Pre-Program Focus Group Protocol

REGISTRATION

Name of Moderator(s) _____

Date of Focus Group _____

Number of Participants: Male_____ Female _____

Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

Additional Notes/Comments:

WELCOME

I. Welcome participants to the session.
II. Thank participants for their time and input.
III. Introduce yourself, your professional role with Sanford Research

OVERVIEW

I. As a participant in Sanford's Science Educator Research Fellowship (SERF) Program, you are being asked to take part in an educational research study focused on improving the teaching styles and practices of middle school and high school science educators. As we are all well aware, the achievement of students is highly dependent on the ability of teachers to relate to them individually and differentially, providing them with the resources and knowledge necessary to be successful in an increasingly competitive society. Our hope is that with this study, we will be able to provide science educators with the tools necessary to improve their practice and become more powerful mentors for their students.
II. The purpose of this focus group is to discuss the your thoughts and opinions about your role as science educators.

GUIDELINES and GROUND RULES

I. Describe your role as a moderator/co-moderator/assistant moderator
   a. A moderator's role is to ask questions and listen, but not participate in the conversation.

II. You won't be participating in the conversation, but we want everyone to feel free to talk with one another. Just remember to be respectful of everyone in the room.

III. It is a general tendency in these types of discussions for some people to talk a lot and some people not to say much. It is important that we hear from each of you today because you each have different experiences. There are no wrong answers, only different points of view.

IV. There will be about 10 questions being asked, and response forms have been placed in front of each of you to help facilitate the process.

V. This session is being video recorded, and we ask that you be sure speak up when answering questions so that the information can be recorded accurately.

VI. Finally, we would like to ask that you answer each question thoughtfully and honestly. All recorded information will be coded and therefore will be treated anonymously and confidentially. There are no risks associated with participating in this study, and we believe that your contribution will not only benefit you and your students, but also the science community as a whole as we continue to modify and refine our approach to educating students in an ever changing, technology-driven society.

VII. Your participation is voluntary and if there is any question you feel uncomfortable answering, you are not obligated to do so.

VIII. Ask the participants if they have any questions before beginning.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe your classroom environment during a typical lesson. What is typically happening? What methods are you most often using to teach your lessons? What is the level of student engagement during the lesson?

2. On a scale of 1-10, how challenging is your current job as an educator? 1 = very easy, 10 = very challenging. Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 2*.
   a. *Follow up:* What are your greatest challenges as a teacher, both in the classroom and out of the classroom?

3. Describe a lab experiment or classroom activity you have performed that you feel exemplifies quality teaching or that you are extremely proud of.

4. On a scale of 1-10, how would you describe your confidence in performing quality and pertinent laboratory experiments with your students? 1 = not confident, 10 = very confident. Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 4*.

5. How often do you perform laboratory experiments such as those described in the previous question? Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 5*.
    a. *Follow Up:* How would you describe your enthusiasm about doing lab experiments with your students?

6. Since beginning your career as a teacher, what changes have you thought about making or have attempted to make in your classroom to improve your practice?
    a. *Follow up*: Why did you want to make these changes?
    b. *Follow up:* How did you, your students, and the administration respond to these changes?

7. On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you in your current teaching position? 1 = not satisfied, 10 = very satisfied. Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 7*.
    a. *Follow up:* What are the most enjoyable parts of your job?
    b. *Follow up:* What are the biggest burdens associated with your job?

8. Do you see yourself continuing to teach long-term? Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 8*. Would anybody care to share with us why or why not?

CLOSING

I. Thank the participants once again for their time and input
II. Ask participants if there are any final questions or comments. If the moderators are unable to answer a specific question, record the information and let the individual know that you will get back to them soon with a response.
III. Remind the participants to turn in their Response Forms before leaving

Debriefing

I. As soon as participants have left the room, please consider and discuss the following questions:
   a. What are the most important themes or ideas discussed?
   b. How do these differ from what was expected?
   c. What points, memorable quotes, or unexpected findings need to be highlighted?
   d. Should anything be done differently the next time this focus group is implemented?

II. Be sure to include all Response Forms, moderator notes, and the video recording in your submission packet.

THANK YOU!

Science Educator Summer Research Fellowship
Pre-Program Focus Group Response Form

ID# _____ Date _____

Age _____ Gender _____ Years Employed as a Teacher _____

Subjects Taught _____

Which best describes you:
[ ] American Indian or Native Alaskan [ ] Asian or Pacific Islander
[ ] Black, non-Hispanic [ ] Hispanic [ ] White, non-Hispanic

Please complete the following when prompted:

Response 2: Very Easy Moderate Very Challenging
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Response 4: Not Confident Moderate Very Confident
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Response 5:

Never	1-2 times per month	1-2 times per week	Almost every class	Every class
1	2	3	4	5

Response 7: Not Satisfied Moderate Very Satisfied
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Response 8:

Yes	No
1	2

Post-Program Focus Group Protocol

REGISTRATION

Name of Moderator(s) _____

Date of Focus Group _____

Number of Participants: Male_____ Female _____

Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

Additional Notes/Comments:

WELCOME

I. Welcome participants to the session.
II. Thank participants for their time and input.
III. Introduce yourself, your professional role with Sanford Research

OVERVIEW

I. As a participant in Sanford's Science Educator Research Fellowship (SERF) Program, you are being asked to take part in an educational research study focused on improving the teaching styles and practices of middle school and high school science educators. As we are all well aware, the achievement of students is highly dependent on the ability of teachers to relate to them individually and differentially, providing them with the resources and knowledge necessary to be successful in an increasingly competitive society. Our hope is that with this study, we will be able to provide science educators with the tools necessary to improve their practice and become more powerful mentors for their students.
II. The purpose of this focus group is to discuss the your thoughts and opinions about your role as science educators.

