Eastern Washington University
Department of Education

Professional Certification Portfolio

Candidate Work Sample Portfolio Entries

Note: Second half of portfolio including artifacts and evidence will be available in the NCATE team workroom.
# Professional Certification Portfolio

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# Professional Growth Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard/Criterion</th>
<th>Approval of Core Activities</th>
<th>Verification of Completed Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 EffectiTeaching</strong></td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Advisor Initials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Using instructional strategies that make learning meaningful and show positive impact on student learning</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Using a variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Using appropriate classroom management principles, processes and practices to foster a safe, positive, student-focused learning environment</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Designing and/or adapting challenging curriculum that is based on the diverse needs of each student</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Demonstrating cultural sensitivity in teaching and in relationships with students, families, and community members</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Integrating technology into instruction and assessment</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Informing, involving, and collaborating with families and community members as partners in each student's educational process, including using information about student achievement and performance</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Professional Development</strong></td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Advisor Initials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Evaluating the effects of his/her teaching through feedback and reflection;</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Using professional standards and district criteria to assess professional performance, and plan and implement appropriate growth activities</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Remaining current in subject area(s), theories, practice, research and ethical practice</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Professional Contributions</strong></td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Advisor Initials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Advocating for curriculum, instruction, and learning environments that meet the diverse needs of each student</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Participating collaboratively in school improvement activities and contributing to collegial decision-making</td>
<td>12/05/09</td>
<td>JZ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Certification of Initial Plan

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the planned activities comply with state laws and regulations.

**Jeani Struss**  
Advisor's Name (Print of Type)

Date of Approval: 12/05/09

## Verification by Candidate

Under penalty of perjury, I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information on this form is accurate.

**Jeani Struss**  
Candidate's Signature: 8-4-10

Date of Verification: 8-4-10

## Verification of Completion

I certify that I have been this credential holder's advisor, and that, to the best of my knowledge, the above information is accurate.

**Jeani Struss**  
Advisor's Name (Print or Type)

Date of Verification: 8/4/2010

College/University: EWU

Workday Telephone Number: (509) 954-1124

Date of Verification: 8/4/2010
Student Learning Context Profile

EDUC 598 Pre-Assessment Seminar

Eastern Washington University

Fall 2009
Student Learning Context Profile

Introduction

I teach kindergarten at Ness Elementary in the West Valley School District. This is my fourth year of teaching kindergarten at Ness. I taught sixth grade reading and social studies at Surprise Lake Middle School in the Fife School District for two years before moving to Spokane. Last summer I received my masters degree from EWU in Curriculum and Instruction.

Classroom Characteristics

I started the school year with 29 kindergarten students. Five students were sent to another elementary school, leaving me with 24 students. I have eight girls and sixteen boys in my class. Most are Caucasian but I have two Hispanic students, two African American students and one Asian student. I have two students on an IEP for severe learning disabilities, two Autistic students, two students with limited English and one student with a severe speech impediment. Based on the high needs of these students, I will have an educational assistant in the classroom at most times. The morning session starts at nine in the morning and ends at eleven forty five.

West Valley started a new kindergarten enrichment program last year. All kindergarten students at Ness attend a morning session of school. Out of those forty eight kindergarten students, eighteen students stay for lunch and I teach them in the afternoon. These students were chosen based on testing done during the first week of school. Based on the assessment data, we placed the students into three tiers. The tier three students need immediate intervention and therefore
are the children that qualify for the enrichment program. The class size is small to provide support and targeted instruction. The students are a mix between my morning class and the other kindergarten class. Out of the eighteen students, seven are girls and eleven are boys. The afternoon session runs from twelve forty-five in the afternoon to three thirty.

My classroom setup is more structured this year. I still have a house center, block center and art center, but I replaced round tables with desks. I assigned seating based on need and skill level. Our morning is pretty structured and the children already seem to have the routine down. We start the day with an entry task, go to the carpet to sing songs and do calendar. Everyday we do either Writers Workshop or Readers Workshop. Some days we can squeeze in both. This starts with a mini-lesson and then allows the students to work at their own pace at their desk. During that time I confer with students about their writing or meet with reading groups. We complete a math lesson everyday and usually have time for a short recess or centers. They go to music and library once a week. The afternoon schedule is less rigorous. We do a lot of preview and review of concepts. There is also more time for centers and recess in the afternoon.

School Characteristics

The name of my school is Arthur B. Ness Elementary. Ness is a Title 1 School and leads the district in WASL scores. Ness Elementary is in a relatively low income neighborhood with sixty eight percent of students on free and reduced lunch. Of the 332 students at Ness Elementary, over eighty five percent are Caucasian. There are eight Native American students, five Asian students,
twelve African American students and twenty two Hispanic students. There are twenty teachers at Ness, one half-time literacy coach and one half-time instructional coach. Teachers at Ness Elementary are very passionate about their jobs and often collaborate on their own time. The students at Ness are very needy and can be difficult at times. Families move in and out of our neighborhood often and the teachers go out of their way to help students and welcome new children. There is a high population of elderly in our surrounding neighborhood so many of our students live with their grandparents.

**District Characteristics**

West Valley is a relatively small district compared to the surrounding districts of Spokane and Central Valley. It contains one high school, three alternative high schools, two middle schools, four elementary schools and one preschool. There are a total of 3,894 students in the district and forty seven percent qualify for free and reduced lunch.

**Community Characteristics**

The West Valley community is very diverse. It includes many areas of poverty, businesses, and the wealthy area of North Woods. Businesses in the area include fast food restaurants, grocery stores and other small specialty stores. The community support for schools has been great. The past levies and bonds have been very successful.
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Background for Using the Professional Growth Needs Assessment Form

The Professional Growth Needs Assessment is a guide to help you to determine your focus goals for Entry #1: Professional Growth and Contributions. To give yourself a complete overview of your strengths and areas in need of improvement, you should complete an analysis for each criterion. At the conclusion of this analysis, you will narrow the goals to the three to be used within Entry 1. As you complete your Professional Growth Needs Assessment found on the following pages, consider both your Learning Process and Content Area needs (defined below).

For the purposes of this assessment, please use the following definitions as a guide:
- **Learning Process** needs are the areas of practice addressed in the Teacher Professional Certification Standards and Criteria.
- **Content Area** needs are subject areas addressed in the EALRs, GLEs, and other state and district standards.

Steps for Completing Your Professional Growth Needs Assessment

Use the following steps to guide you in creating your Professional Growth Needs Assessment.

Step 1: Read the Washington Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) approved standards and criteria found on pages 6 and 7 of the handbook. These standards serve as the basis for all three entries and the rubrics.
Step 2: Read the Professional Growth Needs Assessment template. Note the bulleted questions that appear after each criterion. You will use these questions as a guide to help formulate your responses to the four boxes under each criterion.
Step 3: Read the rubric for the criterion. As you do so, think of the connection between the levels of the rubric and the bulleted questions.
Step 4: Compose your responses to the “Criterion Met” and “Criterion Not Met” questions in the appropriate boxes, making sure you allow the bulleted questions and the criteria to inform your analysis.
Step 5: Articulate an appropriate goal(s) for your professional growth for the specific criterion and place it in the last box.
Step 6: When the Professional Growth Needs Assessment is complete, revisit each of the 12 professional growth goals found in the last box of each template, prioritize, and decide which three will become the focus of Entry 1. Place these goals in Template 1.1.1 located in the back of Entry 1. Remember, the three goals must represent both the Learning Process and Content Area needs categories.
Suggestions:
- You may use bullets and phrases instead of responding in complete sentences.
- The Professional Growth Needs Assessment is not submitted as part of your portfolio, and therefore is not part of the final evaluation. But, keep in mind that the results of this procedure will have a major influence on the breadth and quality of all three entries.
STANDARD ONE: The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by:

**Criterion 1a:** using instructional strategies that make learning meaningful and show positive impact on student learning

- What instructional strategies do you use to make learning meaningful?
- In what ways do you determine [assess] the relevance and meaning of the instructional strategies?
- How do you gauge positive impact on student learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are offered choice</td>
<td>Collections and Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students learn in different ways</td>
<td>Songs, movement, documentary camera + white board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students usually work in isolation</td>
<td>Limited peer coaching and/or group projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High number of students w/ special needs</td>
<td>IEP's / 504 plans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is:

**Establish peer partnerships**
**STANDARD ONE:** The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by:

**Criterion 1b:** using a variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction
- What formative assessments do you use? What summative assessments?
- In what ways do you use formative and summative assessments to make instructional decisions?
- How are your students involved in developing scoring criteria such as rubrics?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Students are assessed first week of school  
- Frequent use of assessment  
|  
- DIBELS, math, reading + name  
|  
- 4 times a year  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- DIBELS results are primarily for teachers  
- DIBELS results are hard to measure.  
|  
- Students + parents do not receive results  
|  
- DIBELS graphs + print outs  

