

Data Brief

Supporting Content Coaching in Mathematics

September 2005 – May 2006

A report for the Chicago Public Schools Office of Mathematics and Science and
The Center for the Study of Learning, Instruction, and Teacher Development (LITD)
at the University of Illinois at Chicago

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The conclusions drawn in this report reflect the viewpoints of the authors. While there are many potential viewpoints, these reflect a systematic analysis of data by external evaluators. The hope is that these findings can facilitate improvement of this and related programs through open discussion and consideration of data-driven understandings.

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1. Introduction

The following document is an external evaluation report of the *Supporting Content Coaching in Mathematics Project* (SCCMP) for the 2005-2006 project year. SCCMP was supported by a grant from the Chicago Community Trust and was a combined effort of UIC Center for the Study of Learning, Instruction, and Teacher Development (LITD) and UIC Trailblazers. The short-term goals of the project were to help specialists and other teachers improve their coaching of Math teachers in their schools and to boost teachers' confidence in OMS math curriculum teaching methodologies and content.

This report provides feedback on the five professional development sessions SCCMP offered to school-based Specialists, Citywide Specialists, and lead teachers between September 2005 and May 2006. Both full-time and part-time specialists attended sessions. SCCMP project staff led those portions of the professional development sessions that were subsets of regularly scheduled specialists/lead teachers meetings with the OMS. The following table lists the sessions by date, topic, and duration.

SESSION #	DATE	TOPIC/CASE	DURATION
Session 1	September 23 2005	Building a Working Relationship	1 hour 8 minutes
Session 2	November 18, 2005	Using the Classroom Observation Guide	2 hours 8 minutes
Session 3	January 13, 2006	Facilitating the Analysis of	2 hours 30

		Student Work	minutes
Session 4	February 24, 2006	Using the Classroom Observation Guide	2 hours 10 minutes
Session 5	May 5, 2006	Do I Connect the Dots? When the Unexpected Happens	1 hour 40 minutes

In this data brief we provide the following:

- an overview of the evaluation methodology used to assess the project’s activities;
- a report on findings and analysis of training workshop organization, quality of content, quality of presenters, impact on participants;
- recommendations for future training sessions.

2. Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation of professional development sessions was organized around four guiding questions:

- What was the organization of the workshops? Was the structure of the sessions conducive to an effective learning environment?
- What was the quality of the workshop content? Were the topics useful for specialists in their work with the teachers?
- What was the quality of the presenters? Did they model quality professional development practices?
- What skills did participants report they gained from these sessions?

In order to address these questions, PRAIRIE evaluators engaged in the following evaluation activities:

- Semi-structured observations.* Semi-structured observations of the five professional development meetings led by the project’s professional development instructors with Office of Math and Science City-wide Specialists, school-based Specialists, and lead teachers. The purpose of the observations was to document the presentation of case studies of coaching presented by different instructors to be summarized in this data brief. PRAIRIE evaluators missed one session, but observed LITD’s videotape of this session. Data derived from viewing the videotape was incorporated into the overall findings.
- Written Reflections.* At the final workshop on May 5, PRAIRIE staff administered a written reflections process for participants. Participants were asked to reflect upon participation in the program’s professional development and to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the sessions. 33 participants completed the reflections. The questions asked on this form (attached to this brief as Appendix A) were devised by LITD staff, OMS staff, and the PRAIRIE Group.

3. Findings and Analysis

In this section we present findings and analysis based on observational notes, notes from the videotaped session, and written reflection forms, which were analyzed around elements relevant to the themes contained in each of the guiding project questions. These themes

include: (A) structure and organization of the sessions; (B) quality and usefulness of workshop content; (C) quality of presenters; (D) skills gained by participants.

(A) Structure and Organization of the Sessions

Findings: Most of the professional development sessions took place in a large room where the 70 or so participants were seated in groups of 4-8. At two of the five sessions the large group was split up into smaller groups. In these instances each smaller group was provided professional development by different presenters.

