

# Directions in Education

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## A Quotation . . . and a Calling

*'SO, basically, I'm supposed to create a rich and safe environment where all students develop mathematical power by working actively together in heterogeneous groups doing meaningful tasks using state-of-the-art technology as an appropriate problem-solving tool at the appropriate time, to reach deeper levels of understanding than ever before, largely because of my carefully timed and well-phrased probing questions, while I convince my fellow teachers that this is how they, too, should teach, and while I sell the idea that this is how it really should be to parents, taxpayers, administrators and school board members, most of whom think I should really be spending my time raising my test scores by just doing a better job of what we used to do 20 years ago, in an environment that most of them wouldn't dare set foot into?'* (Cathy Seeley, 1994 National Council of Teachers of Mathematics AGM).

Few people outside our profession could possibly understand the demands and complexities of teaching, as exemplified by Cathy Seeley's well-articulated question. But we wouldn't be gearing-up for another year in the classroom if we weren't challenged by the demands, excited by the complexities and inspired by the chance to make a difference in the lives of the young people under our care. That is not to say there aren't days when we feel let down by students, even colleagues, but perhaps we wouldn't be embarking on another year in the classroom if we were not also humbled by a profession where, no matter how much success we may have enjoyed in the past or how much experience we've gained, and irrespective of our seniority in the learning organization, as a teacher, one is only as good as, and never any better than, one's next class. I hope yours is a good one!

*Mr Russell Boyle, education consultant and writer, Victoria*