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Round 2 Reflection

During my round, my adult-to-student ratio was almost 1:2, which was very different from my last round. Feedback from observers is always helpful, but I found the feedback from this round particularly helpful because I asked the observers to take on a more active role in the class. Because of this, each group of 2-4 students got one adult's mostly undivided attention for almost half of a period, which is so rare in school. It makes me wonder why we don't structure our schools differently to allow more opportunities for that. Why is the standard model a one-teacher classroom with twenty-something students when we know that students learn best in smaller groups and with a lower teacher-to-student ratio? In my undergrad education classes at Clark, we talked about education being the institution most resistant to change, since we're still following the same model set up in the 1800s. This frustrates me so much.

Since I know that there's no way I'll be able to have so many helpers in my class on a regular basis, this makes me wonder how I can structure this project the next time I do it to make students still have the amazing conversations I heard yesterday, but on their own. Basically, what kind of structure can I put in place to make students more self-sufficient in this project? During the post-round, Jie suggested that I give each group a tape recorder and ask them to leave me a quick voice message at the end of each period telling me their progress and any questions they have. When she taught English, she did this with her students and would listen to the recordings each night and either write or record a response back to them for the

next day. She also pointed out that leaving a voice recording is much less intimidating for students than writing down a summary of their work and questions, which I agree with.

If I couldn't use tape recorders, or maybe I could even do this in addition to tape recorders, I was thinking that I could use some sort of daily group check-in sheet that I saw Kathy use with her students during the function stations. At the end of each period, each student filled out a checklist of sorts about their progress and participation. I can't remember if that sheet included a spot for teacher comments to be written back to them, but I would want to include a spot for that. So far, I've been writing each group post-it notes and putting them in their folder, but I think a more organized system would be better. Another idea I just thought of is to schedule 3-minute conferences with each group during the period and holding myself to that time limit. But what would happen if a group was stuck and need help but wasn't scheduled to conference with me until later in the period? What would happen if multiple groups were in that same position?

I was so happy to hear that almost all the groups were having robust conversations about the math! The evidence that observers collected of my students talking about the graphs, tables, and solution truly astounded me. I especially loved hearing that students who don't usually seem confident enough to engage in mathematical conversations – like Nate and Jonathan – were doing just that. Based on the evidence all the observers gathered, I feel like my learning goals for this project have already been accomplished. I wanted to get students to use the tables, graphs, and solution to justify their decision, which they are clearly doing. Also, I just wanted to get them talking about math! This is the most student-led math-centered discourse I

think my students have ever engaged in while I've been their teacher, which is so exciting for

me to see.