

New Mexico Teacher Performance
Reflection on Annual Teaching Professional Development Plan (PDP)

May 17, 2010

Head Teacher Feedback to Jenn Gable (optional):

Jenn, you developed a professional learning plan focused on using portfolios as a tool to help students self-assess and to prepare them for a final public exhibition that demonstrates improvement and/or proficiency of the science habits and skills. You devised a well-crafted PDP with an ambitious outcome goal (75% of students showing proficiency in two of the five skill categories). The data you presented were very easy to read and very thorough, giving a well-documented picture of what students achieved. While students may not have reached the goal you set, what is impressive is the improvement they achieved over the course of three quarters: 97% improved in at least one skill area from Q1 to Q3. Also impressive is that Students know their learning targets.

Jenn, in your reflection, you pinpointed some key lessons for our school to consider as a whole. Timing of student reflections is critical and formative assessments are important in student awareness. Of course, how we as school collectively support students who do not achieve essential skills will remain an important area of growth for South Valley Academy. Thanks for preparing such a thoughtful reflection. Feel free to send me a revised reflection based on your 4th-quarter results if you would like us to incorporate that in final documents. Truly, the data produced could be used in a level 3 dossier.

PDP Next steps: For your consideration, I would like to share a resource that Dr. Shelley Roberts suggested to me this past summer. Just last month I sat down to examine an ETS publication called, Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning, and it clearly is one that may address the value of student self-assessment, an area you have supported this past year. See notes outside of these margins.

I conducted both formal and informal observations of your classroom this year. Formal observations were linked directly to your PDP. You asked me to observe students as they worked on compiling their portfolio work. I focused on whether students could connect their assessments with their self-reflection. In our post observation we discussed the idea of incorporating the question, "Why did you earn the grade you did?" as students examine their achievements in specific essential skills. Students were asked to then write a standard paragraph (using evidence), to defend their understanding of their academic growth in specific chemistry skills they had learned. On another occasion I had a chance to watch as students worked on posters for the carbon cycle as well as the water cycle. In this particular observation I witnessed Yajaira, who did not understand carbon cycle at the start of the presentations, then explain four key elements of the process after working with and watching her peers. Jenn, you truly create a classroom environment conducive for learning.

With your leadership, the Science Department has pushed all of Departments at South Valley Academy to develop our skills such that students experience focused learning. I also appreciate that your team of teachers in Science have supported writing across the curriculum. Congratulations on a successful year of teaching! I also want to applaud your work over the last two years at New Mexico Tech. I know that seeking a master's degree and teaching full-time is an incredible feat. You are almost done!

Julie Radoslovich
Head Teacher