

EDITORIAL

Terry Goodman

Since this past November I have been a member of a writing team that has been charged with creating the *Missouri K-12 Mathematics Learning Goals*. This effort is being co-sponsored by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Missouri Mathematics, Engineering, Technology and Science Coalition.

The Writing Group, consisting of public school mathematics teachers and mathematics/mathematics education faculty from higher education, will develop a document that will serve as a guide to Missouri schools in updating, strengthening, and aligning mathematics programs. The document will also communicate the focus of NCLB-mandated annual assessments for grades 3-8 and high school. More specifically, the Writing Group will develop a set of coherent, focused, rigorous *K-12 Mathematics Learning Goals* which incorporate both content and process goals and describe the primary focus of instruction for a grade or course (what students should know and be able to do).

This document is based on a somewhat different view of the K-12 mathematics curriculum. For each grade/course three to five core concepts will be identified and these will serve as the unifying ideas for that particular grade/course. Three to five learning goals will be linked to each core concept and specific performance expectations will be associated with each learning goal. The content emphasis for a particular grade/course will not be on “covering” a list of mathematical topics. Rather, the focus will highlight organizing the curriculum around the most important core concepts that will serve to help students develop deeper understanding of mathematical concepts, relationships, and connections.

While this new document will give direction to state mathematics assessment, it is anticipated that it will be used primarily to help teachers and schools organize, evaluate, and align their local mathematics curricula. College and university mathematics and mathematics education faculty will also be able to use the document in developing and modifying preservice programs for K-12 mathematics teachers.