Each session began with an introduction of the agenda by the workshop presenter, which included a presentation regarding that day's case that addressed a topic relevant to specialists. Presenters reviewed case studies and gave specialists opportunities to talk with each other, ask questions, and communicate their ideas. Three of the five professional development sessions involved the viewing of a segment of video of a teacher and specialist interacting in a mathematics classroom. In some cases video was shown uninterrupted, in other cases clips of the video were shown, interspersed with discussion. Time spent showing the video ranged from under half an hour to over one hour, in one session. During these viewings participants had to strain to hear discussion, as the sound quality of the video was not very good. Those participants who were seated with their backs to the screen had to turn around to view the video, and the back of the room was at least two tables back from the screen and the source of sound.

Case studies were discussed in small groups after participants had a chance to either read about them or observe the videotaped footage. Small group discussion lasted about 15-20 minutes. Large group discussion generally followed small group discussions and was facilitated by the instructor and ranged from a few minutes (when groups were not directly pressed to share ideas) to 20 minutes (when participant "experts" shared ideas). The large group discussion entailed analysis of the case studies participants had read, response to the video, or a reporting out of small group discussions. Often discussion centered around how participants would apply the situation to their own work.

Analysis: Introductions were thorough and clear. The thought questions at the beginning of the session, the small group discussion, and the large group open discussion engaged some participants in sharing their experiences and opinions. In written reflections several respondents indicated they liked the workshop format. No one complained about the format itself. However, while the small group time allowed participants to answer the questions given to them, in the written reflections several participants indicated they would have liked more time in small groups to develop their ideas more fully.

While the structure of workshop sessions was consistent, sessions were uneven in terms of the effectiveness of their organization/implementation. Five factors in particular contributed to disrupting the effective flow of communication and deepening participants' engagement with the workshop content:

- *Degree of timeliness:* Timeliness was important, given that the agenda was very tight and participants expressed interest in having as much small group discussion and time for reflection as possible. Those sessions that started late were rushed at the end, when discussion, critical analysis of the cases, and potential application to participants' work was taking place. Rushing through the analytic part of the workshops prevented participants

from exploring and analyzing more deeply the issues raised in the course of the session. In their written reflections at the end of the May session, many participants complained that they felt rushed at the end.

- *Organization of participants in the room:* The number of participants was large as was the room. This made it difficult to control the noise level. It also discouraged meaningful participation during large group discussions. Participants sitting in the front tended to participate more actively, while those sitting in back participated less and appeared to become distracted or “tune out.” Even small group activities were hampered by the room and group seating arrangements such as tables too close together such that presenters may have had difficulty getting to each table or participants may have been distracted by conversations around them.
- *Ordering lunch:* At several sessions lunch ordering forms were passed around during the presentation and small group discussion, interrupting the learning activities. When the forms were being passed around, the noise level went up in the room and the momentum of the session was disrupted.
- *Miscommunication about structure/schedule:* Miscommunication between presenters and specialists as well as among presenters and OMS staff was not uncommon. For instance, during the May session the presenter announced that the group was supposed to be out of the big room and split into two smaller rooms, but the specialists had not been informed that they needed to change rooms. This meant time was spent moving and resettling rather than on learning. One participant indicated that this type of miscommunication happened often. Another type of miscommunication identified was the failure to inform some specialists about the workshops, an issue identified in the written reflections.
- *Video length and quality:* The video clip was rather long relative to the total time for the PD session, which meant that participants were engaged in passive viewing for a good chunk of time, except in the case (discussed in section C below), in which the presenter worked between video and discussion. As mentioned above, another drawback of the videos was the poor quality of the audio, making it difficult to hear and understand what the specialists, teachers, and students were saying. This may have been particularly distracting on those occasions when the video was viewed continuously without interruption for commentary or discussion.

(B) Content, quality and usefulness of workshops:

Findings. In this section we summarize the content of each workshop session and describe the use of video clips during the workshops.

- The September session on *Building a Better Working Relationship* emphasized having specialists become more personable and less threatening with the school staff by getting to know the school, building up teachers, getting the principal to support them, visiting classrooms and working with manipulatives, and letting teachers know what they are taking notes on.
- The November session on *Using the Classroom Observation Guide Part 1* covered the pre-conference with a teacher and the observation of a lesson with close detail of how students were responding during the lesson. It emphasized reading about the lesson guide as well as the lesson plan given to

them by the teachers before the observation. The presenter encouraged participants to push the teachers toward lessons and practices that are new to them.