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is:

*Use many different types of assessment informal, standards on clipboard*
**STANDARD ONE:** The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by:

**Criterion 1c:** using appropriate classroom management principles, processes and practices to foster a safe, positive, student-focused environment

- What processes do you incorporate that ensure high levels of achievement for all students?
- How do you involve students in decision making?
- What strategies do you use to give students feedback on their behavior?
- What methods do you use for assessing students’ sense of safety in your classroom?
- How do you structure collaborative work among your students? How are roles chosen or assigned? How do you assess collaborative work?
- How does your classroom environment fit your teaching style and your instructional goals?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teach + use voting</td>
<td>- Weather, center choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student involvement in workshop rules</td>
<td>- Posters for writers + readers workshop.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Unclear consequences</td>
<td>- Names on board, loss of activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher chooses class rules</td>
<td>- Class rules, poster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is: Establish a structured classroom management plan. Step 1: Chart transitions.
STANDARD ONE: The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by:

**Criterion 1d:** designing and/or adapting challenging curriculum that is based on the diverse needs of each student

- How do you communicate learning targets to students? In what ways do you determine if they know and understand the learning targets?
- What opportunities do you provide for students to reflect on their own learning and thinking strategies? What strategies do you use to assist students in their reflection?
- What are ways you can adapt a curriculum to appropriately challenge all students?
- What strategies do you use to determine the diverse needs of each student?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Adjust lessons</td>
<td>- Reduce amount of work, offer tracing paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lessons are relevant to students</td>
<td>- Ex. Math: counting steps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Students have limited ways to monitor their thinking skills</td>
<td>- Can explain with voice, or show with manipulatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- (Writing is limited)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is: **Make manipulatives accessible to students.**
**STANDARD ONE:** The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by:

**Criterion 1e:** demonstrating cultural sensitivity in teaching and in relationships with students, families, and community members

- How do you get to know your students including their previous experiences, prior learning, interests, and learning styles?
- How do you teach respect for differences?
- How do you teach your students about other cultures and backgrounds that may or may not be represented in your class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meet parents early in year</td>
<td>Back to School BBQ (night before 1st day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach difference through S.S. curriculum</td>
<td>S.S. lessons + activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited show-and-tell</td>
<td>Students are unaware about different cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited opportunities to share culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is: *Allow more time for class sharing + discussions*.

**STANDARD ONE:** The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by:

**Criterion 1f:** integrating technology into instruction and assessment
- In what ways do you utilize technology as an instructional tool?
- In what ways do you involve your students with technology as a learning tool?
- In what ways do you integrate technology into assignments, projects, or assessments?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use document camera during instruction</td>
<td>Calendar, writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ math, games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Paint program + reading games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer use during centers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Teach basic typing skills</td>
<td>- Lab availability?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Limited time on computers</td>
<td>- Only 2 classroom computers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is: Research different learning programs to use on the computer.
STANDARD ONE: The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by:

**Criterion 1g:** informing, involving and collaborating with families and community members as partners in each student’s educational process, including using information about student achievement and performance

- What have been your most successful strategies for communicating with parents? What have been some challenges?
- When you have a strategy that is not very effective, what are your next steps?
- What are some other strategies you might try to communicate with and involve parents and families?
- What are some strategies you use to actively involve parents and families in the education process? What might be some additional strategies?
- How do you solicit information about a student from parents or families?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Utilize parent volunteers in class</td>
<td>- Volunteers help assess students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Frequent phone calls + letters home</td>
<td>- Monthly newsletter + other notes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Unfamiliar with PTO policies and procedures</td>
<td>- Limited meeting s notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Limited attendance at PTO functions</td>
<td>- Skate Night, Ornament Night</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is: Attend a few PTO meetings this year and attend some events.
**STANDARD TWO:** A successful candidate for the professional certificate shall demonstrate the knowledge and skills for professional development by:

**Criterion 2a:** evaluating the effects of his/her teaching through feedback and reflection

- What are your sources of feedback? In what ways do you solicit and gather this feedback?
- What are additional feedback channels that may be helpful?
- What is your system for analyzing data? What actions result from this analysis?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Assessment Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze with team teacher &amp; other colleagues</td>
<td>Meetings with other teachers &amp; instructional coach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze school + district assessment data</td>
<td>WASL scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get feedback from other teachers</td>
<td>Limited collaboration w/ 4th + 5th grade teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is: **Analyze school trends based on assessment**
**STANDARD TWO:** A successful candidate for the professional certificate shall demonstrate the knowledge and skills for professional development by:

**Criterion 2b:** using professional standards and district criteria to assess professional performance and plan and implement appropriate growth activities

- What are work related challenges that you think about all the time?
- What are your greatest successes?
- How will you know that your impact on student learning has increased?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Use educational research</td>
<td>- EWU Masters Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collect evidence of growth</td>
<td>- Pro-cert Program Assessment + Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Research best practices</td>
<td>- Lesson plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Check on students progress in 1st grade</td>
<td>- Teacher mtgs./ class observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my response to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I could set for myself is: Next w/ 1st grade teachers about progress
STANDARD TWO: A successful candidate for the professional certificate shall demonstrate the knowledge and skills for professional development by:

**Criterion 2c:** remaining current in subject area(s), theories, practice, research and ethical practice

- How do you remain current in your subject area(s)?
- How do you use research on best practices to inform your decision making and planning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What My Students and I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Attend curriculum trainings</td>
<td>- Foss Science, New Main Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teach new methods/best practices</td>
<td>- Use workshop models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Inquiry based learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data Including Student Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Research best practices in math</td>
<td>- Low school math WASL scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Inconsistent writing curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is: **Re-evaluate math curriculum + research best practices**
STANDARD THREE: A successful candidate for the professional certificate shall demonstrate professional contributions to the improvement of the school, community and the profession by:

**Criterion 3a:** advocating for curriculum, instruction and learning environments that meet the diverse needs of each student

- How do you ensure that students with special needs have access to curriculum, instruction, and learning environments that meet their needs?
- When you have concerns or ideas about curriculum or learning environments, what do you do?
- Is there a student or group of students you have “gone to bat” for? What was the situation and what was the outcome for student learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend training on school-wide writing program</td>
<td>Consistent K-5 ability to pre-teach curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocate for smaller class sizes</td>
<td>Overload K classes 3 years in a row</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is:

**Utilize educational assistants to make smaller groups during instruction.**
STANDARD THREE: A successful candidate for the professional certificate shall demonstrate professional contributions to the improvement of the school, community and the profession by:

**Criterion 3b:** participating collaboratively in school improvement activities and contributing to collegial decision-making

- What are some ways you collaborate with your grade level team, department, or other job-alike group in your building? In what ways do you focus on student learning together?
- In what ways do you collaborate with educators with different roles than yours? (For example, if you are classroom teacher, how do you collaborate with specialists or vice versa?)
- How have you shared your new learning, materials, or experiences with colleagues?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I Do Successfully Now</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Meetings/ Collaboration</td>
<td>Thurs mornings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade level MTAS</td>
<td>Focus: reading + writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent lesson plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Areas Do I Need to Improve?</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence/Data</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate with different teachers 4th + 5th grade</td>
<td>Limited knowledge of 4th + 5th grade curriculum</td>
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</table>

Based on my responses to the above table, a professional growth goal(s) that I would set for myself is: Join a Focus Group on an unfamiliar topic.
Cover Sheet: Standard 1a

1a Using instructional strategies that make learning meaningful and show positive impact on student learning.

1a1 Verbalize different approaches to teaching.

1a2 Practice explanations for learning, interpret ideas from diverse teaching.

1a3 Actively engaged-meaningful tasks reflect own life, related to learning targets.

