
Pre-Conference Strategies

Source: Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative

Tools: Successful Coaching

STRATEGY

The role of the pre-conference is to frame the lesson for the teacher and coach. It is a time to clarify the lesson and the key mathematics that will be taught in it. It provides an opportunity for the teacher to explain the main goal and big mathematics ideas. It provides the coach with insights to the teacher's depth of mathematical knowledge. It can also provide time for discussion on effective strategies to deliver instruction. The pre-conference is a good opportunity to brainstorm possible challenges students may have and misconceptions that may be addressed up front in the lesson. Finally, it provides the coach and teacher with a common focus for the observation. Below are several common questions that a coach might use in the pre-conference.

PRE-CONFERENCE FOCUS QUESTIONS

- What topic will you and your students be working on in this lesson?
- What mathematical ideas are embedded in this lesson?
- What are the goals of the lesson?
- What do you plan to do in this lesson?
- What do you hope to accomplish in this lesson?
- How does this lesson fit into your overall goals for the year?
- What have the students done previously that will support the learning goals of the lesson?
- What aspect of the lesson might be most challenging to the students?
- Describe how the lesson will unfold.
- Where might students have difficulties?
- What strategies might you try in case this difficulty occurs?
- What misconceptions might students have about the content you are teaching?
- Are there students who have special issues in the class?
- What would you encourage me to focus on?
- Will the students produce a work product by the end of class?