GUIDELINES and GROUND RULES

I. Describe your role as a moderator/co-moderator/assistant moderator
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II. You won't be participating in the conversation, but we want everyone to feel free to talk with one another. Just remember to be respectful of everyone in the room.

III. It is a general tendency in these types of discussions for some people to talk a lot and some people not to say much. It is important that we hear from each of you today because you each have different experiences. There are no wrong answers, only different points of view.

IV. There will be about 10 questions being asked, and response forms have been placed in front of each of you to help facilitate the process.

V. This session is being video recorded, and we ask that you be sure speak up when answering questions so that the information can be recorded accurately.

VI. Finally, we would like to ask that you answer each question thoughtfully and honestly. All recorded information will be coded and therefore will be treated anonymously and confidentially. There are no risks associated with participating in this study, and we believe that your contribution will not only benefit you and your students, but also the science community as a whole as we continue to modify and refine our approach to educating students in an ever changing, technology-driven society.

VII. Your participation is voluntary and if there is any question you feel uncomfortable answering, you are not obligated to do so.

VIII. Ask the participants if they have any questions before beginning.

QUESTIONS

1. Since being part of the fellowship program, describe how your classroom environment has changed during a typical lesson. What is typically happening? What methods are you most often using to teach your lessons? What is the level of student engagement during the lesson?

2. On a scale of 1-10, how has the challenge of your current job as an educator changed since being part of the fellowship program? 1 = significantly easier, 5 = equally challenging, 10 = significantly more challenging. Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 2*.

    a. *Follow up:* What are your greatest challenges as a teacher, both in the classroom and out of the classroom?

3. Describe a lab experiment or classroom activity you have integrated into the curriculum as a result of being part of the fellowship program that you feel exemplifies quality teaching or that you are extremely proud of. How has being part of the fellowship program helped in the development of this experiment/activity?

4. On a scale of 1-10, how would you describe your confidence in performing quality and pertinent laboratory experiments with your students since being part of the fellowship program? 1 = significantly less confident, 5 = equally confident, 10 = significantly more confident. Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 4*.

5. How often do you perform laboratory experiments such as those described in the previous question? Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 5*.
    a. *Follow Up:* How would you describe your enthusiasm about doing lab experiments with your students?

6. What changes have you thought about making or have attempted to make in your classroom since being part of the program?
    a. *Follow up*: Why did you want to make these changes?
    b. *Follow up*: How did you, your students, and the school administration respond to these changes?

7. On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you in your current teaching position compared to your experiences before the fellowship program? 1 = less satisfied, 5 = equally satisfied, 10 = significantly more satisfied. Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 7*.
    a. *Follow up:* What are the most enjoyable parts of your job? What are the biggest burdens?

8. Do you see yourself continuing to teach long-term? Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 8*. Would anybody care to share with us why or why not?

9. Is there anything that has happened to you professionally as a result of being part of this program that you would care to share or comment on?

10. On a scale of 1-10, how beneficial has the fellowship program been to your development as a scientist and teacher? 1 = not beneficial, 10 = very beneficial. Please mark your response on the form provided under *Response 10*
    a. *Follow up*: Can you please give examples of how this development has benefitted your career?

CLOSING

I. Thank the participants once again for their time and input
II. Ask participants if there are any final questions or comments. If the moderators are unable to answer a specific question, record the information and let the individual know that you will get back to them soon with a response.
III. Remind the participants to turn in their Response Forms before leaving

Debriefing

I. As soon as participants have left the room, please consider and discuss the following questions:
    a. What are the most important themes or ideas discussed?
    b. How do these differ from what was expected?
    c. What points, memorable quotes, or unexpected findings need to be highlighted?
    d. Should anything be done differently the next time this focus group is implemented?
II. Be sure to include all Response Forms, moderator notes, and the video recording in your submission packet.

THANK YOU!

Science Educator Summer Research Fellowship
Post-Program Focus Group Response Form – School Year 2

ID# _____ Date _____

Age _____ Gender _____ Years Employed as a Teacher _____

Subjects Taught _____

Which best describes you:
[ ] American Indian or Native Alaskan [ ] Asian or Pacific Islander
[ ] Black, non-Hispanic [ ] Hispanic [ ] White, non-Hispanic

Please complete the following when prompted:

Response 2: Easier Equally Challenging More Challenging
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Response 4: Less Confident Equally Confident More Confident
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Response 5: Never 1-2 times per month 1-2 times per week Almost every class Every class
1 2 3 4 5

Response 7: Less Satisfied Equally Satisfied More Satisfied
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Response 8: Yes No
1 2

Response 10: Not Beneficial Moderate Very Beneficial
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10