

6th-8th Grade: Continuing the Journey

Use the padlet to record reflections, next steps, comments and/or questions.

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Focus on Grade/Course - Level Content

Question #1

How will you support and promote student's learning grade-level content while providing just in time supports, as needed, beginning on day one of this school year?

Through meeting with school leaders and department chairs about the vision of just in time learning and provide concrete examples of what this looks like.

Keep the focus on grade level material when meeting with PLC's- look back at "pre-Covid" days to help remind ourselves of what we did

Anchoring in essentials with strong formative assessment

I hope to teach grade level content and use informal assessments to confirm mastery.

Last year I created a set of formative tasks or routines for each essential outcome from the year before so that teachers could use this to determine what prerequisite skills/concepts students needed as they start specific (or connected) grade level content

Highlight Student successes and encourage/welcome "mistakes"

Providing professional learning opportunities for teachers to learn about and engage in the progression of the mathematics they are teaching.

Use formative assessments to chose appropriate scaffolds and levels of understanding. Does the student need concrete or representative models to get kids to abstract understandings of grade level content.

I think a focus on learning progressions will be important to share with other educators. Consider this continuum so we can embed work that contributes to grade level standards.

Utilizing the flipped classroom model

As a coach, I'll be sure to share successful strategies that I am seeing in colleagues' classrooms

Purposeful Planning

We are scheduling extended monthly grade-level team meetings to interpret student work data and CFAs to make decisions about what prior content needs to be brought in and to what extent - just a few added questions in a grade-level task, or incorporating a few tasks to ramp up to current content.

Asking questions, have the students demonstrate how they solved it

Priority Content for Resources

I am a Math Consultant and we created documents for different math resources that show where the prior year's content fits with grade level content so they know what they might be able scaffold and where it will occur

Our district met and rolled out grade level plan sheets for the year, along with when we might need to go back and pick up a content before teaching a concept. Make sure we are following grade level concepts so students do not fall behind. Use bell work (daily class starter) to review needed concepts

Using some problems that have multiple entry levels like Inside Mathematics at the beginning of the year to allow all students to have a point of entry

When lesson planning I make a note of the prior knowledge/concepts that is required for the topic. I will review these prior concepts as required as I teach the grade level content.

Make it a habit to ask students, what do you notice? what do you wonder?

Use rich tasks, from grade-level work, and allow students to solve them in anyway possible. Sequence student responses to attend to different representations and strategies. Use this to leverage student thinking along a progression - help students to see their thinking in someone's else response.

I intend to evaluate students skills as quickly as possible so I can identify strengths and weaknesses and move forward.

Make lessons meaningful and engaging. It's not about quantity but more about quality and in-depth learning. I will utilize Exit Tickets to check in on student understanding regularly. I will use the data to inform my teaching and adjust my plans as needed.

Focus on Grade/Course - Level Content

Question #2:

How will you focus on student strengths and keep the joy and humanity in teaching and learning?

make content engaging and relatable, give students choices too!

Providing low floor, high ceiling tasks that engage all students.

Provide opportunities for students to give authentic feedback instead of assigning grades.

Bungee Barbie (and Ken, et al)!!

ask students where they find joy in mathematics

Making connections through SEL and the coursework.

Using What do you notice/wonder or WODB activities to begin each class. Multiple entry points.

Provide different ways to show their learning

Q2

I will continue to praise and promote positive learning behaviors. I will make the content relevant to the students.

Give students low floor, high ceiling activities and focus on student choice

Creating a positive classroom environment so students feel confident and willing to take risks and share their ideas with each other.

I will learn student interests and incorporate that knowledge while planning lessons. I would like to use real-world examples for students to connect to.

Use tasks that have multiple access points and multiple correct answers.

Integrate lessons from previous grade level.

provide students multiple opportunities to problem solve. Create a space where mistakes are accepted. Create a thinking classroom.

Give students the opportunity in the first week to reflect on what makes them proud as a math doer. All students are proud of something related to math.

First week or 2: community building & teamwork so they see the value of working together.

