

Focus of Practice (Part I)

Participating Teacher: Michael V.	Induction Coach: Amanda K.	Teaching assignment and grade level(s): 7th Grade Math (3rd period)
Part I Due – February 17th (For all teachers) Part I, II & III Due – Year 1: April 21st Year 2 & Pending ECOs: April 7th		

Directions: As you view the **Developing Your Focus of Practice webinar** with your coach, you will be asked to review your **Focus of Practice Self-Analysis** and respond to the prompts in Part I: Plan Development (Cells 1-4). Refer to "[Michael's Focus of Practice](#)", specifically pages 1-2, while developing your plan for Part I.

Submission Requirements: Cells 1-4 must be fully completed and typed in order to meet submission standards.

Part I: Plan Development

- Based on the [Focus of Practice Self-Analysis](#) that you completed, which domain(s) is an area of focus for you? Check the box below.
☒ **Instructional Culture & Management** ☐ **Rigor & High Expectations** ☒ **Student Engagement & Ownership**
- Which element(s) within this domain is/are your highest professional priority?
Instructional Culture & Management: Element I(c) - Do my students and I demonstrate a consistent joy for learning through positive relationships with one another and a strong classroom culture?
Student Engagement & Ownership: Element III(c) - Do I facilitate high student engagement, enthusiasm and participation during my lessons through structured activities?
- Considering this reflection, what might you want to intentionally focus on? Provide a rationale. This will be your **Focus of Practice** for the next 4-6 weeks.

After reflecting on Domain I, Instructional Culture & Management and Domain III: Student Engagement & Ownership on the self-analysis, I realized that I have a very different approach and attitude towards my role as a teacher in my 3rd period Math 7 class in comparison to my morning Math 7 classes. Due to the fact that this 3rd period math class takes place right after lunch, is my most populated class (29 students), and has a few students who have loud and disruptive behaviors, I have found it difficult to build a strong classroom culture and demonstrate a joy for teaching. **I want to be intentional about creating a strong classroom culture through positive relationships with my 3rd period class. Additionally, I also want to commit to teaching lessons that will facilitate high student engagement and participation with these students.**

***Rationale:** While discussing my self-analysis with my coach, Amanda, she asked me, "You mentioned your 3rd period class is difficult to manage and lacks a strong classroom culture. What might be some things that you are doing, whether or not they are unintentional, that might be contributing to the current climate of the classroom?" After reflecting on this question, posed by my coach, I have realized that I have a sort of defeatist attitude with this group of students. Whereas I am so excited and enthusiastic to teach my morning classes, I almost feel this sense of dread when lunch is over and I know my 3rd period class is on their way over to my classroom. I think my students can probably tell that I am not excited to teach them. And because of my lack of excitement and enthusiasm, I definitely do not approach my lessons in the same ways that I do in my morning classes. I normally take more of a lecturing/independent work approach because it's easier, then to actually facilitate structured activities. I now realize that I sometimes blame my students. I tend to think that they can't handle the type of cooperative and collaborative instruction that I provide to my morning classes. However, I am responsible for setting the current climate. I need to be better about strengthening relationships, demonstrating a joy for teaching my students, and creating the agency to provide them with the same instructional opportunities that I give to my morning classes.*

4. What *actions/practices/strategies* are you considering to make improvements in your Focus of Practice?

Note: This brainstormed list of actions/practices/strategies will serve as a bank of ideas as you continue your Focus of Practice. Please keep in mind that throughout your Focus of Practice you will come up with additional actions/practices/strategies based on your weekly reflections.

Some of the actions that I will take at the beginning of this process are listed below. I will be adding more actions and making adjustments week-to-week as I engage in this reflective period.

Action 1: Instructional Culture & Management: Element I(c) - Do my students and I demonstrate a consistent joy for learning through positive relationships with one another and a strong classroom culture?

- I realized that I have not gotten to know my 3rd period students or intentionally built rapport with them in the way that I have with my morning classes. This week I will be intentional about greeting each student by name and a fist pump as they walk into my classroom. Additionally, I will be starting off the period with a short team building ice breaker. My hope is that by incorporating these strategies, I will start to mend my relationships with my students in this class.

Action 2: Student Engagement & Ownership: Element III(c) - Do I facilitate high student engagement, enthusiasm and participation during my lessons through structured activities?

