**START Lisa\_Gr1-ST\_Rita\_2014\_12\_02.MP3**

PROFESSOR BABB: So December 2nd, 2014. This is an interview with Lisa, Grade One at St. Rita. So I’m gonna go with some of these questions.

INTERVIEWEE LISA: Okay.

PROFESSOR BABB: First we want to start asking about some recommendations.

INTERVIEWEE: Okay.

PROFESSOR BABB: So what specific advice would you give to the new teachers joining Math Minds?

INTERVIEWEE: What advice? I guess just -- I mean you have to look through the student worksheets prior to the lesson and the teacher lessons. That way, you know, you know exactly what you’re supposed to cover in the lesson and adapt accordingly. And I would keep in mind that in my opinion the teacher manual or the PowerPoint slides, they don’t always fully correlate to the student worksheets. Sometimes there’s -- I’ve noticed on numerous occasions there’s been a gap there so you might have to do a little extra teaching before you send them off to do their activity sheet. Yes, because I -- yes, the slides are not always 100 percent correlated to the student book. So, you need to change the content sometimes.

PROFESSOR BABB: And this is very particular for you. What advice would you give to the teacher that will cover your class?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. So in general you mean?

PROFESSOR BABB: No, your teacher that will come into your class --

INTERVIEWEE: Right. Well, --

PROFESSOR BABB: -- this year.

INTERVIEWEE: -- she’ll have to be, you know, brought up to speed about what unit I’m on.

PROFESSOR BABB: Hmm-hmm.

INTERVIEWEE: And she’ll have to sort of do what I did which was I mean, look through the teacher manuals, talk to you guys and, you know, with Math Minds. She’ll have -- the new teacher will have to talk to Cindy next door to get some tips from Cindy as well.

PROFESSOR BABB: Did you get tips from Cindy?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh yes, she’s given me some tips because she did it last year so she’s been helpful for sure. And just, you know, read -- you know, like familiar -- the teacher -- the new teacher’s going to have to familiarize him or herself with, you know, the standard things that we use; the whiteboards for assessment

PROFESSOR BABB: Hmm-hmm.

INTERVIEWEE: -- the thumbs up or down, all -- you know, the things we have covered in PDs this year. They’re going to have to be brought up to speed quickly on that, right? So they have all those little strategies at hand that they can use so, --

PROFESSOR BABB: And --

INTERVIEWEE: Because they’ve missed all the PDs so, yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: Yeah. What advice would you give to the Research Team going forward in the project in terms of working with new teachers here and in the 02:31 (INDISCERNIBLE) school?

INTERVIEWEE: Advice for new teachers --

PROFESSOR BABB: Actually it’s advice for us, --

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- for the Research Team.

INTERVIEWEE: Okay. I guess just keep in mind that when you guys come in -- as uninvasive as you try to be, a lesson might not always be the way it is when it’s just the teacher and the students, right? It is a different set of eyes in the class; the students realize you’re there. As friendly and as much as you try to be a fly on the wall it is different, right? And also keep in mind that if a certain lesson does not go particularly well when you guys are -- when the Research Team is in the room, whether that’s a day that you’re videotaping or not videotaping, teachers often will go back -- sometimes in a day if one math lesson went poorly, we’ll do a second unplanned math lesson later in the day to, you know, correct anything that may have gone askew the first time. But you guys don’t see that.

PROFESSOR BABB: Yeah.

INTERVIEWEE: Right? So, you know, there’s a lot of behind the scene things that happen, right? Like I’ve done that on, you know, on this year with JUMP Math or just in the past, right? Like if any lesson, a Language Arts, Math or whatever, if a given lesson does -- goes completely sideways and goes, you know, really really poorly, a subsequent lesson may happen later on in the day.

PROFESSOR BABB: So what would you suggest? Do you keep -- would you say keep this in mind?

