

**A Position of the Florida Council of Teachers of Mathematics (FCTM):
Commitment to Promote Equitable Educational Opportunities
for All Students in Mathematics**

As an organization, FCTM’s motivation to support education exists because we love math, students, and teachers. We advocate for students having access to teaching and learning that fosters a love and appreciation for mathematics and how it connects to themselves and the world around them (FCTM, 2018). Our organization’s purpose includes these **actionable steps**:

- To promote the improvement of Florida's mathematics instructional programs
- To promote cooperation and communication among the teachers of mathematics in Florida
- To promote instructional practices that eliminate deficit views of mathematics learning, eradicate mathematics as a gatekeeper, incorporate culturally responsive pedagogy, and teach mathematics for social justice
- To provide direction and feedback to policymakers regarding mathematics issues and initiatives
- To affiliate with national organizations when such affiliation seems beneficial to teaching mathematics

Florida State Statute (Section 4), SS 1000.05, states that:

Public schools and Florida College System institutions shall develop and implement methods and strategies to increase the participation of students of a particular race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or marital status in programs and courses in which students of that particular race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or marital status have been traditionally underrepresented, including, but not limited to, mathematics, science, computer technology, electronics, communications technology, engineering, and career education.

In agreement, FCTM advocates for students to have access to engaging mathematics teaching and learning that reflects the diversity of Florida’s learners (FCTM, 2018).

Indicator 19-G of the Math Textbook adoption rubric states that “the portrayal of gender, ethnicity, age, work situations, cultural, religious, physical, and various social groups are fair and unbiased”, should be included in materials provided for instruction. In agreement, FCTM advocates that there should be multicultural representation in the curriculum. Hence, to attend to the diversity of students, we support the framework of Dr. Ladson-Billings (1995), who defined **culturally relevant pedagogy (culturally relevant teaching)** as:

a theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate (p. 469).

In efforts to support math teachers in providing equity and access for all learners, we desire to connect math to all students and teachers through bridging the achievement gap. Further, we strive to support families and students in a collaborative effort through ongoing resources and opportunities for engagement. During the transition to new mathematics standards we will continue to provide necessary supports to our members.

In alignment with the newly adopted B.E.S.T. Standards for Mathematical Thinking and Reasoning Standards, specifically MTR 1.1 which requires students to “Actively participate in effortful learning both individually and collectively,” FCTM will continue to support teachers to “cultivate a community of growth mindset learners and foster perseverance in students by choosing tasks that are challenging.” Teachers are encouraged to identify and use appropriate strategies to address achievement and opportunity gaps.

As stated earlier, we advocate for students having access to teaching and learning that fosters a love and appreciation for mathematics and how it connects to themselves and the world around them (FCTM, 2018). One of the ways that mathematics can connect to students' world is through exploring issues related to one's sense of belonging in the classroom and within society. Hence, mathematics should be used as a tool to empower students to understand their world better, form informed opinions, and enact change in society.

We advocate for students to have access to necessary supports to thrive within rigorous, adaptive learning experiences (FCTM, 2018). This means that students should be afforded opportunities to engage in mathematical discourse, problem-solving, reasoning, sense-making, proving, and other strategies that move beyond the lowest levels of cognitive complexity that includes memorization and procedures. As we move in this direction, we remain in alignment with the **MTR's**, which are:

- 1.1 Actively participate effortful learning, both individually and collectively
- 2.1 Demonstrate understanding by representing problems in multiple ways
- 3.1 Complete tasks with mathematical fluency
- 4.1- Engage in discussions that reflect on the mathematical thinking of self and others
- 5.1 Use patterns and structure to help understand and connect mathematical concepts
- 6.1 Assess the reasonableness of solutions
- 7.1 Apply mathematics to real-world contexts

To conclude, the Florida Council of Teachers of Mathematics **proposes** that various factors impact decisions about the curriculum enactment process (Remillard & Heck, 2014). We encourage teachers to ultimately make decisions about the curriculum enactment process that promotes and supports all students achieving success in mathematics. When making such decisions, teachers are encouraged to consider learners' diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences to promote equitable learning outcomes and the development of robust and positive mathematical identities. Teachers are encouraged to reflect upon and implement research-based findings and scholarly recommendations to promote mathematical practices that support the needs of all learners.

References

Florida Council of Teachers of Mathematics (2018). *FCTMs access and equity position statement*. <https://fctm.net/access-and-equity/>

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