Take more time to get to know the interests and mathematical stories of my students prior to starting into routines and procedures.

Through choice, allowing students to share with others, guide partner and small group discussions, and open ended questions.

I encourage the use of Jo Boaler's Week of Inspirational Math as well as games and puzzles for the first week or two.

Empowering instructional math and language routines - connecting everything to real world - connecting conceptual and procedural

ensure problem solving through noticing and wondering

I would like everyone to record what they are good at and confident with in math and then I'd like to show them how to build on that skill(s) to access new material this year. Building their confidence and self-esteem builds their growth mindset.

Focus on continuing to grow their positive math mindsets.

Begin with a low floor high ceiling grade level task and have students Think, pair, share and then move to large group and have students present their thinking.

My Favorite No activities

Make students' voice and choice

Work on creating a community of learners that play and learn together with a focus on rough-draft math. We are all learners on a journey and we are in different spots on the journey but we can all get there.

Provide support and build their confidence. Challenge them to move outside of their comfort zone in that particular area.

Keep in mind the importance of building norms together to build the classroom community, to have a collaborative effort to keep joy and humanity in learning environments.

Focus on Grade/Course - Level Content

Question #3

What will you do to inform families of the essential learning and work within your system to eliminate tracking?

I create a monthly newsletter in English and Spanish informing the parents what skills will be covered during that month.

Use homework tracker and use the drills to discuss the progress of the students.

Lots of “what do you notice?” And “what do you wonder?”

I love using Remind to keep parents and guardians in the loop!

Share with families some of my beliefs in students ability to experience all high levels of cognitive demand. Provide types of questions that are asked in my class that open up mathematics for all students to access.

Family Newsletters & Math Nights

Both will help to engage and inform families about the content in our classrooms. I will also honor the mathematics in their homes.

provide parent resource to every unit that houses model problems & solutions and need-to-know notes

Encourage two-way communication; ask families about how they view mathematics and talk about mathematics at home

Weekly communication with families.

Communicating formative feedback to parents, not just summative

More Connections

We must keep parents involved in the learning as well. Many parents seem like they don't really know the content because they "didn't learn it this new way." I have been providing tutorial videos and more ways for parents to also see how we are working with our math.

There are several electronic methods available to communicate with families as well as students. My goal is to utilize this method to keep everyone informed as timely as possible. Newsletters are nice, however they are often lost in the bottom of backpacks.

In addition to electronic communication, spread math across the school so it is visible down the hallways, in the displays and student work. We can add notes about the curricular standards that are being addressed.

Foundations for Equitable, Effective Teaching Practices

Question #4

What are challenges or barriers to cultivating equitable instructional mindsets and practices and how can this be addresses?

systemic policies and related practices that to not intentionally invite student and community voice/feedback into the learning experience

Teacher wellness

Time Constraints

Time constraints (class period, school day, school year) are the greatest inequities when it comes to mathematics education. Yes, all students can learn math, though processing times and mechanisms vary, and time constraints don't honor them.

Readiness of the students, more exposure

Other teacher's and administrator's mindset towards mathematics. Continue to share with these people research based resources to show how effective non-tracking and tasks are beneficial to students.

Time constraints particularly as they relate to timelines and standardized testing can restrict the time we would like to provide students to engage in productive struggle and learn

We need more equity across gen Ed and special Ed teachers supporting math. Increased collaboration and conversations among educators with different roles can lead to more equitable practices for all students.

Self-care

Take care of yourself first before you take care of your students

I will be utilizing a curriculum of which I am unfamiliar. My goal is to be as prepared and tap resources to be as informed to present skills and content.

Tracked class groups: advanced groups, students that struggle in math, English language learners, etc. GET RID OF TRACKING

Hire people of diverse backgrounds - race, experience, languages, etc. so students can see themselves in school and believe that they can be successful in math.

Our community values "accelerated" classes over student wellbeing. Students are tracked from K on into "high" and "low" math groups. By the time they get to me. . . ugh.

Tradition and/or parent perception of what math instruction should look like.