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah, just keep it mind. Like, you know, because you guys have given us feedback after lessons and I think for the most part like teachers are able to recognize the downfalls in a lesson which is part of your feedback. You guys give positive and negative feedback, you know, like constructive feedback. But, you know, for the most part I think we’re aware of the parts that didn’t work and I think teachers do self-correct that in the next lessons. You know, we’ll back-teach and try to correct whatever has happened. So just keep that in mind I guess, that, you know, we know our students really well and we try to correct anything that didn’t seem to go over smoothly the first time. Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: Okay. Now the JUMP materials such as teachers’ guides, SMART Board, --

INTERVIEWEE: Hmm-hmm.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- slides and students books are intended to help with planning and implementing math instruction. Have you found these materials to be helpful, restrictive or difficult? Please give us examples.

INTERVIEWEE: No, I have found them helpful certainly. I love the whiteboards. Students are really engaged with the whiteboards. For the most part the PowerPoint slides are helpful, like there’s more -- there’s often more than I’ll use in a given lesson or I’ll split the lesson up into two, you know, I’ll split a JUMP lesson into two --

PROFESSOR BABB: Hmm-hmm.

INTERVIEWEE: -- teacher lessons, right? I’ll split it up. But no, I think in general like it’s been very helpful. That doesn’t mean that there are not extra worksheets outside of JUMP.

PROFESSOR BABB: Hmm-hmm.

INTERVIEWEE: Right? Like even with addition and subtraction which is like fundamental to grade one math, there wasn’t particularly a lot of pages in JUMP Math for addition and subtraction and I haven’t seen the second workbook so maybe that’s different. You know, maybe there’s going to be a lot of that in the second workbook. But I didn’t find there to be a lot of addition and subtraction so like I’ve given my students lots of extra worksheets that are outside of JUMP. That can be during -- that can be in their Treasure Book which is like a free time kind of duotang, or we have an actual extra math duotang that has an array of worksheets in there just to give extra practice because I don’t think for a lot of the fundamentals of math -- even though JUMP like goes in small sequential steps, I don’t know if there’s enough -- always enough practice.

PROFESSOR BABB: So you’re adding practice.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, definitely. Like they have a separate math duotang. Like right now with it being Christmastime like, you know, they have a little booklet a dozen or so Christmasy math worksheets that they can work on, that are addition and subtraction up to 20 because that’s what we work on in grade one. So there’s room for additional sheets.

PROFESSOR BABB: And I have a question because that’s interesting. When you work with these additional sheets and --

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- additional practice --

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- do you still follow some of the JUMP principles or it’s just kind of something totally different?

INTERVIEWEE: Well, they’re meant to -- no I don’t know if I do follow the JUMP for that because it’s meant to be independent and the lesson like for addition and subtraction would have already been done with JUMP, right? These are just additional, they’re just supplementing --

PROFESSOR BABB: So how does it work? The students are working and do you check their work and then provide -- assist them or --

INTERVIEWEE: With the extra math?

PROFESSOR BABB: Yes.

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah, yeah. I mark them. Like I either mark them at the end of the day or I mark them as they hand them in. But they’re meant to be -- yeah, they’re just meant to be extra independent worksheets that they could do with a partner. Sometimes I say, you know, “Get your math duotang and you can go work with a partner.” But I’d say most of the time it’s independent just so that they’re not copying answers. But yeah, so I think --

PROFESSOR BABB: Now the --

INTERVIEWEE: -- the supply or the materials have been helpful. There’s just -- I’ve had to still use my own materials on top of them.

PROFESSOR BABB: Yeah, and that’s okay. Because we also --

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah. Which is not to mean that JUMP materials have not been helpful, it’s just -- yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: And we expect that teachers actually adapt it --

INTERVIEWEE: Right.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- these into their own classroom so it’s -- that’s common. So --

INTERVIEWEE: Okay.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- do you closely follow the teachers’ guide?

