Project Summary

Student Choice

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Background

Are you looking for a mathematics instruction reboot where students show up asking for more, can persevere in problem solving, and feel the mathematics they are learning is relevant? We implemented a variety of activities centering student choice that they hoped would achieve these goals. Our project rejuvenated our lessons by offering more student choice. Student choice enabled students to better relate to the content and feel more ownership over what and how they learned. We feel this increased students' sense of enjoyment in the classroom.

Innovations

Our team came up with the following list of choice taxonomies: choice in product, choice in process, choice in quantity.

Findings

Providing students with choices showed signs of increased engagement and enthusiasm towards learning. Students realized they had agency in their educational journey and said that activities were more memorable and were discussed more outside of class with friends, families, and other teachers.

Contribution

We argue that providing the time and space to share why certain choices were made allows students to build identity, learn about cultural differences, and increase acceptance of others. There are many lessons throughout CPM that allow students to have choices as they are learning. Teachers have to be willing to let go and let students make decisions about how they want to solve problems so that they can make connections and have a deeper understanding of the content.

Disclaimer. CPM is glad to share the promising ideas produced through the work of the Teacher Research Corps. It is expected that teachers will rely on their knowledge of their students, the mathematics they are teaching, and the circumstances surrounding their specific teaching assignment when modifying their own behavior and selecting appropriate instructional strategies. A given strategy may have a positive effect on student learning in some situations and a negative effect in others. Please use your own best judgment as you continue to improve your teaching practice.
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