TO WHAT EXTENT IS TEACHING DEPENDENT ON THE LEVEL OF THE STUDENT’S ABILITY? This is very important about knowing where the students’ are in their knowledge of math. You have to be able to talk at their level so they can understand you.

DO THE TEACHER MENTORS BELIEVE THAT STUDENTS BUILD KNOWLEDGE ON PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE? Yes I feel it is important for the students to grasp concepts they have to have a basis of previous knowledge to build on.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND TEACHERS? The interaction has to be mostly professional especially at first. The students need to realize that you are the teacher not their buddy especially at first. One can always loosen up your discipline as the year goes on. It is very difficult to increase your discipline as the year goes on. If you have to resort to this I feel that the remainder of the school year will be much harder.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU USE TECHNOLOGY/SHOULD ONE USE TECHNOLOGY? I feel technology is very important. Anything to help the students understand math concepts I am for.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU USE MANIPULATIVES?/SHOULD ONE USE MANIPULATIVES? Manipulatives should be used to show how it concretely solves math problems. However one needs to be careful with these tools to make sure they do not just play with them.

TO WHAT EXTENT SHOULD STUDENTS BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN LEARNING? Students are still young teenagers in middle school. I remember many years ago when I was that age and if learning was left up to me I would not have spent near as many hours as I needed studying. So assigning homework and keeping students on task during school is the teachers’ responsibility. I feel that much homework is not necessary because we have the students an hour in class and by being busy one can get an incredible amount of work done. I do assign homework one night a week especially to help those that need help in after school programs.

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT CHANGE THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH OF THE TEACHER MENTOR? In the 7th and 8th grade classes we do not get much parental involvement unless we ask for it. Then when parents come in they want to help as much as they can but they admit at times that they can not help much. By the parents showing up at school this has a tendency to help the student because they know that the parents care.

WHAT ROLE DOES THE TEXTBOOK PLAY IN YOUR COURSE? WHAT ROLE WOULD YOU LIKE IT TO PLAY? The textbook is the main part of my lesson. I use it to show the students continuity and gives wonderful examples and explanations as opposed to just listening to me. I like having it in this role.
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF STRUCTURED TIME IN LEARNING? I feel the majority of the time should be in individual work. Group work can be a useful tool. One needs to be careful to make sure the students are on task not just playing in group work. Also make sure that not just one student is doing all the work.

HOW DOES THE TENSION BETWEEN STUDENT DISCIPLINE, ATTITUDE, AND LEARNING PLAY OUT IN THE APPROACH OF THE TEACHER MENTOR TO PEDAGOGY? Students that have the discipline and attitude to want to come to school and learn are a pleasure to teach. The others are where we earn our money. It is motivating them that is the challenge. It has been heart warming to me to have students call me and say that they are going to college because of me. I am still learning the approach of discipline and being their caring adult. I try to treat them the way I would want a teacher to treat my children.

IS THERE A “RURAL NATURE TO MATH PEDAGOGY”? After talking to Ms. Heilman we agree that there is no rural nature that math is a universal language. She has taught at Bryan Station High School and I certainly respect her viewpoint.

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE EXISTENCE OF A STATE-WIDE ASSESSMENT BEAR ON STYLE OR PEDAGOGY? The state test runs my program. Everything that I teach I feel could be on the test. I use it to my advantage by telling the students that this material is important to other people smarter than me (state department) so we have to learn it. I never will forget when the CATS test was introduced in the early nineties. Mr. Ek Rose (speaker of Ky house) came and talked to us. We were not happy about being accountable about the test, feeling the students were deciding our fates. He said there are parts of this that nobody likes. I can assure you the public does not like their taxes raised to provide the money that you are going to get. That year we had a sliding scale of 5.5 to 15% raises with the most going to the more experienced teachers. Teachers maxed out then in the low $30,000 and next year will be in the high $50,000 not too bad for 17 years.