

**Is there a  $(4, 27, 2)$  partial geometry?**

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This is joint work with Leonard Soicher

A *partial geometry* with parameters  $(s, t, \alpha)$  consists of lines and points with the properties that (i) each line has  $s + 1$  points and two distinct lines intersect in at most one point; (ii) each point is on  $t + 1$  lines and two distinct points occur on at most one line; and (iii) for each point  $p$  that does not lie on a line  $l$ , there are exactly  $\alpha$  lines through  $p$  that intersect  $l$ . The question whether there exists a  $(4, 27, 2)$  partial geometry has tantalized researchers during the last couple of decades. Such a partial geometry would have 275 points and 1540 lines and its point graph would be a  $(275, 112, 30, 56)$  strongly regular graph (srg). There is a unique srg with the aforementioned parameters called the *McLaughlin graph*. In this talk, a computer search for a  $(4, 27, 2)$  partial geometry starting from the McLaughlin graph is described. After 270 core-years and more than one physical year, the computers claim that there is no such partial geometry.