- I realized that I have resorted to lecture and independent work for this 3rd period class, even though I know that it is not the best way to teach. This week I will be utilizing the same cooperative learning structures (think-pair-share, four corners, round robin, showdown) as I do with my morning classes.

What to Expect in Part II: Reflective Journal

You will be reflecting on this Focus of Practice by writing a reflective journal entry each week.

WHY: The intent of the weekly journal entries is to help you analyze the effect of your *actions/practices/strategies* on your students over time. Through this self-reflection the hope is that you will discover which *actions/practices/strategies* are having the biggest impact on your teaching practice and why. Furthermore, through this reflective process our hope is that you will identify how to change and improve your *actions/practices/strategies* in order to make them more impactful and effective.

WHEN & HOW: With this being said, you will complete a weekly reflection guided by four questions to ensure that there is a consistent measure to analyze your progress. You will complete one journal entry each week for 4-6 weeks (This means you will have 4-6 journal entries in total). The four questions you will respond to for your weekly reflections are listed below:

1. **What specific *actions/practices/strategies* did I implement this week?**
2. **Were these *actions/practices/strategies* effective? Why or why not?**
3. **What did I learn from this week's implementation of my selected *actions/practices/strategies*?**
4. **Based on this, what changes might I want to make for next time/week? (Consider how this will impact your original Focus of Practice.)**

You can utilize two different approaches for your weekly reflection. These two options include a macro approach and a micro approach.

- The Macro reflection will be a more holistic approach and will summarize insights/learnings/observations over the course of the week. It will encompass details from multiple periods of time (multiple class periods, learning blocks, student interactions, etc.) that occurred over the course of the week.
- The Micro reflection approach will be more specific and based on a singular time during the week (a specific class period, learning block, period of time during your daily schedule, etc.).

Please know that you do not have to commit to one type of approach for *all* of your journal entries. Feel free to utilize the approach that is most appropriate and supportive for you week by week.

Focus of Practice (Part II)

Participating Teacher: Michael V.	Induction Coach: Amanda K.	Teaching assignment and grade level(s): 7th Grade Math (3rd period)
Part I, II & III Due – Year 1: April 21st Year 2 & Pending ECOs: April 7th		

Directions: Each week as you implement your intentional *actions/practices/strategies* with the goal of making improvements in your Focus of Practice, you will –

- 1) Reflect on your progress on a weekly basis using the four questions below and **type your responses into your Reflective Journal**. You can utilize two different approaches for your weekly reflection – a macro approach or a micro approach. For clarification on the two different approaches, please review the “What to Expect in Part II” cell above.
- 2) Discuss your weekly reflections with your coach to **brainstorm possible changes or improvements that you can make to your actions/practices/strategies** for the following week, with the goal of continuous improvement.
- 3) For an example of a journal entry that meets standards for Part II, refer to “[Michael's Focus of Practice](#)”, specifically pages 3-5.

Submission Requirements: Your reflective journal must be typed and include 4-6 weeks of entries.

Part II: Reflective Journal

The four questions you will respond to for your weekly reflections are listed below:

1. What specific *actions/practices/strategies* did I implement this week?
2. Were these *actions/practices/strategies* effective? Why or why not?
3. What did I learn from this week's implementation of my selected *actions/practices/strategies*?
4. Based on this, what changes might I want to make for next time/week? (*Consider how this will impact your original Focus of Practice.*)

Please include other significant insights, details, and/or examples that may not have been addressed by the questions above, including any ahas or insights from the conversations you have had with your coach.