- In the January session on *Facilitating the Analysis of Student Work by Teachers* the presenters led specialists through an analysis of student work and then talked about ways they could take this analysis process back to teachers in their schools.
- At the February session on *Using the Classroom Observation Guide Part 2*, specialists were reminded of the November meeting on this same topic and told that they would continue with the observation of the teacher and the post-observation meeting. Use of the Classroom Observation Guide took place prior to watching the videotape of the observation.
- The May session on *Connecting the Dots* employed two presenters who shared the same content but had different approaches to how to present this to specialists. This session's conversation addressed the topic of drawing lines of best fit.

Videos were introduced in the November, February and May sessions to showing a “coach” working with a teacher. Video clips included the following events: (1) a pre-conference session of the “coach” and teacher conferring about what the teacher would like the “coach” to look for in the classroom, (2) the classroom teaching and/or coaching session, (3) a post-conference session in which the “coach” and the teacher discussed the classroom teaching and whether the teacher's goals were met in the classroom that day. The February session included a pre-conference transcript as well. During the video watching time, participants were supposed to write notes to help them answer the discussion questions.

Video content was used to provoke participant questions about the teaching and students' work. For example, during the May session on “Connecting the Dots,” the presenter showed a snippet and asked questions about the kind of learners they were looking at, and how students showed what they did and did not know. After a short discussion, the presenter showed the video again. In this piece of the video students asked the teacher a question and the teacher didn't know the answer. So the students decided to look for the answer in the book. The presenter used the video to help specialists realize that although there are a lot of misconceptions in a classroom, more emphasis should be placed on asking questions and working through errors. The presenter asked participants what the teacher was doing to promote this, what the mathematical lesson was, the goal of the lesson, and how to approach a post-lesson conference with the teacher. The presenter's point was that specialists should have the teachers discover their own error when talking to the teachers.

Analysis: Based on our observations, the content of the sessions engaged most participants. Small groups often seemed to be engaged in conversation on the topic; however, not all small groups participated in feedback in the large group. For example, often the presenter asked for general feedback without specifically calling on a particular group to report out. Sometimes folks responded; other times they didn't. In some of these cases the presenter, without giving more “wait time” or without directing the question to a particular group, just continued on either answering her own question or moving on to another topic. Several participants indicated in written reflections that the content gave them a lot to think about and work with, and they indicated that they were able to or trying to use the materials in their practice. That said, on multiple occasions we observed a number of participants reading the paper,

making the rounds to tables to chat with friends, talking on cell phones, and engaging with colleagues on other topics.

The following set of tables represents participants' self-report regarding the usefulness of each session. It should be noted that all sessions were rated on the written reflection form administered at the end of the final session. Thus individual sessions were rated in some cases long after they had taken place. Several participants indicated in their reflections that this limited or impeded their ability to reflect accurately on the usefulness of the particular session.

September '05 Building a Working Relationship

Specialists	Highly Useful	Useful	Slightly Useful	Not at all useful	Didn't attend
Full-time	6	3	3	1	5
Part-time	2	3	0	0	5

November 05 Using the Classroom Observation Guide for Content Coaching: 1

Specialists	Highly Useful	Useful	Slightly Useful	Not at all useful	Didn't attend
Full-time	7	4	1	1	5
Part-time	2	2	0	0	4

January '06 Facilitating the Analysis of Student Work by Teachers

Specialists	Highly Useful	Useful	Slightly Useful	Not at all useful	Didn't attend
Full-time	9	4	2	2	2
Part-time	1	3	0	0	5

February '06 Using the Classroom Observation Guide for Content Coaching: 2

Specialists	Highly Useful	Useful	Slightly Useful	Not at all useful	Didn't attend
Full-time	10	4	1	1	2
Part-time	1	3	0	0	6

May '06 Do I Connect the Dots? When the Unexpected Happens

Specialists	Highly Useful	Useful	Slightly Useful	Not at all useful	Didn't attend
Full-time	8	7	2	2	0
Part-time	3	5	0	0	0

Participants' written reflections shed some light on what they found to be particularly useful about the session. The three most common comments addressing usefulness of the sessions

were as follows: 1. the videotaped clips were realistic; 2. the sessions helped them understand and practice good implementation; 3. the discussions were useful.

