

Everyone Belongs Here

Uplifting, Valuing, and Belonging in Mathematics is rooted in knowing each student brings a unique fund of knowledge to the mathematics classroom, representative of their authentic experiences of family, community, and culture. Instead of embracing and celebrating the differences in each child, too often others group, track, isolate, and underestimate children's brilliance, using their distinct characteristics as an impetus and thus negatively affecting their sense of value and belonging in the mathematics classroom. This conference theme speaks to using instructional practices that create safe learning spaces where students' voices, thoughts, and ideas are heard; their math identities thrive; and they are secure in knowing they matter, they are valued, and they belong.

Fostering Belonging and Value for All Students through Instructional Practices and Systemic Initiatives

We must all challenge the practices and structures that deny access and perpetuate separation. In this strand, we will focus on instructional practices and structures/systems that are inclusive, diverse, and equitable. Through culturally rich and diverse mathematical experiences, each and every student can learn from and contribute to the mathematics community. What is possible when we ground our instructional and systemic practices in honoring the whole student? What do we all stand to gain from situating our decision-making, instruction, and student learning in the values, norms, knowledge, beliefs, practices, experiences, and language that are the foundation to students' cultural identity? Sessions in this strand might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Practices that promote and foster diversity, inclusion, and/or equity in order to invite every student into mathematics while cultivating strong mathematical agency, authentic belonging, and joy
- Strategies for fostering belonging in the classroom and school
- Ideas for authentically conveying that every child brings value into the classroom, school, and community.

Valuing Students' Authentic Funds of Knowledge to Enhance Deep Mathematical Learning and Belonging

This strand will focus on instructional practices that value and use students' prior mathematical, personal, and cultural experiences to enhance deep mathematical learning, as well as practices and routines that provide opportunities to help students see the function of mathematics in their everyday lives. Instructional routines can uplift students' classroom experiences, promote their sense of belonging, and value their unique lived experiences. What methods can foster students' growth and confidence in math? What types of strategies, routines, and tasks can be used to promote meaningful student mathematical discourse, elicit student thinking, and provide opportunities for students to engage in the Standards for Mathematical Practice? Sessions in this strand will provide participants with strategies to deepen students' mathematics knowledge by promoting active engagement through mathematics practices. Sessions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Higher-order thinking tasks
- Real-world connections
- Hands-on engagement
- Mathematical representations
- Effective questioning strategies
- Productive struggle to promote deep mathematical learning and understanding.

Improving Students' Sense of Value and Belonging through Assessment

In this strand, we will focus on formative and summative assessments as tools to support students in navigating their learning, promoting a positive mathematical identity, and nurturing a growth mindset. Assessment is often viewed as a grade, not a learning opportunity but should reflect the instructional shift that embraces students' unique educational, personal, and cultural experiences. How might we use assessment to break the cycle of grade captivity while evaluating what we value? Sessions in this strand may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Using student-centered assessment
- Focusing on the Standards for Mathematical Practice
- Implementing alternative assessment practices
- Providing asset-based feedback
- Leveraging multiple points of data to support every child.
- Dismantling grade-driven motivation

Using Innovative Technology to Enrich Students' Value and Sense of Belonging in Mathematics

In this strand, we focus on innovative instructional strategies that improve and enhance learning through the use of technology. The use of technology, both inside and outside the mathematics classroom, can support sense making and reasoning while also honoring multiple ways to communicate thinking. How can we use technology to create a greater sense of belonging for all students as they learn mathematics? Sessions in this strand may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and other technological tools to investigate real-world problems and support student learning.
- Technology as a pedagogical tool for differentiation
- Technological tools that support visualizing mathematics, student engagement, and collaboration to achieve a deeper understanding of mathematics.
- Equitable access for all students through the use of technology
- Integration with other content areas with technology

Developing Effective Advocacy Practices to Affect Students' Sense of Value and Belonging within Mathematics

In this strand, we will focus on the components that are necessary for an equitable and sustainable system of mathematics education for all students. Effective advocacy work can take many forms, and all educational partners can participate and contribute to positive change. What is possible when we attend to, value, and connect the cultural capital of our students, families, and communities to schools? In what ways do we advocate for the teachers and learners of mathematics? Sessions in this strand might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interrogating current practices (classroom to systemic) of inequity and oppression
- Empowering educators to reconceptualize and transform classrooms, schools, and systems to ones that promote the just teaching and learning of mathematics.
- Uplifting teachers to make decisions and take action in their classrooms.

Eliminating Barriers to Inspire Creative Pathways Rooted in Students' Authenticity, Value, and Sense of Belonging in Mathematics

When students view mathematics as relevant and essential to solve worthwhile problems, they are more likely to engage, productively struggle, and succeed. In this strand, we will focus on ways to remove mathematics as a barrier to success. Graduation pathways are essential in honoring students' interests and aspirations while providing them with opportunities to see mathematics as valuable. Sessions in this strand may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Improving mathematical identities
- Ensuring every student makes progress.
- Providing student choice in mathematics course sequence
- Elevating pathways while dismantling tracks and deficit mindsets.
- Examining desired skills from different perspectives (trade, workforce, services, higher education)
- Modernizing mathematics