Welcome.

Attending an online course can be both a wonderful learning opportunity and a trying experience. We invite you to focus on the former, making the most of this course for yourself as a learner. Ask questions, explore the mathematics, solve problems, think, and reflect.

For us, learning mathematics is an opportunity for all: for all course participants and for all students in the classroom. Access and equity are front and foremost in our minds as we facilitate sessions.

Research indicates that all students do not receive equal time, attention and support in classrooms. This is particularly evident in math and science classrooms. In this course we will highlight some of the specific inequities that are commonly present in elementary mathematics classrooms, ways we can become more aware of these inequities, and specific strategies for making classrooms more equitable and accessible.

In your classroom you have goals for what you want your students to learn and for the way in which the learning is to occur – these are informed by your own experiences and by the ways in which the classroom environment and community impact learning. We also have goals for how we want your learning to occur.

Throughout the course some of the mathematical content may be new and some of the ways we will encourage you to learn may feel unfamiliar. As you participate in sessions, think about the times that you feel energized and excited, or confused and distracted. When do you want to think by yourself and when do you want to be engaged with the thinking of others?

In thinking about how you experience learning, consider how your students experience learning. We will discuss how to support students who are having a variety of experiences. It might be helpful to look at the ways in which other participants experience learning and think about what you, as a teacher, could do to address the various learning styles and needs of your students.

We invite you to reflect upon the following questions, our guiding questions, throughout the course.

	You as a learner	You as a teacher
1	How is learning the mathematics in this way different from the way you learned mathematics in school?	In what ways does this affect how you think about teaching and learning?
2	How do you participate? How does this affect the participation of others around you?	What promotes or interferes with students' participation in the mathematics classroom?
3	What is it like for you to work with people who have different ideas, experiences, and learning styles than you do?	What are the implications for working with students with different experiences and backgrounds (e.g. ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, language)?

At various times during the course, you will likely think about issues of access and equity. Jot down things that strike you, such as "I didn't know this about myself as a learner" or "I should pay attention to this when I'm teaching." We hope that these reflections will be helpful to you in your work. We look forward to working and learning with you.

Investigations Workshops
for Transforming Mathematics