As the tables on session usefulness indicate, among full-time specialists, most participants rated the sessions as “Highly Useful.” Only in the last session were the categories “Highly Useful” and “Useful” rated almost equally by participants. Participants claimed the sessions were “engaging, interesting, and thought provoking.” However, as noted in the tables above, roughly 30 participants responded to the written reflections at this last training session. This number represents less than half the normal attendance for these meetings, which were usually attended by between 50-70 participants. Thus these aggregate numbers are not necessarily representative of the entire participant pool.

Part-time specialists tended to rate the sessions as “Useful” more than “Highly Useful.” This is perhaps due to their lack of opportunities to work with colleagues in a coaching capacity. Part-time specialists with teaching responsibilities do not have the time availability to devote themselves to coaching, and since the sessions involved coaching teachers, those part-time specialists may not have considered the cases to be as relevant to their practice as the full-time specialists. This, however, does not reflect the quality of content offered for those who do coach.

In the written reflections, many reported that the sessions provided a new perspective on some of the situations they faced and helped them see how to do their job, such as how to communicate with teachers in ways that were not threatening—applying what one participant described as the “lite” touch. Watching the videos and working with the discussion questions gave specialists ideas about where to improve. Some participants indicated that it was useful to see another teacher working and participating in real-life situations (the fact that the video was realistic was very important), and then be able to react to them through learning activities and the discussion questions that preceded the videos, as well as in small groups afterwards.

Another measure of content quality is *importance or relevance*. We assess importance/relevance of the sessions in drawing on two factors: (a) participation of the specialists, especially through the use of questions; and (b) discussion of problems specialists are aware of. In the November session, issues related to working with the Observation Guide provided participants with an opportunity to share with each other what strategies work best. This discussion, while focusing on the video case, relied equally on the expertise of participants who readily engaged in conversations with each other about their experiences and uses of the Classroom Observation Log. Several participants commented in their written reflections on the value of dialogue among specialists, and the opportunity to hear other specialists share their experiences. This suggests that the relevance of the sessions is increased when the expertise in the room is drawn on through the discussion and reflection process.

The use of video had the potential to be an effective training tool since it gave participants the opportunity to see a real life situation about the issue discussed, and provided a concrete example to refer to during the discussion. In some instances the video helped clarify the point and let the participants see an effective/ineffective case “hands-on.” Most participants who answered the written reflections in May stated that they enjoyed and learned a lot from the videos because they were “realistic.” However, many

of the participants also stated that they would have liked to see a case study with a resistant teacher, since this was a common “real” situation.

When the video content was consistent with the content of the sessions it provided a relevant illustration of interaction between specialists and teachers on which participants could model their own work with the teachers. Critical questions were brought up during the video, as seen in pre-conference and post-conference interviews, as well as after the video viewing when the participants shared their ideas, questions, and experiences with each other in small and large groups. However, on several occasions this consistency between session content and video content was lacking. For instance, during the February session the topic of how to interact with the teacher was the focus of a brainstorming discussion with the entire group; however, few if any of the large group suggestions were addressed in the videotaped post conference interview that presenter showed after this discussion. In this case viewing of the video clip seemed to diffuse the instructional value of the brainstorming discussion since the post-conference video clip lacked much of what specialists agreed needed to be addressed with the teacher.

(C) Quality of presenters and modeling of professional development practices

Findings and analysis. In this section we combine findings and analysis of quality of presenters around three facets of the workshop sessions: discussion, use of learning tools, and time management.

Discussions: During discussion sessions, presenters welcomed participants’ comments and gave feedback to comments. They encouraged the development of ideas and analysis by asking open-ended questions such as, “What kind of learners are they?” Presenters pointed out problems, and asked how to solve them, listened to the answer, gave feedback and added further clarification or explanation of the issues. Questions were answered promptly and professionally. Presenters also used the guidelines used for coaching by specialists to induce the participants to think deeper about the cases.