1a4 Engaged in variety of learning tasks, indirect, cooperative, and independent.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 1c demonstrates a kindergarten classroom rich with students engaged in their work and eager to learn. Students experience learning through many different ways. Students have time to listen to the teacher each morning at "carpet time," they have opportunities throughout the day to work individually at their desk and they engage in centers. I have conducted student surveys, student interviews and taken many pictures that demonstrate how I use these instructional strategies to make learning meaningful and show a positive impact on student learning.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Through student interviews, student surveys and pictures I was able to demonstrate how students in my classroom use instructional strategies to make
learning meaningful. Students know there are many ways to approach learning and are able to verbalize their own approaches. (1a1) They practice explanations for learning in a variety of ways. (1a2) and actively engage in tasks that are meaningful, reflect their own life experiences and are directly related to the learning targets. (1a3) Students engage in a variety of learning tasks and can apply the appropriate skills and strategies to be successful in each type of learning task. (1a4)

**Goal and Rational**

My goal was to use instructional strategies to make learning meaningful and show a positive impact on student learning. Implementing this goal actually started the week before school began. The week before school starts, the West Valley School District holds a Learning Improvement Day. This year all the teachers in the district learned how to analyze important data. We analyzed the district's WASL scores from the last three years. We saw that our lowest area was math and it seemed to be decreasing. As a result of this information, math became a focus in our building at Ness Elementary. Each grade level took time to align our math curriculum, Everyday Mathematics, to the standards. The kindergarten team found that it was lowest in meeting the standard K.5 Core Processes: Reasoning, problem solving and communication. The other kindergarten teacher and I spent some time finding supplemental resources, planning lessons and making resources that would help us meet each standard in math.
One of the supplemental ideas we decided to incorporate was math centers. We found many great games and activities that could be used in math centers throughout the school year. Research suggests that “math centers encourage students' independence and increases enthusiasm for learning by giving students opportunities to make choices, work together, and talk about math” (National Center for Quality After School.) The key goals of Math Centers are to engage students in different math-related activities, build their problem-solving and collaboration skills, increase their desire to learn, and ultimately extend their understanding of math. Students are more likely to explore different approaches to problem solving, question, take risks and explain things to each other when they work in small groups. John Van De Walle also states that “in a mathematical environment, students feel comfortable trying out ideas, sharing insights, challenging others, seeking advice from other students and the teacher, explaining their thinking, and taking risks” (Elementary and Middle School Mathematics: Teaching Developmentally.) Math centers will give students time to practice and apply the skills introduced during whole group instruction.

Process

In order to implement my goals, I introduced “carpet time” at the beginning of the year. This was an important first step because I do a lot of teaching and the class does the majority of learning at the carpet for the first half of the year. We start each day by putting the date on the calendar and voting on the weather. Other activities during carpet time include: songs, stories, a writers workshop lesson and a math demonstration (See evidence 10, 1a4).
The next step was to introduce center time. The first month of school, students were taught about the center, the rules of each center and how to clean each center up. Students have centers/free time at the end of the day a couple times a week. The centers in my room include an art station, a block station, and a house station (See evidence 11, 1a4). Other activities that students may engage in at this time include sorting collections, painting at the easel and completing puzzles (See evidence 6, 1a3). Once the class had learned enough math activities or games they could perform somewhat independently, I introduced the math center chart and the concept of rotating math centers (See evidence 12 and 13, 1a4). The class uses math centers once a week as a time to practice new math skills and review previously taught math skills.

Besides the use of class collections and math centers to provide multi-sensory learning, I use graphing often in kindergarten. One example of this is our Age Graph (See evidence 3, 1a2). This graph stays up year-round and when a student has a birthday, we move their picture from the 5 row to the 6 row. The students love this graph and look at the pictures often. We have also graphed our pets, family members and favorite color throughout the year. Another example of active learning is from an observation from our school’s Instructional Coach. In November, I invited our Instructional Coach in to our classroom to observe a math lesson. I asked him to look for students engaged in the lesson and he observed students in “multi-sensory engagement, following the demonstration and making connections” (See evidence 1, 1a1, 1a2, 1a3, 1a4). I have also looked at ways to increase active learning and engagement in other subjects. In
reading the class started meeting with reading buddies once a week. Our reading buddies are first grade students and when we get together with them, they help the kindergarten students read their books and then they read a story or two to the kindergarten student (See evidence 15, 1a4). As the pictures show, the students love listening to the stories and get really valuable one-on-one time. Since January, the students have been working in reading groups (See evidence 14, 1a4). This provides time for me, an educational assistant or a parent volunteer to work with a small group of students. The mini-lessons include going over sounds, sight words, learning new words and reading appropriate leveled books.

This spring has offered many great opportunities to make learning meaningful for my students. The science unit for kindergarten in the spring is life cycles. We start the unit by growing caterpillars in our classroom and then keep them until they turn into butterflies, studying each step along the way. I made a large model of a caterpillar for the class to use during the first process of the unit. Students individually observed their caterpillars (See evidence 7, 1a3) and then we labeled the caterpillar body parts on the board as a class (See evidence 4, 1a2). Students were able to observe their caterpillars molting and turning into a chrysalis. Once the caterpillars turn into butterflies after about a week, the class will get to release the butterflies outside. To help enforce the teaching of life cycles in nature, the students take a field trip to the district's outdoor learning center. During this field trip, the students learned about the life cycles of different bugs through three centers (See evidence 8, 1a3). The first center had the
students create a ladybug life cycle with pictures, the second center had the students create a stick bug using a stick and pipe cleaners, and the last center had the students look for pill bugs outside. All three centers started the lesson with a story or information about that particular bug. It was a very hands-on experience to learning and the students were beyond engaged.

The final step in accomplishing my goals of making learning meaningful and showing positive impact on student learning was to conduct student interviews and student surveys. I wanted actual student voice to help demonstrate all of the different learning that goes on during a normal kindergarten day. Students were able to tell the educational assistant interviewing them about what they did in school that day and about some different ways we learned (See evidence 2 1a1, 1a2). Through the use of a student survey called “Mark the Face,” students were able to demonstrate their level of engagement during a particular lesson (See evidence 5, 1a3). I used this survey primarily to gauge the engagement in math since that has been my area of focus this year. Students are also able to work independently at their desks for longer periods of time now so the use of math and science journals have been a great way to document their learning (See evidence 9, 1a4).

As a result of these strategies, my students know there are many ways to approach learning and are able to verbalize their own approaches. My students practice explanations for learning in a variety of ways. They are actively engaged in tasks that are meaningful, reflect their own life experiences and are directly related to the learning targets. My students engage in a variety of learning tasks.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence #</th>
<th>Description of Practice</th>
<th>Name of Evidence</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1a1, 1a2, 1a3, 1a4</td>
<td>See, Think, Wonder</td>
<td>November 24, 2009</td>
<td>Instructional Coach Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1a1, 1a2</td>
<td>Instructional Strategies Evidence</td>
<td>April 21, 22, 23. 2010</td>
<td>Student interview about how I teach and how they learn</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1a2</td>
<td>Age Graph Picture</td>
<td>September 2009</td>
<td>Age graph of students from class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1a2</td>
<td>Caterpillar Picture</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Labeled model of a caterpillar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1a3</td>
<td>Mark the Face</td>
<td>Week of April 26, 2010</td>
<td>Student Survey on Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1a3</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 16, 2010</td>
<td>Students sorting class collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1a3</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 20, 2010</td>
<td>Students observing class caterpillars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1a3</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 26, 2010</td>
<td>Students on a fieldtrip learning in centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1a4</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Students working individually at their desks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1a4</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 20, 2010</td>
<td>Students listening to a story at carpet time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1a4</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 15, 2010</td>
<td>Students at centers/free time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1a4</td>
<td>Center Chart</td>
<td>April 28, 2010</td>
<td>Math Center Chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1a4</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 28, 2010</td>
<td>Students at math centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1a4</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 20, 2010</td>
<td>Students in reading groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1a4</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 30, 2010</td>
<td>Students reading with first grade &quot;reading buddies&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Analysis and Reflection

I was able to make learning meaningful to my students through implementing math centers and incorporating hands-on learning. I was able to see the impact on students learning as a result of these strategies because students were engaged in their learning during different types of learning tasks. The evidence reinforced my belief that the more ways to teach something, the better. An example of this includes students listening to a story at carpet time, reading individually at their desks, reading in a group and reading with an older student (See evidence 10, 9, 14, 15, 1a4). These are all different types of learning, but the student is always practicing reading.

The only piece of evidence I question is the validity of the student survey that asked the students to rate their engagement (See evidence 5, 1a3). I am not sure all of my students truly understood what face to mark even though we discussed it numerous times and they had ample exposure to it. A simple thumb up or thumbs down would probably be more appropriate for kindergarten students. The student interviews though offered insight to how they like to learn and what they remembered from that day of learning (See evidence 2, 1a1 and 1a2).

I really enjoyed the use of math centers (See evidence 13, 1a4) and will definitely use this strategy again next year. I would like to learn more about how I could use center based learning for other subject areas, such as reading and writing. A couple ideas the other kindergarten teacher and I have come up with is to incorporate a writing station and a listening station to center time for next year.
I will continue to research ways to incorporate other subject areas because as the research and evidence show, center-based learning is the best way for students to practice skills taught during whole class instruction.
Cover Sheet: Standard 1b

1b Using a variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction.

