Round Reflection

In reflecting upon my round through the lens of the video, I noticed several things that I was quite pleased about. Many are minor. For instance, the students know that I expect them to raise their hands; they respond to the fact that I look for and value participation; they feel safe enough to make a go of things even after a period of silence. However, the main positive I observed in my round video was the students’ conceptual understanding. They truly have a grasp of our strategies, models, and vocabulary, as well as how to employ the aforementioned elements to successfully answer challenging multiplication word problems. The flexibility of their understanding was truly tested by the extensions, and they lived up to that test! I was also incredibly proud of my students’ ability to work together on these problems, which I hope had something to do with the pairings I spent a great period of time creating.

All this being said, the round video did reveal a few deltas or areas for change. I know that there is room for improvement with my transitions, as was apparent by the difficulty I had separating the class into their groups. It is also clear that I need to be more explicit about my expectations, such as for quiet in the room or clean desks. Beyond these common first-year-teacher problems, I noticed a larger problem that I wanted to bring to the attention of my peers and mentors. Throughout the video, I noticed that I have the habit of saying something that the kids can say themselves or repeating what they have already said. I feel this is a terrible habit, because I do not want the kids to tune each other out and rely only on me as the source of information. Furthermore, there were many missed opportunities for me to lean on their funds of knowledge. I need help employing accountable talk so that the kids do more of it and I less!
Notes on my round questions:

1. Do you see them using mental math in addition to written math? This may look like them counting in their heads, counting on their fingers, or using any other method than writing on the page.

In this question, I was looking to see if any of the students were using their math facts to answer a question in their head before tackling it on paper. My rationale for asking this question was to capture the students demonstrating their fluency with a given multiple. Overwhelmingly, students were using mental math to answer these questions. Perhaps a more precise question to have asked would have been, Do you see students generating multiplication number sentences and products in their head before working on the problem on paper?

2. When prompted, “Why did you choose that operation?,” can they respond cogently? Please provide an example of a student response.

I was hoping that students would more easily build off a previous activity from the unit in which we looked for clues or words in the problem that indicated a certain operation. Some students referred to parts of the question, such as “It says ‘each.’” Others noted that division required taking a bigger number and making it smaller, which was evident to them in the given question. Still, we need more practice at this so students are not simply responding that they chose a certain operation because it was easy or fast.

3. Did the structure of the review at the beginning of the class prove helpful to the class? You may find evidence of this by students looking at and using the chart, graphic organizer, or their peer’s work.

It seems from the notes that students for the most part could use the elements identified in the review as a tool in their group work.