Week 1 Date: Feb. 13-17	<p>Note: This is an example of a detailed entry. The detail and description of entries will vary week-to-week. Some weeks you will have more content to summarize; whereas, other weeks your reflective journal may be more concise because you're honing in on a specific area(s) of your Focus of Practice. Reviewers will be analyzing the quality, not the quantity, of your reflective journal. Specifically, your entries will be reviewed for depth and evaluated on the basis of the evidence you provide about your teaching practice and the impact that the improvements you made had on your student population. Keep in mind, reflective journal entries in Part II will need to paint a cohesive picture of what was learned and implemented to improve your chosen focus area.</p> <p>1. What specific <i>actions/practices/strategies</i> did I implement this week?</p> <p>Action 1: Instructional Culture & Management: Element I(c) This week I decided to be really intentional and cognizant of my facial expressions and general attitude. I know that I am not as checked in with my 3rd period class as I am with my morning classes. In addition to just having a personal attitude check, I also greeted every student as they walked into my classroom with a smile, hello, and fist pump all five days of the week. In addition to this, I also started the period with an ice breaker activity. On Monday, I had a Common Ground activity, Tuesday was the name game, Wednesday we played “Would You Rather?”, Thursday we had a hula hoop challenge, and Friday we participated in a whole class yarn tangle activity.</p> <p>Action 2: Student Engagement & Ownership: Element III(c) This week I utilized the same lesson structures in my 3rd period Math 7 class that I do with my morning Math 7 classes. Specifically, I decided to incorporate the same lesson sequence as well as the cooperative learning strategies (think-pair-share, showdown, collaborative group work on a word problem).</p>
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2. Were these *actions/practices/strategies* effective? Why or why not?

Action 1: Instructional Culture & Management: Element I(c)

In terms of my first action of checking my own attitude and demonstrating enthusiasm for this class, I think it was effective. My students certainly noticed that I was acting differently. This was especially true when I was greeting them at the door with a fist pump, as they seemed to be taken aback and a little confused. While I can't say that it has completely repaired my relationships with my students, I can say that it is something I need to continue to do everyday to slowly build trust and rapport with my students. The fact that they were so taken aback by this gesture of mine, shows me how neglectful I have been in building relationships with these students.

The next action of utilizing ice breaker activities in the beginning of the period, was somewhat effective in laying the foundations of a better classroom environment. Again, my students were hesitant and confused as to why we were starting the period with an ice breaker activity. In fact many of them asked, "Why are we doing this?". I was not prepared for their questions and in retrospect probably could have addressed the questions in a more honest and transparent way. I think my lack of transparency with them might have been the reason why several of my students didn't really share in their small groups during the activities such as Common Ground and Would You Rather. Furthermore, there were some activities that everyone participated in and seemed to enjoy; however, they took up too much time and were a bit chaotic in terms of classroom management. This was especially true for the whole class yarn tangle and hula hoop challenge. Also, five days of ice breakers felt like a lot. I think if I limit them to 2-3 days a week I will be able to save more instructional time and maintain the fun and novelty of the ice breakers. This will keep students engaged and looking forward to the next ice breaker.

Action 2: Student Engagement & Ownership: Element III(c)

I use a very specific lesson sequence with my morning classes that I don't utilize with my 3rd period class. This lesson sequence includes the objective review, some direct instruction, engagement strategies whole class, CHAMPS review, release to group work, and lesson closure. In terms of utilizing this lesson sequence with my 3rd period Math 7 class, it wasn't as effective as I had hoped for it to be. First and foremost, I ran out of time all five days and was unable to complete each lesson due to the fact that our ice breakers ended up taking longer than anticipated. Secondly, students were off-task, rambunctious, and were not productively participating in the cooperative learning structures that I had employed. During the think-pair-share, many pairs were either off-task or one person was doing an inequitable amount of work. There was a lack of shared accountability and agency amongst the students that I find is natural and organic in my morning classes. In terms of the showdown activity, some groups were not coming to a consensus and there were arguments initiated by a few of my students who struggle with tier 3 chronic misbehaviors. Lastly, when students were working in small groups on their assigned word problem, there were some groups that were working well, but many of them were not. I noticed the common issues with group work was that one or two students did all of the work for their group while the other two students were checked out and not paying attention. I also noticed that some groups stayed quiet the whole time and students worked independently instead of collaboratively. Again, the group work in my 3rd period class wasn't as seamless and successful as it is in my morning classes.

3. What did I learn from this week's implementation of my selected *actions/practices/strategies*?

Action 1: Instructional Culture & Management: Element I(c)

A general sort of realization that I had this week is that as a teacher, my attitude and my disposition have a huge impact on my students. The fact that my students were surprised and even a little taken aback by my intentional display of enthusiasm was a big wake up call for me. I am the adult and I set the culture of my classroom, and unfortunately, I have set a negative culture that is going to take some time to restore. Being positive, smiling, and greeting my students every day is not a magic fix for the current climate and culture of my classroom, but I do think things will start to change for both myself and my students.