1b1 Use a variety of assessment tools. Know how tools measure learning targets.

1b2 Keep and review own progress. Identify own growth needs.

1b3 Use own work to reflect and set goals.

1b4 Monitor, evaluate, and self-regulate learning. Tell what worked, what did not, what to do differently next time.

1b5 Work with the teacher to show own progress and best work.

1b6 Create and use scoring criteria to assess own and others work.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 1b focuses on the different assessment strategies I have used this year to help monitor and improve instruction in my classroom. Students have been assessed often this year and learning has been evaluated through many different summative and formative measures. The class has made charts that show new learning, the students have worked in science journals to show what they have learned and I have conducted interviews asking students about their learning.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Through multiple assessments, student journals, student interviews and the use of charts I was able to demonstrate how students in my classroom use a
variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction. Students use different assessments throughout the year, such as DIBELS, CAP and DRA to help monitor progress. (1b1) Students keep track of their progress and show their best work through assessment folders, journals and charts. (1b2 and 1b5) Students were able to identify simple goals for themselves for the upcoming kindergarten year. (1b3) My students learned how to monitor and evaluate their learning this year through problem solving activities (1b4) and they learned how to use a rubric to complete a writing sample. (1b6)

**Goal and Rational**

My goal was to use a variety of assessment strategies and data in order to monitor and improve instruction. One of the most important principles of assessment is that it should be an ongoing process. The Principles of Effective Literacy Assessment state that true assessment should occur every time a child reads, writes or speaks, so that it becomes natural and expected for the student. The best forms of assessment are the routine, daily activities that a teacher does with students to determine growth.

An effective assessment should identify the child’s strength. According to Vygotsky’s (1978) zone of proximal development theory, children construct meaning by advancing what they already know how to do as they work with the teacher. The assessment should inform the teacher of the child’s strengths and the teacher will give support in gaining new strategies and techniques. An effective assessment should be multidimensional as well because it gathers various forms of evidence (The Principles of Effective Literacy Assessment).
Therefore, the use of charts, journals and writing samples all provide examples of ongoing assessment in my classroom.

There are two main types of assessment used today in the classroom are summative assessment and formative assessment. Ehringhaus and Garrison from Formative and Summative Assessments in the Classroom define summative assessment as something "given periodically to determine at a particular point in time what students know and do not know." Summative assessments are usually spread out and occur after instruction occurs. Formative assessments are less standardized and usually contain a high level of student involvement. Teachers can use formative assessments to gauge student understanding at any time in the school year. Formative assessment enables teachers to make instructional adjustments and interventions during the learning process (Formative and Summative Assessments in the Classroom). Clearly, both forms of assessment are valuable to a teacher and I incorporated both summative and formative strategies into my teaching this year. The Kindergarten Year Round Assessment, DIBELS, CAP, DRA, charts and journals are all examples of assessments I used this year to determine what a student knows at a particular time and then make instructional adjustments if needed. DIBELS is a district mandated assessment and DRA is the form of running records suggested for use in our building.

**Process**

Implementing my goal to use a variety of assessment strategies and data to help monitor student learning began at the beginning of the school year. The
other kindergarten teacher and I spent some time collaborating on how we could create an assessment tool that would keep track of the student's progress throughout the whole school year. We created The Kindergarten Year Round Assessment (See evidence 16, 1b1 and 1b2). This assessment is placed in a folder to be used all year long to track and monitor each student's progress. It is a standards-based assessment designed to be used three times a year, before each grading period: October, February and May. Each testing period is completed in a different color so that the progress made by the students is visually noticeable. Besides requiring the student to write their name, this assessment tests letter identification, sounds, reading and writing sight words and math concepts.

In addition to The Year Round Kindergarten Assessment being used during conferences and to complete report cards, the students used this tool to review their own progress. Whoever was testing, whether it was an educational assistant, a parent volunteer or myself, time was spent looking over the folder with the child and discussing how they had improved. The class discussed making goals for the year and after their first testing period I asked each student if they had a goal for kindergarten this year. Evidence 17, 1b3 shows three student examples of how what they identified as their goal, or growth need for the year.

Due to my work on reading assessments for my masters project in 2008, I have become very familiar with The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS). DIBELS is a reading assessment used in our district to help gauge
reading readiness at the kindergarten level. In the later grades it is used to gauge reading comprehension and fluency. Throughout my research study, I compared DIBELS results to that of two other types of reading assessments: The Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) and The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). This research helped me to understand DIBELS data and how I could use the results to improve instruction. I now use DIBELS three times a year to monitor student progress (See evidence 18, 1b1). The results from DIBELS mainly tell me how many letters and sounds the students can identify. It also gives an instruction recommendation for each student, stating whether they are at benchmark, strategic or intensive level. A student testing at the benchmark level is exactly where they need to be, a student at a strategic level is slightly below grade level and a student at the intensive level is even farther below grade level. It is a timed test, however, so I have found that it is not always accurate. For that reason, I use both DIBELS and the Kindergarten Year Round Assessment to give me a more accurate picture of how many letters and sounds a child can identify.

Besides using the year round assessment and DIBELS, I have incorporated a Concepts About Print (CAP) that demonstrates if the student is ready to start reading. This assessment is very quick and concise and asks students things such as to point to capital letters and to find a period on the page (See evidence 19, 1b1). I administer the CAP in January and the students that pass this assessment are given The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). DRA is the form of running records used at our school. Evidence 20, 1b1 shows
an example of what a DRA looks like. This assessment gives me the student’s actual reading level. I use the Kindergarten Year Round Assessment, DIBELS, CAP and DRA to keep track of growth and place students in reading groups.

In addition to using the Kindergarten Year Round Assessment to keep and review a student’s progress, I incorporated charts and journals into our spring science unit on life cycles to help demonstrate this. We started the science unit with a K-W-L chart on caterpillars (See evidence 21, 1b2 and 1b5). We completed the first two sections on the chart before the caterpillars arrived to find out what the class already knew about caterpillars and butterflies and what they wanted to know. After the unit we completed the last section of the chart on what they had learned. All students were able to share at least one thing they had learned about caterpillars and butterflies.

Another example of how students in my classroom were able to keep track of and show their own progress this year was through the use of science journals. The first page in their science journal asked the students to draw a picture of what they thought a caterpillar looks like (See evidence 22, 1b2 and 1b5). After we received the caterpillars and spent time learning about them and observing them, I asked the class to draw a new picture of a caterpillar. Evidence 23, 1b2 and 1b5 shows how two students drew their caterpillar differently and what they learned about caterpillars. I worked with students throughout the course of their science journals to help them show their best work.

Another important goal for this school year was to incorporate more problem solving into our math curriculum. Evidence 24, 1b4 shows an example of
a lesson that asked students to solve a problem and monitor their own learning. After the students completed the lesson, I interviewed a few students to find out how they solved the problem and if it had worked or not. To help enforce 1b4, I ask a lot of “why” question throughout the day. Whether we are reading a story or doing a science experiment, kindergarten students are gradually learning how to self-regulate their learning. An example of this would when I ask the class to predict what a story is going to be about by only looking at the cover. After students respond with some reasonable guesses, I ask them how and they can usually correlate their answer with the picture on the cover.

The last two pieces of evidence demonstrate how students in my class use a simple rubric to complete a piece of writing. Writing is a very structured time in my classroom with many different components to learn. One of the most important components is that by mid-year students should be able to work independently and check their own writing. This is done through the use of a writing rubric in the shape of a pencil. At the beginning of the year I put a very large pencil that I have created on the white board (See evidence 25, 1b6). Each piece of the rubric is introduced and taught gradually until all students understand what each picture represents and can master that skill. For example the first piece of the rubric is that their words must match their picture, the picture of the sun and matching words represents this skill. The go sign represents starting your sentence with a capital letter, the hand represents using a finger to help space between words, the picture of the little boy represents stretching your words out to hear all of the sounds and the last piece of the rubric is a stop sign.
for using punctuation at the end of a sentence. Students also have a picture of the pencil on the inside of their folders to use during writers workshop time (See evidence 25, 1b6). Furthermore, evidence 26, 1b6 describes how students in their own words use this rubric to help assess their writing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence #</th>
<th>Description of Practice</th>
<th>Name of Evidence</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1b1, 1b2</td>
<td>Kindergarten Year Round Assessment</td>
<td>Throughout school year: Oct. Feb. and May</td>
<td>Assessment for alphabet, sounds, sight words and math concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1b3</td>
<td>Assessment Evidence</td>
<td>October 5, 2009</td>
<td>Student Interview about kindergarten goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1b1</td>
<td>DIBELS Reports</td>
<td>Throughout school year</td>
<td>Results from the standardized reading test, DIBELS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1b1</td>
<td>CAP Assessment</td>
<td>January 2010</td>
<td>Assessment that tests students readiness to read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1b1</td>
<td>DRA</td>
<td>January 2010</td>
<td>Assessment that tests students reading level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>1b2, 1b5</td>
<td>K-W-L Chart</td>
<td>April-May 2010</td>
<td>Picture of a K-W-L chart the class made about caterpillars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>1b2, 1b5</td>
<td>Caterpillar Pre-Assessment</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Page from science journal asking students to draw a caterpillar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1b2, 1b5</td>
<td>Caterpillar Post-Assessment</td>
<td>May 2010</td>
<td>Student reflection on what they learned about caterpillars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>1b4</td>
<td>The Missing Side</td>
<td>May 5, 2010</td>
<td>Worksheet from a problem solving activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>1b6</td>
<td>Writing rubric pictures</td>
<td>May 2010</td>
<td>Picture of writing rubric and students using rubric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>1b6</td>
<td>Assessment Evidence</td>
<td>May 11, 2010</td>
<td>Student Interview about using a writing rubric</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis and Reflection