The way math is seen by adults in their lives and in the media. Math has a bad rep and that needs to change. Make a positive environment in your classroom where mistakes are expected and math is more than a subject in school

time limitations and lots of materials that need to be given to the students over the year

I think grades can get in the way of learning and divides our classrooms of learners. I would love to provide specific feedback about learners rather than a letter grade or percentage.

Foundations for Equitable, Effective Teaching Practices

Question #5

What are ways we can get to know our learners/students, that is, who they are, what are their strengths, interest, cultures and hobbies as we begin the school year and then use this to plan intentional instructional experiences that support access to grade-level content?

Provide an activities that will express the interest of the students in order to get to know their interest.

Invite them!

Incorporating routines in instruction and seeking opportunities for students to share connections between current tasks and their individual lives and home traditions.

I will have students complete a survey that shares important highlights about themselves. I'll use this throughout the year in my teaching.

Geoff Krall has a great Math Mindsets and Attitudes Student Survey in his book Necessary Conditions.

My first HW assignment is always asking students how did they get their name, where does their name come from?

Name Tents

Sara VanderWerf's Name Tent activity has been a staple for me for quickly breaking the ice with students through the first week.

Using Theresa Will's template, Scavenger Hunt: All about XXX

Be authentic in your instruction...have fun with your students and let them see you as human and learner along with them.

First we have to believe that they are sources of invaluable knowledge and skill that is worthy of uncovering.

I give them a name tent on day one. Each day for approx. 10 days, I ask them a question to help get to know them. (favorite foods, restaurants, colors, hobby, etc) and I response each day so they know I read them. It is relationship building

daily check ins - desmos has some activities

Foundations for Equitable, Effective Teaching Practices

Question #6

How can we cultivate and strengthen a sense of community in our classrooms and our schools?

Bringing the outside experiences into the classroom.

Making sure that all students realize they have something valuable to contribute.

Start with non-curricular tasks

Accountable Talk & Sentence Frames

Give students entry points into the conversations, and teach productive ways to participate

Relate to the real-world

Being respectful to each other.

Be human

Regularly check in and ask how students are doing, learn who they are, their hopes, their dreams and what types of problems they like to solve

Lots of ideas from Peter Liljedahl to build thinking classrooms: visibly random groups, non-permanent vertical surfaces, etc.

Connect real life experiences into classroom math

meaningful collaboration

Mathematicians don't work in isolation. It is important for teachers to work in teams collaboratively and students should be given the same opportunities.

Foundations for Equitable, Effective Teaching Practices

Question #7

How can I help emphasize the importance of connecting mathematical ideas that interconnect to provide a coherent approach?

We always try to identify their context of the class and we start from there. We try to develop them

Relate to the real world

Math needs to be practical and useful. I tend to make sure that we can relate our content in class for things we will see in the real world. Also, choose themes that can connect much easier to the content

I connect the skills to the real world as much as possible

self-discovery! have students connect the pathways

As I prepare a lesson, I reflect on what was needed before and what it might lead to in future lessons. I think explicitly showing students (or designing ways for them to discover) connections between mathematic ideas must be part of instruction. Support their connection making and respond positively and with support when they make connections on their own.

Include current events and world topics in problems relevant to math topics.

Show multiple representations in every concept.

Foundations for Equitable, Effective Teaching Practices

Question #8

What are structures that are needed to support a collaborative culture for our mathematics team(s)?

Begin with the end in mind

Collaborate on common formative assessments to do data analysis and structure tier 2 interventions.

So lucky to teach at a school that offers summer grants for collaboration!

Grade-level teams that meet on a regular basis; PLCs

Dedicated time for collaborative professional collaboration.

Time in the schedule to meet. Admin to support coaches in supporting teacher groups/meetings

Conversations about data

Meeting with the students one on one; having visual word wall, math discussion on Padlet

School administration must give TIME to support collaborative work for teams in the school. These can be based on grades, subjects or special focus projects.

Planning for Advocacy

Question #9

How will you disrupt practices that marginalize students?

allow reassessment, not all learn at the same time in the same way

continue the use of Mastery Grading

support teacher and leaders to recognize bias and inequities as they show up in planning, instruction, assessment, and feedback

Awareness

In our case, systems and structures are adopted based on the fact they already existed - rather than giving thought to how they impact historically underrepresented groups. Considering how each impacts ALL our students and inviting student voices and families to the conversation can help us uncover unintended biases and disrupt those structures.

Teacher talk should always be positive about students. Teachers should stand up and disrupt the negative conversation by other teachers.

Include a variety of assessments in the classroom, real life projects using choice with guideline expectations for rigor.

Learn more myself about how to support students of different backgrounds than mine. I am not only thinking about how to make content relevant but the processes that support different learners. Finding more ways to give ALL students a voice.

Address deficit language when teachers/admin use it.

Speaking up respectfully during team/department meetings.

push to eliminate tracking practices

We need a district-wide discussion about why our culture values labels such as "accelerated", "remedial" and "average."

I believe all students can do mathematics to high levels. That is a given in my classroom.

Allow for multiple opportunities to "show what you know"

Provide feedback as immediate as possible to adjust and correct any learning gaps

Also, be the change. If I ask my colleagues to use asset based language, then I will hold myself responsible as well and be the example.

Choice and voice

our school has finally gotten rid of leveling of middle school math and english. It is a struggle with some families but many are on board and happy about it.

Normalize

Students are first uncomfortable when empowered with opportunities to advocate. Normalize it. Make it regular and watch students shine.

Positive self talk about students, reflection on what they learned, require students to respond to my feedback

#students with poor internet access

I would like to advocate safe ways of approaching these students perhaps through vans/ physical games which they would love to do and have a self learning

Look at my practices with a new lens and see where I need to make changes - ask others to observe (which I hate to do, but it may help my practice)

Provide multiple means to complete work and allow students to choose their means.

Teacher language and body action can make or break student mathematics appreciation.

Remind students and teachers of one of my mantras P.O.W.E.R. -"Providing Opportunities Within Everyone's Reach" and also to continue to model for teachers.

Allow for mistakes

some of the best learning comes from learning from mistakes. I make it a point that it is OK to fail. The strength of failure is that it is possible to learn from it. This also allows students to really see what misconceptions they have.

Bringing research and best practices articles to the attention of the community may help. When there is data showing the situation in the research matches your setting, it can be powerful.

Giving students the opportunity to complete test corrections. Teaching them to learn from their mistakes and sending the message that mistakes are an opportunity to learn.

Planning for Advocacy

Question #10

How will you advocate for equitable structures (for teachers and students)?

Provide data to admin as to why certain structures do work.

make PD relate

We forget that PD shouldn't just be about content. Sometimes, we forget that students' feelings and whole-child emotions also need to be address. How can we get kids interested in math when many students have other issues that can limit their learning

Make sure all teachers understand and have access to the resources. PD's that relate to what they need.

Provide plain language for parents that describes the math progressions so that parents can be informed and better advocate for their children's needs.

Well, screaming until I'm blue in the face hasn't worked. So, check that off the list.

Acknowledge the SEL state of the students as well as the teachers.

Initiate conversations that support productive struggle in advocacy efforts. Provide protocols or other tools that help people grapple with challenges and constraints and seek solutions.

As an instructional coach, I will make sure that my professional learning and coaching opportunities are understood by administrators. My advocacy often comes when ensuring that administrators understand why

instructional changes need to be made.

Design for Equity

Listen to teachers and students, prioritize those stories from historically marginalized groups and create structures to serve them

Support

Provide numeracy support to our Indigenous initiatives.

In addition to supporting our students and differentiating activities for them, we must do the same for teachers. Some teachers don't feel confident in math and need support and guidance. Supporting teachers will increase equitable opportunities for our students.

Plan with an eye to equity, thinking of the strengths of my students.

Clarity - Share Purpose

Equitable environments provide rigor for all, which can be uncomfortable. Students need to know why these environments are created.

I will be pushing for standards based grading.
