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U.S. Students Rank Below Students from Other Countries in International Study

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A summary of U.S. results in the Second International Mathematics Study, released at a conference at the University of Illinois late in September, shows U.S. elementary and secondary students lagging behind students from other countries in achievement in mathematics.

The study, the largest such cross-national analysis ever conducted, provides detailed information from each of twenty-four participating countries about the content of the mathematics curriculum, how mathematics is taught, and how much mathematics students learn. It is designed to provide information that can be used by individual countries to analyze their school programs, and to help national officials plan future directions in school mathematics in their own countries.

The study surveyed the mathematics curriculum provided for two groups of students, those in the grade with the modal number of thirteen-year-olds and those enrolled in advanced mathematics classes in the terminal year of secondary school. In the U.S., approximately 7,500 eighth-grade students and 6,000 twelfth-grade students in Precalculus or Calculus classes participated in the study. These students completed internationally-developed mathematics achievement tests at the beginning of the 1981-82 academic year and again at the end of the school year. Student testing also included attitude inventories.

During the year, the teachers of the students in the survey answered questionnaires describing how they taught specific topics, their beliefs about teaching, and the resources and general teaching processes they employed. At the end of the year, they completed questionnaires indicating whether or not students in their classes were given the opportunity to learn the mathematics needed to respond to each item on the international tests.

Preliminary achievement results indicate a mean performance for U.S. students essentially in the middle of the distribution of international means for 13-year-old students *(continued on page 2)*

Meeting events for the January 1985 Joint Mathematics Meetings will be held in the Anaheim Convention Center, pictured above, and the Anaheim Marriott Hotel.

Joint Mathematics Meetings January 1985

The January 1985 Joint Mathematics Meetings will be held in Anaheim, California, January 9-13. The meetings will include the **68th Annual Meeting of the Mathematical Association of America**, January 11-13, the **91st Annual Meeting of the American Mathematical Society**, and the 1985 annual meetings of the **Association for Symbolic Logic**, the **Association for Women in Mathematics**, and the **National Association for Mathematicians**.

The meeting program, preregistration and housing forms, and Employment Register information and forms were mailed to all MAA members in the center section of the October issue of *FOCUS*. **MAA members are urged to send in their preregistration forms by November 15, if possible. However, preregistrations and contributed papers will continue to be accepted through November 30.** Anyone who has not preregistered for the meetings may register at the Registration Desk in the North Lobby of the Anaheim Convention Center, Tuesday, January 8, 4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 9, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., or Thursday, January 10 through Saturday, January 12, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.