

XXIII. Why MATH & The AMC Contests are important



The MATHEMATICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

American Mathematics Competitions

Dr. Steven R. Dunbar
MAA Director of K-12 Programs

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Dear Parent or Guardian:

On February 11, 2003 your son or daughter participated in the 54th annual American Mathematics Competitions contest. This contest has grown from a single city-wide competition in New York City in 1950 organized by the local chapter of the Mathematical Association of American to a sequence of contests involving over 250,000 students world-wide.

With these contests, there are awards in each school for the student with the highest score, certificates for high-scoring students in each school, state-wide awards, regional awards, and even national awards. These contests lead to other more selective math contests, even all the way to the USA team sent to the International Mathematical Olympiad, the premier international high school level problem solving contest. Our organization regularly receives requests from well-known colleges and universities for the names of high scoring students. A few colleges offer scholarships to students in their region with high scores on the contests.

But the real rewards come from challenging each student with mathematics that is new, different, and “outside of the box.” The problems on the contest are hard, but designed to be within reach . Even so, if your son or daughter managed to solve only one or two problems, they should still be proud, because these problems are meant to be more challenging than they routinely encounter in their mathematics courses.

Mathematics is increasingly important in our technological and scientific age. Taking enough mathematics in high school is the gateway to jobs and careers of all kinds, even those that are not explicitly mathematical, scientific, or technological. We hope that by offering these contests, we can challenge and inspire students to want to learn more mathematics. We hope that your son or daughter enjoyed the contests, and will continue to take mathematics courses and competitions in high school and beyond.

Sincerely,

Dr. Steven R. Dunbar
MAA Director for School Programs