INTERVIEWEE: I don’t know how closely I follow it to be honest. Like I read it but I don’t know. I do it in conju’ -- I guess it’s all sort of mixed up all together so I look at the teacher manual but I -- more than that I look at the slides that are on --

PROFESSOR BABB: Hmm-hmm.

INTERVIEWEE: -- the given lesson and I teach the slides or cover the slides just in a way that maybe I would have taught math normally but I follow the slides. So I’m not following the teacher manual to a T but I certainly review the teacher manual and keep that in the back of my mind.

PROFESSOR BABB: So would it be fair to say that you follow more closely the SMART Board than the teacher’s manual?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Yes, definitely.

PROFESSOR BABB: And the students’ book?

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah. So we’ve done the majority of the workbook. Some of the pages like back when we were doing ‘more and less’ on a given page there’s a lot of language.

PROFESSOR BABB: Hmm-hmm.

INTERVIEWEE: And especially in term one of grade one there was too much language, right? So we would have to either -- we skip some pages or we would do them collectively as a class and I’d have to, you know, read the que’ -- like read question by question by question because there was too much on a page.

PROFESSOR BABB: I noticed something --

INTERVIEWEE: Too much language.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- something very interesting today.

INTERVIEWEE: Hmm-hmm.

PROFESSOR BABB: Like which is you wrote the words ‘circle’ and ‘star.’

INTERVIEWEE: Hmm-hmm.

PROFESSOR BABB: Was that in the guide or was something you choose to do?

INTERVIEWEE: I didn’t want them to get caught up -- I didn’t want them to sit there focusing on how to spell -- like sound out the word because that happens every day in, you know, in our morning block when we’re doing sentence writing. Some of them, you know, they’ll get stuck on writing the word for five or six minutes. I just didn’t want to waste any time so, --

PROFESSOR BABB: I think that was a great decision --

INTERVIEWEE: Thanks.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- by the way.

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: So you predicted something that the students may be stuck and --

INTERVIEWEE: Right.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- you are just telling me you don’t want them -- you want them to be doing the math, not --

INTERVIEWEE: Exactly.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- not thinking about --

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- something else.

INTERVIEWEE: It was just to get them -- yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: And I love that when these girls noticed that they had it in the small card with all the numbers.

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah, that was so good. Yeah, it was Alberta. Yeah. It wasn’t a star on there but there was circle on there.

PROFESSOR BABB: So that small card with the numbers and that stuff --

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- has had some uses as well.

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah, yeah. They love those cards.

PROFESSOR BABB: So in what ways did you improvise, extend or elaborate JUMP Math Microsteps?

INTERVIEWEE: Like send it with like bonusing, right? I’ve done bonus questions where I’ve written bonus questions in their workbooks or I’ll write a bonus question on a slide and ask them to work on it in their notebook or on a spare piece of paper. I’ve partnered them up to share their answers and be able to support why they gave a certain answer on a page with a partner. Extensions also happen with like manipulatives. After the worksheet is finished they can, you know, create questions on their own and tag team with a partner. So those are examples of extending. Improvising, I guess -- I mean I improvise probably -- teachers have to improvise all the time, right?

PROFESSOR BABB: Hmm-hmm.

INTERVIEWEE: Like I have a bunch of slides I’m supposed to follow but if the students aren’t getting it then I need to re-explain how I’m explaining it differently because nine times out of ten it’s probably how I’m wording something that’s prohibiting them from understanding what’s happening, so --

PROFESSOR BABB: And that --

INTERVIEWEE: -- that’s a big part of improvising.

PROFESSOR BABB: Do you also in the same sense that you may have to explain further some slides, did you keep some slides based on what students tell you and 12:01 (INDISCERNIBLE)?

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah. So I guess that’s part of improvising too. Like sometimes I think, ‘Okay, I’ve gone through the slides. I’m going to do the majority of these slides today,’ I might think. But then the students are picking it up quickly so it would be redundant --

PROFESSOR BABB: And how --

INTERVIEWEE: -- to do all those slides.

