

Mathematics Implementation Study
Interview Protocol: Principals

[Record district name, school name, principal name, and date and time of interview.]

Thank you very much for authorizing your school's participation in this study, for allowing us to come observe here and talk with some teachers, and for speaking with me today. The study that I am working on is about the kinds of school and classroom practices that contribute to high mathematics achievement, and the influence of state and local policies on mathematics instruction.

[If taping the interview] With your permission, I would like to tape record the interview so that I can concentrate on what you are saying rather than on note-taking. The tape recording will remain confidential. Is that okay?

Do you have any questions before we begin? Okay.

1. Tell me about your school's mathematics instructional program. *[Probe for underlying philosophy, scope and sequence (e.g., grade levels the same across schools in district, articulation, etc.)]*
2. Has the school undertaken any new initiatives recently that seem likely to have an effect on mathematics instruction? *[Probe for details on status of, changes in, and reasons for:*
 - *changes in curriculum materials and assessment*
 - *differentiated curriculum and instruction for students with special needs (LEP, special education, Title I, GATE, etc.)*
 - *the way teachers' time is organized to facilitate planning, professional development, collaboration, or other goals*
 - *school time or structure*
 - *the way students are scheduled and organized*
 - *student support services]*
3. To what extent has district policy required, encouraged, and/or supported these changes? What kinds of resources and assistance does the district make available to you?
4. How much discretion does the school have in determining its math curriculum? math textbooks and other instructional materials? curriculum coverage and pacing?
5. How much discretion do individual teachers have in these areas? Are there any committees within the school that make decisions about these issues?

6. What factors do you think exert the greatest influence over mathematics instruction in this school? [*Probe for state and district policies, SBE and district standards, SAT-9, other assessments, national influences (e.g., NCTM standards), professional development, teacher preparation, student demographic characteristics, etc.*]
7. What role does the school play in providing professional development in mathematics instruction for teachers? Do you have any particular priorities and goals for professional development in math? [*Probe for whether teachers are required to participate, how often, whether they have any choices, compensation, who sponsors, and who provides PD.*]
8. What do you think are the most effective kinds of professional development for your teachers in mathematics?
9. What factors do you think exert the greatest influence over *student achievement* in mathematics in this school? [*Probe for professional development, instructional strategies, school characteristics, student characteristics, parent involvement, etc.*]
10. What measures do you use to assess student mathematics achievement in your school? [*Probe for local state and national assessments, percentage of students meeting grade levels standards, etc.*]
11. Generally speaking, how would you rate student mathematics achievement in your school as a whole? [*Probe: what makes you think so?*]
12. Thinking about your school as a whole, what changes do you think are needed to improve math instruction? [*Probe for changes in how teachers work together, funding and other material resources (e.g., technology), parent involvement, and district or state policies.*]
13. These days there is a lot of emphasis placed on accountability. Have you felt that your school has been held accountable? If so, what have you been held accountable for and to whom? What impact, if any, has the state or district accountability system had on your school (not just in math instruction, but in general)?

Thank you so much for your time; you've given us some really valuable information. Can I get copies of the following materials you mentioned? Is there anyone else I should talk to in your school to get a perspective on the kinds of things that we have talked about?