Participants expressed a range of responses to presenter style in their written reflections. Some people praised the presenters’ style as well-prepared and thorough. Others indicated that the presenters cut short participation in the large group. This was corroborated by our observations: Frequently, the presenters answered their own questions in large group discussion instead of giving enough “think” time to the participants. According to the written reflections, some participants felt that the presenters lacked enthusiasm and ran the session as though they were reading out of a script.

Discussion was most fruitful when presenters encouraged elaboration of ideas presented or additional comments and engaged other participants as sources of knowledge by asking them about their experiences with certain things. For example, during the February session, an OMS Facilitator advised the other workshop participants that during an observation they should record “verbatim what you want to relay to the teacher so that you have an example of what you mean. Have a checklist. Videotape the class without telling students when possible.” Another good practice, according to that Facilitator, “is to observe only what the teacher asks you to observe, and only communicate that, even if you have notes about other things. The Facilitator suggested being specific and gave her own examples of how to write notes in shorthand. She also encouraged specialists not to offer suggestions or make it look like they were evaluating the teachers, but to just ask questions that would make teachers think about their

lesson. It bears noting one of the reasons the session was effective was because the Facilitator, a leader within OMS with considerable knowledge and expertise in the area being discussed, was afforded the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the subject at hand.

Quality of presentation was negatively affected by the room arrangement. For instance, when participants offered their comments and questions, it was sometimes hard to hear for the people sitting in the back. Often the microphone, if used, was only used by presenters. While some presenters were good at reiterating questions and summarizing comments from other teachers, other presenters did not leave enough wait time after posing questions to allow for participant response. During small group discussions, most presenters waited at the front while participants engaged each other at tables. On rarer occasions the presenters circulated through the groups and answered questions. This might have been limiting for participants, since some may not have dared to ask questions in a larger group. It also seemed that most of the presenter's attention was on those sitting in front, which may have led others further back to feel excluded from the discussion and lead to their disengagement.

Use of learning tools: Presenters used various tools to facilitate learning: handouts, videos and overhead projectors. The handouts included case studies and Observation Guides. Use of video clips, which were shown in most of the sessions, is discussed in Section B above, including limited effectiveness of the video clips due to the poor quality of the sound. Here we would like to comment on how video and discussion were or were not effectively integrated into the sessions by the presenters.

Instructional use of video clips varied considerably in terms of effectiveness. In at least one session, the presenter ran the videotape without interruption, and then engaged the group in discussion in ways that did not effectively integrate the case viewed with the issues raised or questions asked during discussion. For instance, following the intervention by the OMS Facilitator during the February session described above, the presenter agreed that offering criticism was “sticky” and asked teachers what worked for them. The specialists shared in both large and small groups how they handled these situations. Before watching the pre-conference video, the presenter asked general questions that specialists could be guided to answer using the 16-question guide. She then instructed specialists to consider what the teacher had asked the “Coach” to watch for. While viewing the video, specialists could be actively thinking about the classroom teaching and about their own way of guiding teachers. The presenter discussed the importance of teamwork, of having a purpose to work on together, and of focusing on agreed upon pieces of the Classroom Observation Guide or particular issues the teacher is interested in getting feedback on. After watching the video clip in the large group, the presenter asked participants questions like what they could ask the teacher and how they could encourage the quieter students to participate. The presenter brainstormed with them about how to discuss the observation with the teacher. However, much of the brainstormed discussion of how to interact with the teacher was not addressed in the videotaped post conference interview that Specialists viewed after this discussion.

The range of effective use of video clips was apparent during the final, May, session. One presenter relied heavily on the videotape, having Specialists watch how this was handled in

one particular classroom and having Specialists engage in conversation about this episode as they watched it progress. The other presenter engaged participants in conversation about the importance of understanding the line of best fit and used the video clip (where classroom conversation was difficult to understand) sparingly, relying instead on the expertise in the room to discuss the issues relevant in this case story.