I also learned that the ice breakers are not going to be a cure all for the current lack of classroom community in my 3rd period. However, I truly believe that as I continue this practice, the classroom community will begin to shift. Even though utilizing ice breakers throughout the week is eating away at my instructional time, I need to continue using them knowing that they are slowly but surely, having a positive impact on my relationships with my students as well as their relationships with one another. It's just going to take time and needs to be a part of the long term approach. With that, I do need to think through the structures and routines for the ice breakers I will be using next week to ensure that they are more seamless and timely.

Action 2: Student Engagement & Ownership: Element III(c)

In terms of my second action of utilizing cooperative learning structures (think-pair-share, showdown, collaborative group work on a word problem), I've had some big realizations. I realize that in my morning classes, I don't need to devote a lot of time establishing expectations and procedures because students naturally are accountable not only to themselves but to each other. However, in this class, I have to do more work in establishing and teaching my students the expectations and conditions of what successful group work looks like. With that, I also need to figure out the best group configurations (student seating chart) to foster more orderly, engaged, and successful collaboration amongst my students.

4. Based on this, what changes might I want to make for next time/week? (*Consider how this will impact your original Focus of Practice.*)

For this upcoming week, I will be making the following changes:

- In terms of the ice breakers that will take place during the beginning of the class period, I will utilize ice breakers that are less time intensive and have easy to follow, clearly defined steps. I will also utilize ice breakers only 3 out of the 5 school days. On Monday, we will do We Like, on Wednesday we will play Two Truths and a Lie, and Friday, the class will engage in a marshmallow and toothpick building challenge. In order to make sure that this week's ice breakers are better organized, I will project the directions using my smart board prior to the activity as well as model the expectations for the ice breaker with a volunteer student. I will also project a timer on the screen to let students know how much time they have to work on the activity.
- In terms of my instruction and providing my 3rd period class with the same cooperative learning strategies that I do with my morning classes, I will make sure to use CHAMPS slides for each structure that students will utilize to collaborate with each other (think-pair-share, round robin, collaborative group work on a word problem). I have found that students in my 3rd period class need a visual reminder of what they are doing and how they are doing it. In essence, they need to have the directions accessible to them in order to be successful. While this adds a little more work on my plate in terms of lesson planning and designing, I know it will support my students in meeting behavior expectations for the various cooperative learning structures.
- Another change that I will be making for next week is rearranging my students into a new seating chart. I think if I change the seating chart to optimize the best group configurations, then the cooperative learning structures will be more successful. Specifically, I will be making sure that each group is heterogenous in its academic levels and personalities. Furthermore, I will also be incentivizing effective group work by offering extra credit to those groups that are working well together.

Week 2 Date: Feb. 20-24	
Week 3 Date: Feb. 27-Mar. 3	
Week 4 Date: Mar. 6-10	
Week 5 (Optional) Date:	
Week 6 (Optional) Date:	

Focus of Practice (Part III)

Directions:

Part III Summative Reflection: At the conclusion of your 4-6 week reflection period, you will summarize your insights, learnings, and findings regarding your Focus of Practice. Specifically, you will elaborate on how your Focus of Practice impacted you as an educator.

Part III Final Administrator Collaborative: As your final step, you will share your learnings with your administrator. Please follow the steps below for detailed instructions on conducting this process.

Part III: Summative Reflection

Summarize your reflective process over the last 4-6 weeks. In your summary, please be sure to address the three prompts below:

- a) Describe your greatest insights, learnings, and findings regarding your Focus of Practice.
- b) Through this process of keeping a reflective journal, how have you evolved as a teacher?
- c) What might be some next steps you are considering to take based on the conclusion of these 4-6 weeks?

Part III: Final Administrator Collaborative

After you've completed all reflective journals and noted your final insights in your summative reflection, schedule a 15-minute meeting with your administrator (in-person or virtually) to share your process and learnings from your Focus of Practice.

- **Be sure to share components of your Summative Reflection including:**
 - *How your Focus of Practice Self-Analysis informed the development of your Focus of Practice*
 - *Your greatest insights, learnings, and findings throughout this process*
 - *How the process of reflecting weekly in a journal impacted your teaching practice*
 - *The next steps are you considering*
- **After sharing with your administrator, your administrator will complete the corresponding comments box and verify with a signature.**

Administrator Comments:

Signature of Administrator:

I understand and agree that my typed full name serves as my electronic signature.

Date: