iu.edu)
- Writing Circles HAMTE is pleased to announce the facilitation of writing circles for its members. If you would like accountability and feedback from your mathematics educator peers from across the state, please consider joining a writing circle. The circles will meet virtually approximately once a month. If you are interested, please write to ajhoffman@huntington.edu, indicating any preferences in terms of research areas, peer experiences, or duration of circle.
- Submit an article and/or teaching methods or ideas to the newsletter, HAMTE Crossroads. Email your submission or questions to José Contreras, Newsletter Editor, at <u>incontrerasf@bsu.edu</u>. We publish Fall and Spring editions.



Become a new member or renew your existing HAMTE membership at

hamte.org

Membership Cost:

Regular Member: \$20 Student, Emeritus Faculty: \$10

You can also pay by cash or check at the annual HAMTE business meeting.

Other Topics of Potential Interest to HAMTE Members

Check the following books published recently

Aguirre, J., Mayfield-Ingram, K. & Martin, D. (2024). *Impact of Identity in K–12 Mathematics: Rethinking Equity-Based Practices, Expanded Edition*. Reston, VA: NCTM.

Dykema, K. et al. (2024). *High School Mathematics Reimagined, Revitalized*, and Relevant. Reston, VA: NCTM.

McCoy, A. C., Barnett, J., & Combs, E. (2024). High-Yield Routines (2nd Ed). Reston, VA: NCTM.

McCulloch, A. W. & Lovett, J. N. (2024). *Exploring Math with Technology: Practices for Secondary Math Teachers* (1st edition). New York, NY: Routledge.

Nicol, C., Knijnik, G., Peng, A., Cherinda, M., Bose, A. (2024). *Ethnomathematics and Mathematics Education*. Switzerland: Springer Nature.

Skovsmose, O. (2024). Critical Philosophy of Mathematics. Switzerland: Springer Nature.

Pepin, B., Gueudet, G. & Choppin, J. (Eds.). (2024). *Handbook of Digital Resources in Mathematics Education*. Switzerland: Springer Nature.

Steele, M. D. & Honey, J. (2024). *Transform Your Math Class Using Asset-Based Teaching for Grades 6-12*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

ICTM CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS!

The Indiana Mathematics Teacher is the official journal of the Indiana Council of Teachers of Mathematics (ICTM) and <u>received the 2021 Publication Award for outstanding journal</u>. It is published twice a year and is distributed by mail to all current members. The journal provides ideas and information for mathematics teachers at all levels of the curriculum (PreK-16). The editors invite submissions from new and experienced authors and accept articles on a range of topics including innovative classroom activities and lessons, practical applications of pedagogical research and theory, thoughtful reflections on challenges faced in the mathematics classroom, strategies and stories of mathematics coaching and teacher leadership, and any other topics that support the professional learning of ICTM members. We especially encourage collaborations between PreK-12 teachers and higher education faculty. Indiana residents whose feature articles appear in the Indiana Mathematics Teacher will be granted free membership to ICTM for one year.

Deadlines for Winter/Spring issue:

- •Feature articles should be submitted by January 1
- •Departmental manuscripts should be submitted by February 1

Deadlines for Summer/Fall issue:

- •Feature articles should be submitted by July 1
- •Departmental manuscripts should be submitted by August 1

Visit the ICTM (http://ictm.onefireplace.org/page-819122) and/or contact editors **Mark Creager**(macreager@usi.edu) and **Andrew Gatza** (amgatza@bsu.edu) for more information.



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