Time management: Due to late starts, and/or the complexity of the issue at hand, discussions were cut short at the end of the sessions. Some of the questions on handouts were read very quickly also. One presenter handled the time issue by keeping participants on track, saying, “If you’re not finished, skip to ...” in order to prevent the group from falling behind.

Presenters seemed to have difficulty gauging appropriate allotment of activities, based on the speeding up of the session at the end. Time mismanagement led to short discussion times at the end, limiting the amount of knowledge shared and dissected. This was a drawback to the sessions. It also may have been a factor encouraging the presenters to answer their own questions, a practice which discouraged critical thinking and active engagement.

(D) Skills gained by participants

Findings and analysis: In this section we draw on the results of the written reflections conducted during the final May session to present findings and analysis regarding the skills participants reported to have gained through their participation in the PD sessions. It bears noting that data for this question are limited, as they are restricted to participant self-report that took place only once, at the end of the 9-month-long professional development sequence.

Of the 30 participants who provided written reflections during the final May session (i.e., less than half of all participants), over half of the respondents identified specific new skills they had learned and/or applied (some offering more than one skill), which we distinguish as “instructional” or “dispositional/relational.”

Instructional skills:

- How to approach a teachers’ Math mistake in a lesson.
- Use of a “lite” touch for the “coaching” during grade level meetings, in getting teachers to share student work.
- Rather than say please bring X, brought a sample beforehand that teachers discussed.
- Reflection about what is seen and how to improve on an observation session.
- Used the coaching guide #1 to help through observations
- Has tried to incorporate some of teaching session into teaching
- Read suggestions in guide and when possible, apply to various problems encountered in class.
- Has used discussion about using the Class Observation Guide while doing observations in my school.

- When able to pre and post conference with teachers, used the guide and coaching tools that were presented.
- In grade levels, have looked at student work to discuss how to enhance instruction.
- Uses the Classroom Observation Guide to Content Coaching with all K-8 teachers as a basis for observations.
- Has gone to classrooms to observe teachers/Held group discussions on student work.

Dispositional/relational skills

- Communicate effectively with teachers with professionalism and common sense.
- Increased confidence implementing/working with the classroom observation guide with teachers.
- Decrease anxiety by focusing on 2 or 3 questions rather than all questions available.
- Use a little more patience in work.
- How to approach conversations in my building
- How can approach and interact with teachers at my school.
- Acquired a foundation of where to start with respect to working with teaching staff.

In addition to the respondents who described specific new skills learned or applied, 7 respondents indicated that yes, they have applied or intend to apply, what they learned in their work, without specifying what they had learned. Five people did not respond to the question, and another five respondents indicated they have not learned or applied new skills. Of these, two indicated not being able to apply skills learned due to other issues or commitments, and another responded they hadn't had the chance to apply what was learned since it was their first time attending a session. It bears noting that several participants indicated in their written reflections that they would have liked to address how to engage with resistant teachers. This was a topic that was not addressed during the PD sessions or in the video clips. Overall, written reflections suggest that most participants acquired new skills and were able or expected to be able to apply these in their roles as specialists.

4. Recommendations

In this section we offer recommendations for the following aspects of the professional development sessions reported on and analyzed above: workshop organization and structure; content quality and usefulness; and quality of presenters.

(A) Workshop organization and structure:

- Give participants more group work time for deeper analysis of the topics.
- Establish a shared etiquette for the sessions. Sessions should start on time so that there is enough analytic time during the workshop and enough time for questions at the end. Establish clear rules about breaks, such as going to the bathroom, cell phone talking, and chitchatting
- Order lunch during an assigned break to avoid distracting participants
- Convey information as clearly as possible, relate changes in scheduling early and to as many people as possible to avoid confusion and absenteeism.
- Make sessions available to those who missed them in the form of handouts.

- Reconsider group size and ability of instructor to engage with large groups.
- Take into account the room size and acoustics when organizing large and small group discussions.

