

II. From the Associate Director

Ellen Hilgoe, August 2009

I must admit that during the tumultuous 2008-2009 testing year, I often found myself “hanging on” as waves of change crashed overhead when least expected. The inability to offer early math placement testing during the fall semester was very disheartening, especially knowing that many high school students follow a block schedule and thus missed the NC EMPT opportunity if they took their only 2008-2009 math course during the fall semester. One very positive result, however, was a much improved spring test version with more comprehensive and individualized college information provided to students.



The difficult budget crisis throughout the nation during the spring semester tightened belts statewide, and prohibited the summer promotional travel I heavily rely on. It is especially important for me to advocate in person the services NC EMPT provides to high school teachers across the state, particularly teachers new to the field of high school mathematics. I am inspired by the legions of math teachers who support NC EMPT year after year and I trust they will help “spread the word” to all math faculty on their high school campuses and in their school systems. Their understanding and loyalty amazed me as they quickly came aboard again in the spring, even after our fall hiatus from testing. We are very thankful that our efforts to provide early intervention in the critical area of college math placement are recognized. We continue to be sponsored by the State of North Carolina and will soon begin our fourteenth year of service. We are also appreciative of the continued support of East Carolina University, particularly that of Dr. Linner Griffin, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs.

A third obstacle faced during the year included difficulties in our newly offered avenue of Web-based testing. Despite three years of promotional efforts and the important experience of online testing for students, the vast majority of high school teachers prefer paper-and-pencil testing. In addition, the company that has provided the platform for this testing has also decided that they can no longer

provide the same level of service. With the generous help of other EMPT programs nationwide, namely Ohio EMPT and Wisconsin EMPT, we'll carefully study their successful online testing methods, listen to the feedback from high school teachers and college faculty, and plan to offer a more efficient model soon.

The challenges the program faced could not have been met without the tremendous support of our small staff. Our student workers are some of the best I've ever had, and they never wavered in their willingness to work hard and get the job done. I also appreciate the longevity and invaluable knowledge of the director, Dr. Robert Bernhardt, and long-time consultants David Hodges, Brian Manning, and Robert Elliott. I am surrounded by very helpful people who strongly believe in NC EMPT and keep me afloat. A heartfelt THANK YOU to all!



Christmas 2008 Luncheon (left to right): Cayleigh Blackwell, student worker; Chelsea Anderson, student worker; Dr. Robert Bernhardt, director; Ellen Hilgoe, associate director; Carla Watson, student worker.



Easter Party in the NC EMPT Workroom: (left to right): Cayleigh Blackwell, student worker; Jaleesa Minor, student worker; Ellen Hilgoe, associate director; Bob Longest, student worker; and Mike Kapetanakis, student worker.



(left) Robert Elliott, technology consultant; (right) David Hodges, database consultant; and (below) Brian Manning, web site consultant