I was able to use assessment and data to monitor and improve instruction by creating an assessment tool that could be used year-round to track progress (See evidence 16, 1b1 and 1b2). I was able to use a variety of assessment tools to more accurately gauge student's growth and learning (See evidence 18, 19 and 20, 1b1). Students learned how to make goals this year (See evidence 17, 1b3) and they reflected on their learning (See evidence 22, 23 and 24, 1b2, 1b5 and 1b4). Students were also able to use a rubric to score their writing and determine if a writing piece is complete (See evidence 25 and 26, 1b6).

Assessment data from this year shows students made great academic improvements. I will definitely use the Kindergarten Year Round Assessment again next year. Not only was it extremely helpful in completing report cards and discussing progress with parents at conferences, but it was exciting to be able to send it home at the end of the year so students and parents could look at the amazing progress that was made. The science journals and folders for writers workshop I made this year were also very valuable in assessing students and I will use those strategies again next year. I plan on meeting with our literacy coach and instructional coach next fall to further develop my use of assessment to guide instruction.

I feel my use of assessment to monitor and improve instruction has been one of my greatest accomplishments as a teacher. I have grown so much in this aspect of teaching in the last two years. I have gone from a kindergarten teacher who didn't understand DIBELS and didn't know how else to assess five year-old
students to a teacher that uses multiple assessments and uses the data to guide instruction and can show growth in my students. Students are more aware of their learning, understand assessments and are actually involved in the process.
Cover Sheet: Standard 1c

1c Using appropriate classroom management principles, processes, and practices to foster a safe, positive, and student-focused learning environment.

1c1 Have a voice regarding classroom standards, rules, and consequences. Standards evidenced by classroom behavior.

1c2 Accept responsibility for behavior individually and in groups. Respond positively to teacher suggestions and make adjustments to behavior.

1c3 Contribute to positive, safe, and supportive learning. Students and teachers show respect, sincerity, warmth, and humor and interact positively.

1c4 Receive individually directed specific assistance, encouragement, and recognition promoting an equitable and inclusive learning environment.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 1c demonstrates how appropriate management principles and processes have resulted in a safe and positive learning environment. Students are involved in making rules, they help solve class problems and they take responsibility for their own actions. Peer observation notes and pictures demonstrate students interacting with each other using respect and sincerity. Charts and teacher notes help redirect behavior in a positive way and students respond to directions and feedback well.
Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Through the use of posters, class observations and teacher documentation I was able to demonstrate how classroom management fosters a student-focused learning environment. Students have a voice in creating rules and solving problems during class meetings (1c1) and they accept responsibility for behavior with the use of charts and teacher guidance. (1b2) Students contribute to a positive, safe and supportive learning environment by listening at carpet time and interacting at centers. (1b3) Students receive specific feedback through the use of awards and reports to parents throughout the year. (1b4)

Goal and Rational

One of my main goals this year was to implement a classroom management plan that would foster a safe, positive and student-focused learning environment. As stated in one of my professional growth plans, I have never used an organized classroom management plan. In the past I would just put students names on the board and that would result in a five minute time out. I gave too many warnings before any action was taken and consequences were never clear to the students. I spent some time before the start of school looking into different management processes and principles and I observed a teacher during the first week of school that held weekly class meetings.

Research on classroom management shows that the lack of procedures and routines result in behavior problems. Harry and Rosemary Wong state that "no learning takes place when you discipline. All disciplining does is stop deviant behavior, which must be done, but no learning has taken place." Learning can
only take place when students are at work, or on-task. An effective teacher knows that student achievement will only occur when the student's work environment is organized and structured so that learning can take place. When students are engaged in the learning process, there are less behavior problems. Using the Step Chart and practicing rules and procedures throughout the school year will help keep the student's learning environment organized and structured so that behavior problems do not distract from learning. Using the school wide system of "Bee Slips" will also help to promote positive reinforcement.

Process

After researching some different classroom management procedures at the beginning of the school year, I decided to implement a step chart in my classroom. I decided to use this particular method because I had observed my partner teacher successfully use a step chart to manage her classroom. I made the chart and introduced it to my classroom during the first week of school (See evidence 29, 1c2). Every student in my class has their name on a piece of paper in a card holder with a number on it. If the student receives a warning, they must "pull their card" to step 1. If the behavior does not improve or there is another incident throughout the day, the student then goes to step 2, which is a "think time." A think time usually results in removing the student from the situation for a few minutes or putting their head down for a few minutes. If the student progresses to step 3, they will lose an activity that day such as recess or center time. The final step is step 4 in which the parents are notified with a note or phone call. This system was very successful this year in promoting students to
accept responsibility for their actions. Students had clear consequences, they accepted teacher suggestions positively and they made adjustments to their behavior accordingly. I only had to contact parents twice throughout the year due to a student getting to step 4 because they could not adjust their behavior.

In order to promote student voice regarding classroom standards, rules and consequences, I had the class help come up with rules for readers workshop time (See evidence 27, 1c1). The class started readers workshop in November. It is a time for students to individually read at their desks. For the first month this time only lasts five minutes, but it eventually becomes a twenty minute period by January. January is the month I start guided reading groups and that is done during readers workshop. If I am working with a group of students, the rest of the class is expected to follow the rules so it is very important that they understand those rules and feel ownership towards them. In order to further promote student voice, I have conducted class meetings this year where I present a situation to the students and they help come up with a solution to the problem. One example of such a class meeting is Evidence 28, 1c1. Kindergarten students need constant reminders and my partner teacher was able to observe such a time when the class needed to be reminded of the rules during center time. Her observation notes show that students were respectful, offered insight to the problem and had a voice regarding the consequences.

Evidence 30, 13 and 31 are all examples of how students in my classroom contribute to a safe and supportive learning environment. In another peer observation, it was noted that I had positive interactions with the students and
used a respectful and caring manner (See evidence 30, 1c2, 1c3 and 1c4). I give positive reinforcement and students respond very well. Evidence 13 and 31, 1c3 display students positively interacting and showing respect for each other. Students must interact with each other during math centers. They learn to take turns and share items in order to finish a task or complete a game. The pictures show students actively engaged and working together in a constructive way.

Evidence 13, 1c3 is one example of the class showing respect for another student. Opportunities arise throughout the day for students to share their writing, read a book or share with the class. This was one instance where a student made a book and wanted to read it to the class. The class was very respectful and courteous as the student shared her book. When she was finished, they clapped and told her what a good job she did.

My kindergarten students receive verbal feedback, assistance and encouragement on a daily basis. Evidence 32, 1c4 is one example of how I give positive encouragement. Bee slips are used at Ness Elementary to reward students for great work and behavior. I keep track of how many bee slips each one of my students receives so that everyone has a chance to earn one throughout the year. Some of the reasons for awarding a bee slip include listening at carpet time, following directions, or helping a friend. Students love getting a bee slip and I hear from parents that they often end up on the refrigerator at home. Another form of providing feedback to students is through the use of Friday Reports (See evidence 33, 1c4). I use this form to help communicate with the parents of a child that may be having a difficult time in
class. I only had one student this year that required the additional intervention of the Friday Report. The parents and I worked together with the help of this form to get the student on track. I used the form for two months until the student received a few perfect reports and didn't need them anymore to help with behavior.

