Systems of Linear Equations Reflection

Description
For this field experience, I adapted a project created in the Web-based Learning Systems Course. The original design was created for a high school class in order to incorporate Career Field Technical Content Standards. Since I teach 8th grade, the sections that dealt with the high school standards were left out. I had one group of students complete a section of the high school section as they were advanced and used it as enrichment.

As I adapted the unit, which was designed to possibly be completely online, I reworked and made changes to some of the assignments. Instead of conducting discussions in a Google Forum and turning assignments into Dropbox, I had my students sign up for Edmodo. It was in Edmodo that we had discussions and where assignments were posted and turned in. The reasoning behind this change was to avoid the complications of creating and sharing folders for the entire class in Dropbox. There were also issues with the forums being blocked in school.

As students began to complete the unit, problems occurred immediately. The videos that were embedded were blocked due to a filter malfunction. Even after the filter was fixed, some of the videos were still blocked as they originated in YouTube. I had not anticipated this since they were linked to the Khan Academy and many of the videos did work. Fortunately, I was able to show the videos that did not work to the whole class at the same time. A teacher’s login on a computer allowed YouTube to be accessed. This only happened to a few of the videos.

This experience in this type of learning environment was a first for my students. It was also my first time trying to teach in this way to the whole class. Students were able to ask each other and myself for help when they had difficulties using the technology. As they progressed through the unit and became more comfortable, most of my time in class was used to remediate those who needed it.

Impact
Although there were some frustrating moments due to technology not working the way that I would have like it to, I enjoyed this unit. The students took more responsibility for their learning as when they did not understand something, they were able to review the content videos as many times as necessary. This was something that they appreciated. When they are taking notes during whole class instruction, if one student does not understand the procedure of a problem, I cannot redo the entire problem. When content is used in this manner, a students can watch the example over and over again.

As mentioned, the unit was created to incorporate curriculum standard that exist in high school. Because of this, I eliminated the last section of the unit. Students missed the final project. However, because I designed the math section, I included the real-life math portion to the project as one of the assignments that were required. They were able to complete research, make decisions, write equations, etc. that would have been used as part of the final project.

I was impressed by how my students handled their first experience with an online learning environment. At the beginning, they asked me a lot of content related questions
but I kept insisting that during the time set aside for the unit work, the idea is that they are working on their own. Once they accepted this responsibility, they did a very nice job at working to understand what was being taught. During the time of class that students were working on assignments, I was happy to answer questions, evaluate their work, and give suggestions.

**Intent**

In the future, I intend to use this unit as I continue to make adjustments to it. Next year I will not have the luxury of a block math class so adaptations will have to be made to what students will be able to do in class. I would like to make the content portions of the unit the assignment for students to complete at home so that we can focus on the applying of the knowledge during class time.

I plan on adding more sections of solving linear equations to this unit. I would like to add a lesson on elimination, which is another method for solving systems of linear equations. By doing this, I may be able to incorporate the business planning section. I know students will enjoy it but time is always a factor. It may also be possible to collaborate with the language arts teacher to complete some of it as it may be that some of the LA standards can be met.