PROFESSOR BABB: How do you know they are picking it up quickly?

INTERVIEWEE: If the vast majority of the students are consistently answering the questions correctly.

PROFESSOR BABB: With the SMART Board sort of --

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah. With thumbs up and down, with the whiteboards.

PROFESSOR BABB: Whiteboards. Hmm-hmm.

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah, all those strategies. So, you know, we don’t need to drag a lesson on forever and ever, particularly in grade one when they’re restless anyhow. So, and I want them sitting for an extended period of time. So yeah, I guess that’s when I improvise.

PROFESSOR BABB: Now let’s -- I’m thinking about this idea as microsteps: frequent assessment, the use of bonus questions, and attention to mental math.

INTERVIEWEE: Right.

PROFESSOR BABB: Have you found these ideas helpful?

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah, for sure. I think -- yeah, I think building upon knowledge is a great thing to do in math, right? Like that way everybody -- you’re rest assured that everybody has been taught the most basic of concepts, right? Because there are students in there that have a more advanced understanding of mathematics and some have, you know, a different understanding of math that’s, you know, lower on the spectrum. But by starting at the most basic level then everyone’s getting that foundation and so either it’s reviewing that -- those microsteps at the beginning, it’s either the higher students are revisiting those concepts which is never a bad thing to do, and then the students who are unfamiliar with it they’re being taught it for the first time so it’s, you know, it’s a positive for everyone in the class I think.

PROFESSOR BABB: You find in some way some of those concepts restrictive or difficult?

INTERVIEWEE: Like teaching those? Have they been restrictive as a teacher?

PROFESSOR BABB: Hmm-hmm, yeah.

INTERVIEWEE: They haven’t been restrictive. Like sometimes I think oh it might be too easy for some of the class.

PROFESSOR BABB: Hmm-hmm.

INTERVIEWEE: I wouldn’t call it restrictive in any way though. I think bonus questions are difficult to make. But even times when I thought to myself it might be too boring or it might be, yeah, too easy for some of the kids, like they haven’t -- I’ve never heard them express that really. They’re -- they’ve been pos’ -- you know, they’ve responded positively to JUMP and they often tell me how they love math and math is fun. They’ve been saying that a lot or they said that a lot in the month of November. It’s beginning of December now. So I think there’s been a lot of student positive feedback. So no, I don’t think it’s been restrictive at all.

PROFESSOR BABB: Have particular experiences stretched you outside your comfort zone?

INTERVIEWEE: I think -- sorry, say that again please?

PROFESSOR BABB: Have particular experiences --

INTERVIEWEE: Okay.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- stretched you outside your comfort zone?

INTERVIEWEE: I think the experiences I’ve had in the PD sessions have had an impact on me. Like I think when I used to teach math I did more of the talking than I do now. Like I involve the students a lot more and I involve all the students a lot more which is definitely something I didn’t used to do. Like I, you know, I would pick -- I was a shy kid growing up so I -- as a teacher I hate picking a student who doesn’t have their hand up because I hated that as a kid. If a teacher were -- you know, if I didn’t have my hand up and a teacher called me to answer I would be really really nervous. So that’s always in the back of my mind as a teacher not to do that, not to put a kid on the spot. So I think in years past when I taught math I would be seek’ -- I wouldn’t be seeking out answers from the same five or six kids but it was always the same five or six kids who had their hand up so those are the same kids who would always give answers to questions. But now with JUMP math and my experience in PD and how other teachers, you know, collect answers like with the thumbs up or fingers up against their chest, those kind of strategies, like now I’m seeking or now I’m getting answers from all the students which has been a big change for me. Like I -- last year at this time I was not getting answers from all 18 kids in my class so that’s a big difference and I think that’s -- like the most positive change that I’ve had this year is that I -- on the spot I know if my 18 kids get it or don’t get it which is good; really good.