### Evidence

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Analysis and Reflection

I was able to use appropriate management strategies to create a positive and student-focused learning environment with the use of a Step Chart (See evidence 29, 1c2). The use of the Step Chart has helped the class run more smoothly and has enabled me to be focused on teaching instead of behavior. Instead of taking the time to write a student’s name on the board, I simply have to ask the student to pull a card and I don’t miss a beat in my lesson. My class responded very well to this system due to the structure and clear consequences. Phone calls regarding behavior and discipline issues were rare this year. One thing I would like to improve for next year would be the amount of phone calls I make regarding positive behavior. I would like to create a parent call log for next year so I can keep track of how often I contact a parent and for what reason.

Another important aspect to entry 1c is the use of student voice in creating standards and rules (See evidence 27, 1c1). The class responded well with the responsibility of making and following their own rules. I will definitely involve my class again in making rules for workshop sessions and maybe even expand that to other areas of the day, such as carpet time and center time. I plan on continuing to meet with peer teachers to share ideas to implement expanding the areas of the day when I want kids to make their own rules. Pictures and peer observations clearly show the students interacting with each other and myself in a positive way (See evidence 28, 1c1, 29, 1c2, 13 and 31, 1c3). The use of bee slips and Friday Reports helped to provide positive and negative reinforcement when necessary (See evidence 32 and 33, 1c4). I will implement the use of bee
slips again next year and make it a priority to award a student a bee slip everyday.
Cover Sheet: Standard 1d

1d Designing and/or adapting challenging curriculum based on the diverse needs of each student.

1d1 Articulate required learning targets.
1d2 Know what steps to move to next performance level.
1d3 Aware of and use resources for assistance, remediation, acceleration, or enrichment.
1d4 Articulate how new learning builds on prior knowledge and individual needs.
1d5 Engage in high-level thinking skills using a variety of strategies to analyze information and problem solve.
1d6 Reflect on which strategies worked well and which did not and adjust as necessary.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 1d demonstrates how I have designed and adapted curriculum based on the diverse needs of my students. Students have learned how to identify a learning target and how to use resources in the room such as journals and charts to expand their learning. I have incorporated problem solving activities and created guided reading lesson plans to expand existing curriculum and challenge individual students. Students have also learned how to make predictions and reflect on their learning this year.
Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Through student interviews, student work and pictures I was able to demonstrate how students in my class are exposed to diverse and challenging curriculum. Students express learning targets and what is needed to move to the next level of performance through interviews. (1d1 and 1d2) Students utilize resources in the room such as charts, writers workshop folders and a word wall. (1d3) Examples of student work show how my class builds new learning on prior knowledge. (1d4) Examples of problem solving activities and the use of guided reading groups reveal how students are engaged in high-level thinking skills that uses a variety of strategies. (1d5) Examples of student work also shows how students are able to reflect on their thinking strategies. (1d6)

Goal and Rational

My goal this year was to design and adapt curriculum so that it would meet the needs of each one of my students. The first area of concern became math due to my time at the district's Learning Improvement Day. During the LID day all the teachers from the district analyzed WASL scores from the last three years. We saw that our lowest area was math and it seemed to be decreasing. As a result of this information, math became a focus in our building at Ness Elementary. After aligning our math curriculum to the standards, we found that it was lowest in meeting the standard K.5 Core Processes: Reasoning, problem solving and communication. After collaborating with the other kindergarten teacher, we came up with some resources to supplement Math Standard K.5. Examples of these resources and lesson plans are displayed in entry 1d.
Research shows the important aspects of effectively adapting curriculum include instructional strategies, instructional materials and curricular content. Susan M. Bashinski from the article Adapting the Curriculum to Meet the Needs of Diverse Learners states that "adapting the curriculum involves differentiating instruction to provide learners with a variety of ways to process information and demonstrate what they have learned, in order to match the way in which each learner learns most effectively." Based on this information, I was able to adapt my instructional strategies to work with individual students and small groups of students during guided reading sessions. Instructional materials that I incorporated to help with this include the use of multiple charts for math and science. I also incorporated the use of different reading charts to help with reading concepts. The last aspect research shows should be adapted is curriculum. Students were given time during writers and readers workshop to work at their own level and pace and curriculum was adapted for five different reading groups.

Process

The first aspect I implemented to achieve my goals of using curriculum to meet the diverse needs of each student was to teach the class about learning targets. Evidence 34, 1d1 displays the first time students were interviewed about a learning target. We had learned about patterns and my educational assistant at the time was able to go around the room while students were creating patterns and ask them about what they had learned. Most students were able to describe their pattern but had a difficult time actually stating that a pattern is something
that repeats over and over again. During the next two attempts to interview students about learning targets, most were able to identify learning how to write the date (Evidence 35) and learning about pennies (Evidence 36). Besides displaying learning targets, Evidence 35 and 36, 1d1, 1d2 and 1d3 demonstrate most students knew the next steps to take in their learning and were able to state how they were going to do that. Throughout the year, students became stronger at identifying learning targets and what is required to meet them, knowing the progression of learning to reach the targets and knowing how to access additional support when needed.

The last interview was about a math lesson where the students learned about pennies (See evidence 36, 1d1, 1d2 and 1d3). Two ways in which the lesson was adapted was to include journal writing and a money chart. Students were able to identify that the next step after learning about pennies was to count their pennies they received from the teacher and record their answer in their math journal (See evidence 37, 1d2). We also created a money chart as a class to hang in the room so that students could always have a quick reference for this concept (See evidence 38, 1d3).

Two more resources used daily by students and discussed in evidence 35, 1d1, 1d2 and 1d3 are writers workshop folders and the word wall. Evidence 25, 1d3 shows students using their folders during writers workshop and evidence 39, 1d3 clearly displays the front and back cover of the folder. Each student receives a special writing folder at the beginning of the year to be used during writers workshop time. The front cover has their name and a list of common kindergarten
sight words they may need for writing, such as mom, dad and love. The back cover contains an alphabet chart with our special “Zoo Phonics" sounds. The inside contains the writing rubric shaped like a pencil for students to use when they finish a writing piece. Another valuable classroom resource students utilize often is our class word wall. We play games with the word wall throughout the day as well as use it for reading and writing instruction.

In January I started to implement some of the problem solving resources the kindergarten team had researched. A kindergarten teacher from another elementary in our district sent us a work book called Read It! Draw It! Solve It! (Evidence 43, 1d5) This was a great resource to use for kindergarten students because most problems were simple and involved animals. Students became very successful at not only solving the problems, but drawing how they solved the problem. Later on in the year we introduced more advanced problem solving worksheets. Evidence 44, 1d5 are actually examples of first grade activities that we adapted for our kindergarten class. I would read the scenario and clues to the students and we would work as a class to find the answer.

A huge part of being able to adapt curriculum to reach each learner was spent creating guided reading lesson plans. The other kindergarten teacher and I worked together in this process of finding appropriate leveled books and designing lesson plans for each group (See evidence 42, 1d5). After administering the CAP and DRA assessments in January, students were grouped based on their scores. The yellow and red reading groups were given the lowest books and they mostly worked on reviewing sounds and learning
simple words. The blue and green reading groups worked on books at grade level and were introduced to new sight words. I had to adapt one reading group even farther because two of my students had DRA scores at a first grade reading level. Those students were given more advanced books and we mainly worked on reading comprehension.

Our spring science unit on life cycles offered different ways to have students be able to articulate how new learning builds on prior knowledge. Kindergarten students love learning about insects and most have prior experience and knowledge about insects. The first component of our science unit is to grow caterpillars into butterflies, studying the steps along the way. After this process was complete, I asked the class to make an All About Butterflies book using what they knew about butterflies and what they had learned (See evidence 40, 1d4). The class expanded the unit on insects later on in the year to learn about different types of insects. While the class was learning about bees, we made a K-W-L chart to show a few things students already knew about bees and what they were hoping to learn. After reading a story about bees, the class was to fill in the last section of the chart with something new they had learned about bees (See evidence 41, 1d4).

Student work demonstrates the final aspect of entry 1d, in which students are engaged in high-level thinking strategies and reflect on their thinking. The first reading chart accompanied a lesson on the story The Little Engine That Could (See evidence 45, 1d5). I read the story to the class and we discussed how most stories have a sequence, the order of how things happen. The
students identified what happened first, next and last in the story and then I helped them write the words in the chart. The second reading chart went with the story *The Great Kapok Tree* (See evidence 46, 1d6). Before I read the story to the class, I showed them the cover of the book and asked them to draw a picture and write about what they thought the story was going to be about. After I read the story to the class, I then asked the students to reflect on their prediction and evidence 46, 1d6 shows four student samples from this activity. To incorporate student reflection into math as well, evidence 24, 1d6 displays an activity in which students were given popsicle sticks and asked to make three triangles. Once they figured out they didn’t have enough to make three whole triangles, I asked students reflection questions about why they couldn’t make three triangles and how they solved the problem.
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**Analysis and Reflection**

I was able to design and adapt curriculum to meet the needs of my students through implementing guided reading groups and incorporating different types of learning. Evidence 34, 35 and 36, 1d1, 1d2 and 1d3 demonstrate students learned how to identify a learning target and became much stronger in knowing what they needed to do to achieve that target and what resources they may need. Examples of some of these resources include student math journals, a money chart, writing folder and word wall. (See evidence 37, 38, 25 and 39, 1d2 and 1d3). Students were able to show how new learning builds on prior knowledge and they were engaged often in high level thinking activities throughout all subject areas (See evidence 40-45, 1d4 and 1d5). Asking kindergarten students to reflect on their thinking strategies proved to be the most difficult part of entry 1d, but evidence 24 and 46, 1d6 show two examples of students completing this important skill.

