**Statement of Purpose**

**The problem**

This year my school chose to work with a new math curriculum. As a first year teacher it is unlike any curriculum I’ve worked with before. There are no student books or pictures to capture my second graders attention. With it being a new curriculum the other members of my second grade team have not even been able to give me any pointers because they are learning right along with me. We were given the first module of the curriculum just days before school started and are not given the next module until about two weeks before we finish the module we are working on because of the time it takes our Math Achievement Advisor to get them printed and ready for all of the grade levels. This gives us very little time to look through the module and figure out exactly where we are going with concepts as well as what manipulatives we will need, this curriculum does not include the manipulatives.

Another problem that I have noticed is how big the difference is between this math program and the program that was used at the school last year. This program promotes no teacher modeling, everything is supposed to be worked out by the students or with as little help as possible. The school previously pushed the “I do, We do, You do” model so teachers not modeling a concept is something the students are continuing to adjust to. This curriculum also focuses on higher level thinking and why or how a student is doing math rather than just the answer and it moves very quickly from concrete to abstract which is difficult for some students.

As the teacher of this curriculum I am constantly trying to figure out how to keep my students engaged when they are used to colored math pages instead of the very plain pages they have now, how to keep them engaged and really thinking in order to find their own answers and ways to solve problems and strategies that can make the transition from concrete to abstract easier.

**Needs of the Learner**

There is currently a very big push at my school for students to master their basic facts and have a very solid base with these skills. This has not been focused on as much previously so we are trying to get them to where they need to be with these base skills to help their transition into multiplication and division easier in the next few years.

A big part of this module is place value understanding. Ruth Rumack (2011) said, “Once a child has a good understanding of place value, he or she will have an easier time with addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, expanded notation, etc. Place value is the “why” behind the basics of mathematics; it teaches beyond memorization and repetition”. Understanding place value is a very important fundamental piece that children need in order to be successful in any math that they will do at higher levels. Students really need to be able to see what each number actually means so that they can better manipulate them when they are doing higher level math instead of just saying memorized facts back and never actually understanding what they are doing and why they are doing it.

**Needs of Society**

Basic math skills are essential to be a functioning member of society. The fundamental math that is covered here, especially place value and adding/subtracting, are things that adults who are functioning well in society do on a daily basis whether it be at their own job, the store or elsewhere. These are also skills needed for most jobs so to obtain a job later in life without this foundation would prove difficult.

**Value of Subject Matter**

This foundation, as I stated before, is going to be critical in the future of these children’s lives. A lot of potential jobs need this strong foundation that is being built through gaining the skills in this module. These are also skills that these children will use every day as adults at the store, their own job, when paying bills and during many other experiences.

**The Educational Goal**

The overall goal of this unit is to strengthen place value understanding, addition and subtraction skills, and comparison of numbers to 1,000. This will take place through the use of hands-on manipulatives to introduce the topics. As students become comfortable with the topic the manipulatives will be used less and we will move into cooperative learning so that students hear their thinking out loud so that they can fully process exactly what they are doing. We will then move to abstract math with the end goal being individually mastery for every student. This module is being taught in hopes of strengthening mathematical foundations which will help students prepare for the math that they will learn in the future.

**References**

Rumrack, R. (2011, June 2). The Importance of Place Value. Retrieved February 17 from   
 https://ruthrumack.wordpress.com/2011/06/02/the-importance-of-place-value/