PROFESSOR BABB: Good.

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: Very good.

INTERVIEWEE: Shy kids or outgoing kids, like I’m getting the answers from all of them so I think that’s great.

PROFESSOR BABB: Oh the next one goes as something similar. Have you noticed something new about mathematics this year?

(PAUSE)

INTERVIEWEE: Have I noticed something new about mathematics? I guess that it can be broken down into microsteps and still be engaging for the students and that all students are capable of answering the question in math. Right? It’s not just the kids at the top of the bell curve that are capable, all of my students are capable. And even when they make mistakes we can self-correct along the way and if they’re given more opportunity to answer more questions then by the end of the lesson most of the students are understanding the concept. So I think I’ve taken that away from --

PROFESSOR BABB: Is that something --

INTERVIEWEE: -- my time.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- that -- something you didn’t have or you didn’t think before?

INTERVIEWEE: For sure. Like I thought -- a lot of the times I’d have to go back in and like re-teach the bulk of the lesson with students at a table and I’ve have to like continue a lesson with students on occasion with JUMP but I don’t feel like I’ve had to re-teach a whole lesson with students since I’ve started JUMP.

PROFESSOR BABB: Have you noticed anything like -- well, there can be times during the planning for or teaching of a lesson when it becomes evident that gaps in our own mathematical understanding --

INTERVIEWEE: Hmm-hmm.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- that make it difficult to teach a particular concept or to respond to students’ questions. Have you noticed anything like that in your classes this year?

INTERVIEWEE: Gaps in the students’ understanding that’s made it difficult for me?

PROFESSOR BABB: Yeah. Or gaps in your own understanding of mathematics.

INTERVIEWEE: I think the fact that JUMP goes in microsteps it sort of irons itself out. I haven’t noticed any problems with that. Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: Can you give me just one example of this going into microsteps?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Although I have to go because that was the bell.

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PROFESSOR BABB: Okay. Thanks --

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- for coming back. So think of math lesson prior to Math Minds that it didn’t go as well as you hope. What happened? Has anything that you’ve learned, experienced this year impacted how you would now approach that lesson?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh gosh. I guess just getting a false sense of students understanding the lesson happened quite a bit with Math Makes Sense. So I would have a false sense given the fact that only a select part of the students -- select part of the class were answering questions so that was giving me, you know, confidence that the students understood what was happening, right? Because they’re the ones who are asking questions or the ones answering questions. But when it turned -- you know, when they actually went to do their worksheet at their table it turned out -- it would turn out that, you know, several students didn’t know what to do because they obviously didn’t understand the lesson but I wasn’t able to tap into that during the lesson because they weren’t answering questions.

But now with JUMP, numerous times in a lesson I’m getting answers from all of the students so I’m better able to gauge if the students are comprehending the lesson so that’s setting them up for better success when they’re doing their worksheets because I assessing student more often. So it saves a lot time actually too because I don’t have to re-teach things so that’s definitely a difference from last year to this year with JUMP. But I mean I don’t know if I can think of a specific example --

PROFESSOR BABB: No.

INTERVIEWEE: -- off the top of my head.

PROFESSOR BABB: Can you think of a lesson that you taught this year that you are excited to try again next year?

INTERVIEWEE: Well, I’m excited to do the strategies again because they’re new to me and I think they’re working out well.

PROFESSOR BABB: What strategies?

INTERVIEWEE: The strategies like the whiteboards and how to, you know, display the answers that they have, whether it’s with the whiteboards or thumbs up/thumbs down, the number of fingers on their chest, those things like I think I’ll, you know, I’ll be using those at whatever school I’m at in the future.

But I don’t know. I mean again I don’t know if there’s a specific lesson I’m excited about. But I just like -- I like how its concepts are broken down into microsteps like because it really -- it levels the playing field for all the students and then they’re able to either review or learn for the first time and move through those steps together as a collective class.

