

Foreword

I met Cathy Seeley more than twenty-five years ago when I was in Texas providing math professional development for school districts. At that time, I was impressed by Cathy's commitment to math education, the energy she devoted to it, and her signature booming Texan voice with which she delivered her messages. Since that time, I've been a loyal fan of Cathy's, appreciative of her leadership at the Texas Education Agency, deeply admiring of her choice to enter the Peace Corps and teach math for two years in Burkina Faso in West Africa, and delighted by her influence when she served as president of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). The list of the many other ways Cathy has served mathematics education during the time I've known her is long and varied, and it is testimony to her extraordinary commitment.

When Cathy was president of NCTM, I always looked forward to reading the columns she regularly wrote to address the membership. Her commitment, energy, and voice rang through all of her messages. Even when Cathy addressed a topic that wasn't of immediate concern to me, her message still pulled me in and provoked me to think.

I was especially pleased when Cathy agreed to write a Math Solutions book based on her messages, and I'm even more pleased now that I've had the opportunity to read the final version. It's wonderful to have Cathy's ideas available in one place rather than scattered in different file folders, and revisiting her ideas has sparked and renewed my own thinking. In the introduction to *Faster Isn't Smarter*, Cathy mentions that it's not necessary to read the book from front to back. I've followed her advice, dipping in and out of the book, taking short bursts of time to read one message or longer periods of time to read several. I appreciate Cathy's links to related messages, which have allowed me to easily follow a thread of a message that has especially interested me. This feature not only makes the book accessible and enjoyable but also customizes the book so that I've been able to follow what has particularly engaged me while also gaining additional entry into Cathy's thinking as I have read how she sees particular ideas connecting with others.

In her messages, Cathy offers support and confirmation for teachers working to improve their classroom practices. She helps explain the rationale for effective instructional choices. She provides references that offer further support and expand our thinking. And her messages are ideal for reflecting on alone or with colleagues.

Cathy's hope for the book is that it sparks, enhances, and reinvigorates our thinking. I've found that her messages do just that. They are important and thought provoking, and they make a needed and valuable contribution to all who are interested in math education. Keep the book close at hand—it's a perfect vehicle for stimulating your thinking in new and surprising ways.

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