

## **Strategies for Supporting and Managing Small Groups**

- 1. Strategies for selecting and creating groups**
  - a. Groups should contain 2 – 4 students.
  - b. Random grouping is OK at times, especially at the beginning of the year.
  - c. Avoid putting extremes together
  - d. Be aware of personalities
  
- 2. Strategies for managing groups –**
  - a. Need a signal to get their attention
  - b. Watch the time!
  - c. “Good” questions
  - d. Helping and not telling and not doing it for them.
  - e. Give tips and clues, then follow up.
  - f. All papers should agree.
  - g. Let students know what you expect to see and hear.
  
- 3. Resources from CPM– See [www.cpm.org/teachers/study.htm](http://www.cpm.org/teachers/study.htm)**
  - a. STS (Study Team Strategies) – Powerpoint
    - i. A.K.A. Best Practices
    - ii. Document with reference cards
  - b. Expectations – Slightly different language in each course to make it age appropriate.
  - c. Team Roles – will need reinforcement. Allow students to pick at first.
  
- 4. Strategies for balancing group and individual work time**
  - a. Use deeper, more open-ended problems for group time.
  - b. Make sure there is enough to do for the group.
  - c. Students should face you during whole group discussions.
  - d. Provide pacing and structure to group time – time limits, one problem at a time, carousel problems, etc.
  
- 5. Strategies for encouraging higher order thinking**
  - a. Video – Mrs. Kelly Beck and her 7<sup>th</sup> grade class.
  - b. Give suggestions and hints, but do not tell them how to do the whole problem.
  - c. Let students think out loud and try without fear – (no laughing at mistakes!!!!!!)
  - d. Ask for other strategies (details!).
  - e. Have them justify their answers before letting them off the hook (especially if their answer is right!).
  - f. Questioning strategies

**6. Strategies for accountability**

- a. Twice a year, grade students on their contribution to the group.
- b. Three times a year, have students reflect and write about their contribution to their group.
- c. Every student completes the work.
- d. Grade individual papers, even when they work in groups
- e. Homework completion for team test participation
- f. Use a Participation Quiz