Curriculum was successfully adapted throughout the day to meet all students' needs during readers workshop time (See evidence 42, 1d5) and I feel the addition of activities such as evidence 43 and 44, 1d5 helped meet our math
standards and make our math curriculum more challenging, I will continue to search for more problem solving resources and activities to include in the kindergarten math curriculum. I would also like to expand the ability to work with small groups of students more during the day. One way in which I could do this would be to implement the use of a math workshop. My kindergarten students were so successful at using readers workshop and writers workshop, that I think incorporating time for a weekly math workshop would further help the needs of diverse learners. I plan on doing research on ways to incorporate math workshops into our schedule and would like to observe a teacher in our building that successfully runs a math workshop model with her class.
Cover Sheet: Standard 1e

1e Demonstrating cultural sensitivity in teaching and in relationships with students, families, and community members.

1e1 Listen to all group members, learn, to respect and value differences through compromise.

1e2 Experience cultural diversity through learning materials and activities, resources from wide range of cultural communicates.

1e3 Connect personal experiences to new learning.

1e4 Articulate criteria to differentiate between culturally respectful/demeaning wording and portrayals found in media, print and other resources.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 1e demonstrates how I have used cultural sensitivity throughout my teaching and in my relationships at school. Students were taught to respect adults and each other. They learned how to wait their turn, raise their hand and listen during instruction time. I used posters and different learning activities this year to show diversity, encourage students to share their personal experiences and teach students how to be culturally respectful.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Social Studies posters, start of the week posters and different learning activities demonstrate how students in my classroom learned how to show cultural sensitivity among their peers and community. Students learned how to
listen and respect each other and proof of this behavior occurs in observation
notes and pictures. (1e1) Students were exposed to a wide range of learning
materials and activities that displayed different cultures. (1e2) Students
connected personal experiences to new learning through art and writing (1e3)
and they learned about being culturally respectful through reading activities.
(1e4)

Goal and Rational

My goal was to demonstrate cultural sensitivity in my teaching and in my
relationships with students, families and community members. After completing
some research on what it exactly means to accomplish this, I found that culturally
responsive teaching includes these main aspects:

- It acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different
  ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions,
  attitudes, and approaches to learning.
- It builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school
  experiences.
- It uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to
  different learning styles.
- It teaches students to know and praise their own and each others'
  cultural heritages.
- It incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all
  the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools. (Gay, G. from
  Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, & Practice).
Based on this information, I started to look into different ways I could involve students different heritage into my teaching and make more connections between home and school. I implemented a system called "Star of the Week" that enabled students to share about themselves. This system encouraged parents and families to become more involved. I also wanted to include more lessons and books about cultural diversity and found materials that were age-appropriate for kindergarten students.

**Process**

The first step I took in increasing cultural sensitivity in the classroom was to implement a system where students could have a special time to share about themselves with their class. I found "My very own poster all about me" at the local teaching store, Learning is Fun. I then organized a system where each student was assigned to a time throughout the year and they were the "Star of the Week." I modeled this process by being the first star of the week for the class. Each student was given a poster the Friday before they were to be the star of the week. Their job was to complete the poster over the weekend with help from family members at home. The poster contains a place for a picture of the student, family members, things the student likes, things the student does not like, what they want to be when they grow up, three wishes and some other general information about the student (See evidence 47, 1e2). Many parents came to visit the classroom while their child was star of the week. Some students brought special items, pets, snacks or family members in to our classroom during this time.
Our kindergarten social studies curriculum offered great materials and activities to help teach students about culturally diverse knowledge and attitudes (See evidence 48, 1e2). The curriculum for kindergarten focuses on friends and family and really allows for great class discussions about how everyone's family is different. The first poster shows how families may have different traditions, such as going to a parade on the 4th of July or visiting a pumpkin patch in the fall. We also discussed how families may celebrate special holidays. Cinco de Mayo and the Chinese New Year were two examples we discussed. The second poster shows families from around the world so we were able to talk about how families may look different as well. The final poster in evidence 48, 1e2 displays people of different ethnicities all working together to help make our country a better place.

A lesson I taught in addition to the normal social studies curriculum, was the x marks the spot lesson (See evidence 49, 1e2). I used this lesson as an extension of reading the book *The Little Engine that Could* because we had talked about how trains are one form of transportation that move goods from one place to another. I presented some different items to the class from around the room, such as a stapler and pencils. I asked them where they thought these items came from and then I showed them how to check for where something is made. We made a list of these items, the country that it was made in and put an x sticker on that country on a map. The last component to this lesson was to hold a discussion on how they thought these items ended up here in Spokane, Washington.
Many pictures throughout my portfolio show students being respectful and listening to each other. Evidence 31, 1e1 is just one example of a time when students were respectful towards another student. The class was quiet and listened very well as the student read a book to them that she had made. I encouraged more students to share their work this year, whether it was a story from writers workshop or they learned how to read a new book. The class was observed during a time of instruction at the carpet (See evidence 30, 1e1 and 1e3). Students listened, showed respect for the teacher and were polite to the other classmates during this time. It was also observed that they worked together using their prior knowledge to find rhyming words.

Evidence 50, 1e3 demonstrates a unique way I tried to connect the students personal experiences with new learning. I created a Gingerbread Man Glyph. The students had to answer questions about themselves from the chart and make their gingerbread man accordingly. Connecting personal experience to new learning is a huge part of our kindergarten curriculum. Students learn how to write about a "small moment" and spend much of the year working on this skill. Writing about small moments enables students to use an event from their lives and learn how to make it into a personal narrative story (See evidence 51, 1e3). Farther along in the year, students learn how to make "how to books." This type of writing enables students to again use something they already know about and then write directions that teach somebody else how to do it (See evidence 52, 1e3). The Caterpillar K-W-L chart is yet another example of connecting personal experience to new learning in science (See evidence 21, 1e3).
After searching high and low, I was able to find some age appropriate books about culturally respectful and demeaning wording. The two examples I used in my portfolio are Martin Luther King Jr. and The Crayon Box that Talked. I used both of the books around Martin Luther King Jr. Day to help teach who he was and why he is so celebrated. I read the book about Martin Luther King Jr. first and then one of my educational assistants observed our class conversation about the book (See evidence 53, 1e4). Students noted that their skin color was different and we discussed how that is okay. The Crayon Box that Talked was the other book I used to teach about treating others fairly. We read the book about a box of crayons that fight because they don't like each other's color but in the end figure out what a beautiful picture they can make using all the colors in the box. After discussing how it is important to be proud of your color, the students created their own crayons (See evidence 54, 1e4).
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<td>52</td>
<td>1e3</td>
<td>How-To Stories</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Student work describing how to do a specific task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>1e3</td>
<td>Caterpillar K-W-L Chart</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Chart displaying what the class knew about caterpillars, wanted to learn and learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>1e4</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Lesson</td>
<td>January 2010</td>
<td>Observation Notes and cover page from lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>1e4</td>
<td>The Crayon Box that Talked Lesson</td>
<td>January 2010</td>
<td>Cover page and student work from lesson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis and Reflection

Through this evidence I was able to demonstrate how being culturally sensitive has an impact on student learning. The evidence displays how my students listened to classmates and learned to value difference (See evidence 30 and 31, 1e1 and 1e3). This group of kindergarten students has been the most respectful, kind and polite group of students I have worked with yet. Students experienced cultural diversity through share and tell and social studies lessons (See evidence 47, 48 and 49, 1e2). Students were encouraged to make personal connections throughout the subjects of writing, reading, science and art (See evidence 21, 50, 51 and 52, 1e3). Students learned how to value different cultures and how to avoid racial stereotypes through discussion and reading activities this year (See evidence 53 and 54, 1e4). Star of the Week posters, small moment stories, how to stories and art projects serve as wonderful products in a culturally responsive classroom.

