**REPORT: BRINGING MATHS TO LIFE 2023 Conference at UNSW**

Convened by UNSW School of Education in association with the NSW Institute for Educational Research

**Will the new syllabus address the Maths crisis?**

The new Maths syllabus 2023 which will seek to reverse a declining performance on international and Australian testing, was a major focus of the IER/UNSW Conference on November 23 2023.

The conference, **Bringing Maths to Life 2023 -** *Thinking and working mathematically in the New Syllabus, 3 – 10 -* drew on leading Australian Mathematics educators and practitioners to help teachers meet the challenge; strengthening basic foundations, promoting critical thinking.

It was convened in recognition that a new Mathematics curriculum can have little impact unless strong teacher professional development is provided and teachers are committed to grow professionally. A further concern informing the conference is that fewer students are studying Mathematics to senior levels. This harms the economy and provides a major challenge to teachers:  How can Maths learning be lifted?

Keynote addresses were presented by well-known Maths teacher, **Eddie Woo**, by **Anna Wethereld**, lead author of Maths Curricula and by **Emeritus Professor Dianne Siemon** RMIT. It followed a conference in 2022 to which Professor Kim Beswich UNSW gave a keynote, *Lifting maths learning for all students – Teacher attitudes and practice that impact student success*

**Eddie** spoke on ***Connections that Count****,* helping students to see the Mathematical thoughtlines and relationships that enrich their understanding and enjoyment.

**Anna** addressed ***Bringing Life to Maths,*** showing that Mathematics is not simply a subject to learn but rather a way of unpacking and making meaning from lived experience.

**Dianne**’s presentation, ***Targeting the Big Ideas in Mathematics,***asserted thatnot everything in the mathematics curriculum is equally important and addressed the “how-to” of targeted teaching.

**Practical workshops** supporting classroom instruction were presented by lead teachers in Mathematics including Dr Christine Mae NSWIER, Henrietta Miller AIS, Jennifer Woods AIS, Andrea de Carvalho CSC, Angela D’Angelo CSC,

Assisting with organisation and chairing sessions were members of the NSW IER executive, President Associate Professor Noelene Weatherby-Fell, Dr Annette Sartor, Associate Professor Sean Kearney, Dr Thuan Thai and Scientia Professor Andrew Martin.

Some 100 who attended were mainly leaders of Maths teaching in schools. The participant evaluation gave high praise for the excellence of the sessions and their usefulness to lift Maths education across NSW.

**UNSW Convenors:** Hon Assoc Prof. Alan Watson [a.watson@unsw.edu.au](mailto:a.watson@unsw.edu.au) 0422 225 556

Associate Professor Hoa Nguyen hoa.nguyen@unsw.edu.au