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Gail Ray

Ouachita Baptist University

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MATHEMATICS TEACHING IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

by
Gail Ray

Honors Special Studies; H490

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Mathematics Teaching in the Secondary Schools

Thesis: What are the rewards of teaching mathematics in the high schools?

As to the rewards in teaching mathematics on the secondary level, one must not look totally at salaries and fringe benefits, for these are very limited in comparison with other mathematical professions. One could easily become a computer programmer and double the salary he received as a teacher.

However, the salaries of teachers have been increasing steadily, and there is reason to believe that they will continue to rise. The average salary of secondary school teachers in the United States during the 1967-68 school year was estimated to be \$7,569. The National Education Association is urging that beginning teachers should reach \$16,000 or more as he continues his education.

Also a benefit to the teacher is the tenure he generally receives following his first five years of service in a school system. An increasing number of school districts are now providing sabbatical leaves, whereby a teacher may be excused from service, usually for a period of one year, to engage in study, travel, or other professional advancement.

In every state there is some kind of a retirement plan for teachers. The retirement programs are usually supported by deductions of from two to seven percent of the teacher's salary, matched by an equal or greater payment by his employer or the state.

The teacher of mathematics is assured a summer vacation for study, independent research, travel, earning extra money, and the like. He also has the added pleasure of working with interesting and intelligent people.

If he is successful, a teacher may look forward to professional advancement. He may expect to receive the acceptance and respect of leaders in his community.

But perhaps the greatest reward is the satisfaction that comes from contributing to the growth and success of his pupils. This must be an outstanding reason that many teachers in mathematics willingly devote extra time to their pupils and turn down more highly paid jobs.

Teaching mathematics affords one the satisfaction of knowing that he is making a significant contribution to society. As the world becomes more technical and scientific, the need for trained minds rapidly increases. This need is especially acute in mathematics, for mathematics is the very basis of the technology of this modern age. As the need for trained minds increases, so also does the need for those who can direct and challenge the minds of the youth of this modern age.

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