Table of Contents

Preface v

Acknowledgments vi

Fundamental Ideas for High-Quality Mathematics Education vii

Introduction 1
Snapshot of How Students Are Performing in Mathematics 1
Purpose of This Guide 2

What It Means to Be Mathematically Literate 3

Examples of High-Quality Mathematics Classrooms 3
Elementary School Classroom Example 3
Middle School Classroom Example 5
High School Classroom Example 6
Elements of These Classrooms 9

The Six NCTM Principles: The Foundation of a High-Quality Mathematics Program 10
Equity 12
Curriculum 12
Teaching 13
Learning 14
Assessment 15
Technology 17

Putting the NCTM Principles into Action in Your School 17
Actions Administrators Can Take to Support the Six NCTM Principles 17
Observing and Evaluating a Mathematics Classroom 21

Developing and Supporting Professional Development 22
Elements of Effective Professional Development Programs 22
Knowledge Needed by Mathematics Teachers 23
Regular Teacher Collaboration—Building a Professional Learning Community 23
School Leadership That Supports Teachers' Professional Growth 23
Supporting New Teachers 24

Identifying Instructional Materials 24
Who Should Be Involved in Identifying Instructional Materials? 24
How Do You Analyze Instructional Materials? 24

Communicating with Families 25
Why Is Family Involvement Important? 25
What Information and Resources Should Be Communicated to Families? 25
Ways to Communicate with Families 26
The NCTM Figure This! Program 26

Communicating with Others in the School System and Community 26

Conclusion 27

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions 28
Are the traditional basics still important? 28
What mathematics beyond the traditional basics should all students learn? 28
How should students be grouped? 28
What is the role of practice or drill in instruction? 28
What are the appropriate uses of manipulatives in the mathematics classroom? 28
Will calculators and other technology hurt students' computational skills? 29
When should students master their basic computational facts? 29
How should students learn their basic single-digit facts? 29
Should elementary schools use mathematics specialists? 29
What does algebra really entail in the elementary school? 30
What about algebra in the eighth grade? 31
Do all students need four years of high school mathematics? 31
How do I address those who may hold different views on teaching mathematics? 31

Resources from NCTM 32

Other Resources 33

Table of NCTM Standards and Expectations 33

References 46