**February 2021**

The guest for the **February** **GCTM Roundtable** was **Senator Chuck Payne**. He serves as the Chairman for the Committee on Education & Youth which has general jurisdiction over K-12 education, certified employees of schools and school facilities. It also reviews legislation related to childcare and Pre-K activities.

The GCTM Roundtable format is intended to allow our organization to share updates and advocate for issues important to mathematics educators in Georgia.

Based on information gathered from members about accountability and assessment, we shared the following with Senator Payne:

**Relevant and Valid Data**

Decisions about school performance should consider **relevant and valid data** on student performance. This year, the inconsistency of student attendance and instruction will deem the data to be an unreliable source of information and should not be used as part of decisions on student performance or teacher/school accountability.

**Further Study**

We suggest that a committee to study school accountability options and student assessment be convened to make recommendations for future decisions. This committee should review

**Assessment Pilots** that are currently approved as alternatives to state assessments

**Focus on the Expertise of Classroom Teachers** for assessment data

**Identify a Balanced Combination** of formative and summative assessments

**Reduce the Number of State Assessments** and identify those used as tools for calibration in a comprehensive assessment system

The Georgia Council of Teachers of Mathematics is committed to supporting a high-quality mathematics education for ALL students and would welcome participation from our membership on this committee.

Some of the **CHALLENGES** that GCTM shared based on participant responses to the registration survey included:

* Pressure to grade and focus on tests during this pandemic
* Student attendance has been inconsistent and we are worried about our students
* Lack of funding for student resources has created a wider gap of access
* School staff health and well-being including access to vaccinations

Senator Payne shared his quest of resolving conflict by finding a mutual seed of agreement and continuing to focus on purpose. GCTM members on the call were able to ask questions of Senator Payne and some were shared in the chat. Senator Payne was asked about vouchers that are part of Senate Bill 60 and also about what he and/or the legislature is going to do about the inequities throughout the state. This question was followed by discussion about funding inequities and concern over the passage of this type of legislation and the impact on public schools in our state. In addition, the timeline for the vaccination of teachers was requested and Senator Payne said that more would be coming from the Governor’s office related to this issue. In closing, Senator Payne suggested that we follow up with him to discuss some of our ideas further.