(B) Quality and Usefulness of Content

- Use of videotapes should be carefully considered in relation to the content of the session cases. Video clips will be most effective when their content is consistent with, and reinforces, the content of discussion. If this is not the case, workshop time may be better spent engaging all small groups in presenting their thoughts on a particular topic that is raised in the large group. This is especially true given the unevenness of participation during large group discussions.
- It would be useful, when thinking about future topics, to solicit ideas from participants and deal with their issues. Possible issues include: working with resistant teachers (which is difficult to show in video), working with resistant students or skill-deficient students, team-teaching (teacher and specialist), use of games, giving more classroom observation info (many asked to stay away from cases in written reflections), series of grade level meetings with specialist, and post-conferences/follow-up after observation.
- Many participants in these sessions have held leadership roles within CMSI for a number of years as Coaches, Facilitators, City-wide Specialists, or Specialists. We suggest that professional development sessions utilize this wealth of knowledge more effectively by calling on these leaders to share their expertise as observed in the February session on the Classroom Observation Log.
- Because of this great wealth of experience of participants, it is imperative that in planning professional development for them, presenters ask them directly what topics or areas of concern they want/need professional development in.
- To better gauge how professional development is meeting the needs of participants, more frequent and timely evaluation of sessions is needed.
- Given the poor quality of the video sound, and the uneven incorporation of video clips into the ongoing group discussion, the extent of use of video clips should be reconsidered. If video continues to be used, providing a transcript would be helpful, at least in the main clips of the video, to help the specialists understand everything that is going on, besides trying to improve the quality of the sound, if possible. Also, the topics of the videos could be managed so that other realistic situations are seen, such as working with resistant teachers.

(C) Quality of Presentation:

- Presenters' involvement in large group discussion and the quality of their presentation were conducive to learning and sharing. It would be helpful to reiterate questions and comments from specialists so that everyone can hear them, before giving answers and comments.
- Special care should be taken to involve everyone, even those in the back, by asking them questions and calling on them, as often as on those in the front.
- If questions are worth asking, answers are worth waiting for. Presenters need to increase wait time to ensure that participants have time to answer and/or presenters need to direct questions to particular participants to answer.

- When participants work in groups, it would be helpful for the presenters to walk around the tables and see how they can help participants with issues that arise and to check for understanding. Some participants may be too shy to ask questions in the large group. Doing this would make learning more effective for more participants.
- Time needs to be managed more effectively and consistently. Presenters could try to come up with a schedule of what is to be covered at which times and sticking to them by having the group move on. Special topics should be considered and given the special time they need. Small group discussion need not be seen as limited and should be given more time, since small group interaction is very conducive to learning. Most participants are more open to expressing their ideas and asking questions during small group than during the large group time. Therefore, more time should be devoted to this activity.

Appendix A: Written Reflection on LITD Cases

Please indicate your position: __ School Specialist; __ Specialist with teaching responsibilities; __ City-wide Specialist; __ OMS Facilitator; __ Other: _____.

Over the course of this year, the Center for the Study of Learning, Instruction, and Teacher Development/Barb Crum has presented a number of cases for discussion. Please respond as specifically as you can to the following questions about this work.

Please indicate which sessions you attended and their usefulness to your work with schools: (HU: Highly Useful, U: Useful, SU: Slightly Useful, NU: Not at all useful, DA: Didn't Attend)

_____ Sept. 05 Building a Working Relationship

_____ Nov. 05 Using the Classroom Observation Guide for Content Coaching: 1

_____ Jan. 06 Facilitating the Analysis of Student Work by Teachers

_____ Feb. 06 Using the Classroom Observation Guide for Content Coaching: 2

_____ May 06 Do I Connect the Dots? When the Unexpected Happens

Reflecting on the above cases that you attended,

1. Please describe the presentation of these cases. (Style, format, your engagement in them).

2. How have you applied what you learned in your day-to-day work? (Please be specific/give examples.)

3. What have been the strengths of the cases?

4. Was this case study work an effective use of your professional development time? (Explain why or why not... i.e.: is this something OMS should continue next year?)

5. What are ways that you would improve the cases themselves?

6. How would you improve the format or content of the professional development sessions around these cases?

7. What are some other topics that you would like to see cases developed for?