

PREFACE

While the mathematics education community has long recognized that surface-level metrics—such as quiet compliance, fast procedural recall, or providing correct answers—are inadequate measures of deep mathematical understanding, mathematics educators frequently default to these superficial indicators in the classroom. As Kilpatrick et al. (2001) established in the foundational volume, *Adding It Up*, mathematical proficiency demands not only conceptual understanding and procedural fluency, but also a *productive disposition*, which refers to the inclination to view mathematics as sensible, useful, and worthwhile and to believe in one's own mathematical efficacy. The Spring 2026 issue of the *Journal of Mathematics Education at Teachers College* brings together three contributions that explore how educators can foster this holistic proficiency by expanding inclusive participation, navigating structural course constraints, and repairing damaged student-mathematics relationships.

Recognizing students' thinking requires classrooms in which all learners have meaningful opportunities to demonstrate it. The research article, by Puotier and Obeng, presents a systematic literature review of inclusive practices and academic achievement in mathematics and English Language of students with disabilities. Their review identifies differentiated instruction, assistive technology, collaborative learning, flexible assessment, and physical manipulatives as critical supports for equitable participation. The authors demonstrate that inclusion is not simply a matter of classroom placement; rather, it depends on intentional instructional and institutional conditions that allow students to engage deeply with mathematical concepts.

In this issue's notes from the field, Mei and Schwartz provide an insightful comparison of secondary and undergraduate precalculus teaching in New York City. Through two reflective accounts, the authors show how educators across these distinct settings confront related systemic pressures: limited time, rigid curricular demands, high-stakes examinations, varied student preparation, and the ongoing challenge of sustaining exploratory learning. Their article suggests that secondary and postsecondary mathematics education need not operate as separate worlds; instead, sustained dialogue across these levels can help educators exchange pedagogical practices, reconsider assumptions about student readiness, and better support students' transitions into advanced mathematics.

The issue concludes with Kankam's reflective commentary, "What Have We Done to People in the Name of Math?" Grounded in a conversation with a former student, Kankam asks readers to confront the ways school mathematics can leave individuals with lasting feelings of fear, shame, alienation, and the belief that they are fundamentally not 'math people'. Rather than treating these responses as individual deficits, he frames them as the direct consequences of educational environments that have historically prioritized speed and compliance over genuine

sense-making. His call for mathematical repair challenges educators to rebuild students' relationships with the discipline through student agency, multiple representations, real-world inquiry, and opportunities to understand mathematics as a deeply human practice.

Daria Chudnovsky
Samantha Moroney

Guest Editors

References

Kilpatrick, J., Swafford, J., & Findell, B. (2001). *Adding it up: Helping children learn mathematics*. National Academy Press.