

New Orleans Excellence in Teaching Award Sample Response



NEW SCHOOLS FOR NEW ORLEANS

This nomination is for use as an example only.

- 1. How do you know that this teacher has increased student achievement with his/her students? Please include information about the teacher's academic goals for students and specific data that shows how students in this teacher's class have met or exceeded goals.**

Patricia is on track to ensure that her second grade students will surpass all benchmarks and academic goals for the year. She has been able to increase student achievement within a varied range of abilities due to her skills in differentiation, planning, excellent instructional delivery, and flexibility. In our most recent round of assessments gauging grade level reading skills, 100% of Patricia's students grew at least one year in reading, with 96% of students on or ahead of the grade level target set by DIBELS.

Additionally, I have included her DIBELS data from previous school years:

DIBELS Data:

- 2012-2013: 82% of students were overall core (at or above benchmark) and two students at risk
- 2013-2014: 91% of students were overall core (at or above benchmark) and one student at risk
- 2014-2015: 95% of students were overall core (at or above benchmark) and no students at risk

- 2. How has this teacher demonstrated strong relationships with students in his/her classroom? When possible, please include anecdotes from observations or student/family input about specific students this teacher has impacted, as well as concrete steps this teacher has taken to build relationships with students that will result in having a lasting impact on students' lives.**

Patricia builds strong relationships with students through her focus on joy and kindness in her classroom. Her class is a pleasure to observe – students support each other's learning and regularly give each other "shout outs" when they notice each other doing something kind. Patricia has built on this to incorporate gratitude into her daily classroom rituals—students share at their tables one thing they are grateful for at the end of each day. Seeing students' faces light up when they describe their gratitude for seeing another student show kindness or understanding is one of the highlights of my day when I stop by her classroom. Another sign of her relationships with students is the wall behind her desk. Students regularly draw her pictures or write her notes, which she always tapes up behind her desk like treasures. Every time I go observe, I see new notes and pictures. Also, I recently talked with a parent who told me how much she appreciated Patricia tutoring her child after school and providing the parent with regular updates on this student's progress. Patricia is the kind of teacher who makes a lasting impression on her students, as is evidenced by the frequent requests our upper elementary school teachers receive for Patricia's former students to visit her classroom!

- 3. What steps has this teacher taken to continually improve his/her teaching craft? Please describe opportunities this teacher has sought out to improve his/her teaching beyond attending required professional development at your school, and describe the impact this has had on his/her teaching practice.**

Patricia constantly seeks additional opportunities to learn from teachers in our school and region. She has earned an additional certification in teaching English Language Learners and continually learns by reading literature and participating in professional development relevant to her student needs. Patricia attends the annual "Plain Talk about Literacy and Learning" conference, which is hosted by the Center for Development and Learning, to continue to enhance her skills in reading instruction. Each year, she leads a professional development session for our team on the best practices she learned at the conference. A good example of how her constant learning impacts her teaching is how she has changed her math instruction based on watching LearnZillion videos. Patricia was struggling with how to teach regrouping to her second graders and did a lot of online research on different

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strategies. She discovered a series of LearnZillion videos that showed her several new strategies for addition and subtraction modeling, which she then implemented in her classroom.

- 4. Outside of his/her classroom, how has this teacher demonstrated an impact on the larger community? Please describe how this teacher has gone above and beyond for students outside of his/her class, other educators, families, and/or the community around your school. Please provide anecdotes, actions, organizational involvement, or other specific examples of his/her impact.**

Patricia has impacted our school greatly through her positive energy and passion to create the best community possible for our school. In addition to raising the bar academically for her students, she is involved with multiple efforts that impact the larger community. For example, for the Lunar New Year, Patricia coordinated a school-wide program with a local community organization that taught students about Vietnamese culture, including having students lead a Dragon Dance and learn about Vietnamese traditions and cuisine. Outside of school, she organizes a group of our teachers and community members to help with Habitat for Humanity projects several times a year for families in need. Finally, our team is continually impressed by Patricia's initiatives within social media – she created Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts for our school and provided training to teachers and parents on the best ways to use this media to enhance learning. As a principal, I greatly appreciate how Patricia regularly looks for ways to not only improve the instruction in her classroom, but also across our school.

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