



Britannica and The Math Forum @ Drexel to Provide Professional Development for Math in Context

Teachers will get training, resources, network for grades 6-8 curriculum

CHICAGO, April 23, 2009—Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. and The Math Forum @ Drexel University will collaborate to provide teacher training for the Mathematics in Context (MiC) middle-school curriculum beginning this fall.

The two organizations said they'll combine their resources to produce a rich package of six-week online courses for teachers using the Britannica-published MiC program. Courses not only will provide instruction on how best to use the curriculum but also introduce teachers to a network of colleagues using the same program and give them a wealth of digital resources to help them in their teaching and careers.

The facilitator-led courses, which will allow enrollees to go online to study and complete assignments at their convenience, will focus on strategies to solve problems selected from Mathematics in Context and real work done by students using the program. Teachers will submit their students' work online, examine it and discuss it with the facilitator and colleagues and evaluate student learning. Developed on the foundation of The Math Forum's extensive experience working with students and educators, the courses will help teachers develop their students' problem-solving strategies and gain confidence at all levels in solving interesting problems.

"Mathematics in Context emphasizes the dynamic nature of mathematics," said Trina Williams, director of mathematics with Encyclopaedia Britannica. "It recognizes that there are multiple paths to correct solutions and gives students latitude in finding strategies that work for them. Given that, it's valuable for teachers to look at the actual work students do and have a chance to discuss it with other teachers. That's what we'll concentrate on in the courses."

"We are pleased to be able to work with Encyclopaedia Britannica on this program as part of our mission of helping to address the challenges facing math educators," indicated Steve Weimar, Director of The Math Forum. "Specifically, this program will leverage the success the Math Forum has had in helping teachers get reluctant students, as well as mathematically talented ones, to engage in mathematical thinking and communication."

A sequence of four courses will be offered during the school year for each grade covered by the MiC curriculum, and a certain number of courses will be provided to customers as a part of Britannica's teacher-support package. Teachers enrolled will automatically be subscribed to the award-winning Britannica Online School Edition, and they'll have access to Math Forum's network and extensive online resources. They'll also earn continuing-education credits from Drexel University.

Mathematics in Context, which is used widely in schools throughout the U.S., was developed by the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Freudenthal Institute at the University of Utrecht, The Netherlands. It's a standards-based curriculum whose initial development was funded in part by the National Science Foundation. Connections are a key feature of the program—connections among topics, to other disciplines, and between mathematics and the real world.

Interested schools or school districts can call 800-621-3900 or go to <http://info.eb.com>.

About Encyclopaedia Britannica

Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. is a leader in reference and education publishing whose encyclopedias and other products can be found in many media, from the Internet to cell phones to books. A pioneer in electronic publishing since the early 1980s, the company also still publishes the 32-volume Encyclopaedia Britannica, along with services such as Britannica Online School Edition and new printed products such as Britannica Illustrated Science Library. The company makes its headquarters in Chicago.

About The Math Forum @ Drexel

The Math Forum (<http://mathforum.org/>) is an award-winning, leading center for mathematics and mathematics education on the Internet. Operating as part of Drexel's School of Education, its mission is to provide professional development services, resources, materials, activities, person-to-person interactions, and other educational products and services that enrich and support teaching and learning, including the development of problem solving and critical thinking skills, in an increasingly technological world. The Forum's online community includes teachers, students, researchers, parents, educators, and citizens at all levels who have an interest in math and math education.

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