Like even with -- we just started patterns last week so I just have the worksheet in front of me here and I’m just looking back. So like the first, you know, for Lesson 1.1 it was just talking about the core and their responsibilities in their worksheet were to circle the core and that’s all they had to do. And then that progressed to how -- circle the core and how many terms were in the core, right? So it’s tiny little microsteps. And then circle the core and extend the pattern. Like it’s just small small steps. Being able to tell the difference or be -- within a core if the first term and the last term are the same or different all they had to do there was establish if that first term and last term were same or different which set them up for the next lesson which was to extend patterns with cores that have the same term at the start in the beginning, because that was difficult for them because then you would double up. If the first term and the last term in a core are the same, then you end up with -- it almost looks like duplicates in the pattern. You see what I -- you understand what I’m saying, right?

PROFESSOR BABB: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWEE: Right? So, --

PROFESSOR BABB: This example, this --

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- dark, white, --

INTERVIEWEE: Dark.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- dark. Then dark, white, dark. And we have --

INTERVIEWEE: Right.

PROFESSOR BABB: -- two darks together.

INTERVIEWEE: That’s right, because the first and final term are the same. So, you know, having the lesson, the -- having the page, the previous to that one sort of set them up for more success even though there was still quite a bit of error for this page. But yeah, I think the microsteps are laid out well and it seems to be working well with my class so they’re engaged and doing well, so, --

PROFESSOR BABB: What do you see your greatest strengths as an elementary teacher?

INTERVIEWEE: I think knowing the levels of my students is a positive that I have and I think that’s how I put together my lessons, right? Like I know -- I feel like I know what they already know and what they need to know so I can construct my lessons based on that. Plus I’m willing to adapt within a lesson, that’s also something that I bring as a teacher. Like the willingness and the ability to like adapt as a lesson is going on, right? Like I can feel out if the lesson is going well or not going so well and I seem -- and I feel like I know when to cut off a lesson too or give them a movement break if they need one. So I think those are things that I bring to the table. And I have a genuine interest in them like really picking up the material, right? Not just for the sake of the page but for the sake of them understanding it and for the sake of them being like set up for grade two math. Like I really want them to meet success so have a genuine, you know, interest in their success so, yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: Yeah. So is there anything else you would like to tell us?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I mean it -- not -- I think I’ve covered it all but I’ll just maybe recap a positive and then some constructive criticism. So I think the strategies that JUMP has taught me have been really really good. They’ve all been listed already; the whiteboard and different ways to convey the answers have been positive and things that I’ll take away with me.

But I also -- like I said at the beginning of the interview I don’t always find that the slides match up with the student workbook so I think that’s something that can be fine-tuned a bit behind the scenes with, you know, the creators of the workbook and -- or at least let -- or if there’s some sort of method behind that madness, convey that to the teachers because I’ve thought of it either -- I’ve thought of it both ways. Like sometimes I notice that break between the slides in the workbook and I’ve thought, you know, they have -- there’s either two theories that are -- there’s one of two theories that is behind that which is they either want it like that because they want to be able to make the students think for themselves a little bit, or they expect the teacher to teach additional -- teach additionally before they send them off -- before they send the students off to do the worksheet so I just don’t know which one it is; if I’m supposed to teach a little extra before I send them off if the student is meant to make those leaps on their own. And if it is the second one, if it is that the students are supposed to make some leaps themselves I wish that that was just clearer in the teacher manual.

PROFESSOR BABB: Thank you.

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah.

PROFESSOR BABB: I’m sure the creators will appreciate that feedback.

INTERVIEWEE: Okay, awesome. Thank you.

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I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing pages are a true and faithful transcript of the proceedings taken down by a digital recording device.

Dated at the City of Calgary, in the Province of Alberta, this 19th day of January, A.D. 2015.

Jann Vahey

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