Overall this was a great start to incorporating diversity into my teaching, but I have realized just how much more rich my classroom could be with more diversity. I will continue my search for books about race and different ethnicities that kindergarten students would be able to relate to. I would also like to incorporate activities for some different holidays, such as Cinco de Mayo and the Chinese New Year. My class seemed really interested when we discussed these holidays. I think that would be a great way to incorporate more parent involvement and present the class with different customs, food and music.
Cover Sheet: Standard 1f

1f Integrate technology into instruction and assessment.

1f1 Use a variety of technological skills and select technologies appropriate to instructional and assessment tasks.

1f2 Use technology as a tool to enhance learning.

1f3 Demonstrate responsible and ethical use of technology.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 1f displays how technology is integrated into my instruction and use of assessment. Students have been exposed to different forms of technology throughout the year, such as the document camera, computers and calculators. Student work and pictures show how I incorporate technology and use it to enhance learning.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Through student work and student pictures, I was able to demonstrate how technology is integrated into the classroom. Pictures and samples of student work show students in my class using a variety of appropriate technological skills. (1f1) Pictures and documents also show how technology is used to enhance learning in many areas (1f2) and student interviews exhibit students using technology in a responsible and ethical way. (1f3)

Goal and Rational

My goal was to integrate more technology into my teaching and use technology as a tool to enhance learning throughout the school year. Research
from the article Critical Issue: Using Technology to Improve Student Achievement indicates that computer technology can help support learning and is especially useful in "developing the higher-order skills of critical thinking, analysis, and scientific inquiry by engaging students in authentic, complex tasks within collaborative learning contexts." It was also found that students with "access to any of a number of technologies (such as computer assisted instruction, integrated learning systems, or simulations and software that teaches higher order thinking) show positive gains in achievement on researcher constructed tests, standardized tests, and national tests."

While further researching the use of technology, I found that one of No Child Left Behind goals for enhancing education through technology is "To assist every student in crossing the digital divide by ensuring that every student is technologically literate by the time the student finished eighth grade" (Learning Point Associates, 2007). This information made me realize just how important it is to start introducing students to technology as early as possible. Former students have always been exposed to technology in my classroom in the forms of games and the Microsoft Paint program. This year I decided to take it a step farther by introducing them to the computer lab and teaching them how to use Microsoft Word. Therefore research on technology and best practice all leads to the conclusion of teaching students about computers the sooner, the better.

The first step in this process was to complete research on the best way to teacher kindergarten students how to use Microsoft Word and what programs may be available to help with this. Our school librarian became my most valuable
resource throughout this process. She helped me find programs for the students to use and even gave up her own time to help out when our class was using the computer lab.

**Process**

Students have been exposed to different forms of technology in my class since the beginning of the year. They have seen me use my computer and document camera, they have used the document camera and some students have worked on the two student computers in my room. Mid-way through the school year, I started scheduling time for students to work in the school computer lab. Evidence 55, 1f1 shows students working on the popular reading program Starfall during one of our first visits to the computer lab. It is clear from the pictures that the class was highly engaged in this activity. It was also a great way to start the class off because this program mostly requires them to move and click the mouse. Students were introduced to Microsoft Word the following month and taught how to use the keyboard. I mainly focused on showing them how to type letters and use the space bar. My portfolio includes four products produced on Microsoft Word (See evidence 57, 1f1). Students typed their name and a simple sentence. Some students were even able to make punctuation and capital letters. After I helped them print their story, they were given time to draw a picture that went along with it.

Some other common forms of technology utilized in class to enhance learning include calculators, the document camera and the projection screen. Learning how to skip count is a big component in the kindergarten math
curriculum. Students have worked with calculators in the past, but I expanded their skills with this lesson by teaching the class how to skip count using the plus sign on the calculator (See evidence 56, 1f1). I use technology often throughout the day to help teach a lesson. Evidence 59, 1f2 shows just one time I used my document camera to teach a math lesson and evidence 60, 1f2 shows students observing how to use a new computer based reading program on a projection screen. I involve students often during my instruction and this gives students the opportunity to use technology as well. Evidence 61, 1f2 displays a student pointing to caterpillar parts during a science lesson and evidence 62, 1f2 shows a student sharing her how-to story with the class. Evidence 58, 1f2 is another piece of evidence showing how I use technology to enhance instruction and assessment in my classroom. I create weekly homework on my computer for students to practice skills taught during school.

Students learned how to properly use technology and were very responsible and ethical this year. Before any student is even allowed to work on a computer they must turn in a completed student network/internet user agreement and parent permission form (See evidence 63, 1f3). Each student has to turn a new form in every year and the librarian keeps a record of the forms. On one occasion that the class was working in the computer lab, I asked students what some of the rules were for working on the computer and how they should take care of the computers (See evidence 64, 1f3). Students take their computer time very serious and it is treated like a special privilege.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence #</th>
<th>Description of Practice</th>
<th>Name of Evidence</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>1f1</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>March 2010</td>
<td>Pictures of students working in the computer lab</td>
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<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>1f1</td>
<td>Student Pictures</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Pictures of students during a calculator lesson</td>
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<tr>
<td>57</td>
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<td>Student Work</td>
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<td>Examples of student work on the computer</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>1f2</td>
<td>Homework</td>
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<td>Examples of homework made for students</td>
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<td>59</td>
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<td>Picture</td>
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<td>Picture of myself introducing a lesson using the document camera</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>1f2</td>
<td>Student Picture</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Students learning how to use a computer-based reading program</td>
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<td>61</td>
<td>1f2</td>
<td>Student Picture</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Student using the document camera to discuss parts of a caterpillar</td>
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<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>1f2</td>
<td>Student Picture</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Students using the document camera to share a &quot;How-To&quot; story</td>
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<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>1f3</td>
<td>West Valley</td>
<td>September 2009</td>
<td>Form for students and parents to sign agreeing to proper use of technology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Student User</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>1f3</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>May 2010</td>
<td>Student interviews about the proper use and treatment of computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis and Reflection

I was able to demonstrate how I integrate technology into instruction through the evidence in entry 1f. Pictures and samples of student work show how students in my class use a variety of appropriate technological skills (See evidence 55, 56 and 57, 1b1). Pictures and documents show how technology is used to enhance learning in many areas (See evidence 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62, 1b2). Documentation and student interviews demonstrate how students use technology in a responsible and ethical way (See evidence 63 and 64, 1b3).

I learned kindergarten students are very capable of learning how to type and use the computer to create documents. I will definitely involve Microsoft Word in my teaching again next year and introduce the computer lab to my class earlier in the year. I also noticed levels of engagement were at the highest when technology was incorporated into a lesson. My students were always eager to use any technological resources and it helped keep them excited about learning.

One component that I never seemed to have enough time for this year is to create a class website. Our district offers technology courses in different areas throughout the year. Examples of these workshops include things like using software programs or how to use a smart board. The workshop I was most interested in was how to design a website for your classroom. I think a class website would really help enhance learning in my class. I could post pictures, weekly homework, monthly newsletters and new announcements. I plan on attending the website workshop next year and use those skills to create a website that could be utilized by students and parents.
Cover Sheet: Standard 1g

1g Informing, involving, and collaborating with families and community members as partners in each student’s education process, including using information about student achievement and performance.

1g1 Teacher forms partnerships with parents and families to support student learning. Demonstrates how she/he addresses barriers.

1g2 Teacher communicates to parents and families the child’s learning progress. Uses regular two-way communication/partnership ensuring student success.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 1g shows many different examples of how I share information about curriculum and keep the parents informed throughout the school year. The collection of evidence from my parent handbook, monthly newsletters, progress reports and other parent letters demonstrates how I was able to form partnerships with the parents of my students in an effort to improve student achievement.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Through the use of parent letters and monthly newsletters I was able to inform, involve and collaborate with families. My parent handbook and parent letters show how I form partnerships with the parents of my students. (1g1) Letters, emails and newsletters show how I communicate with parents and families about their child’s learning progress. (1g2)
Goal and Rational

My goal was to inform, involve and collaborate with the parents of my students. Ness Elementary typically has low parent involvement. As a kindergarten teacher, I meet many parents who have no experience with the school system because it is their first child entering kindergarten. It is one of my main tasks to familiarize parents and families with the school and make them feel welcome at Ness. If a successful partnership can be formed at the kindergarten level, the parent involvement from that family may continue through the rest of the child’s school career.

There are many valuable reasons for collaborating with families and community members. Collaboration improves school programs and school climate and it can provide family services and support. Joyce L. Epstein notes the main reason to create teacher parent partnerships is to help all students succeed in school and in later life. “When parents, teachers, students, and others view one another as partners in education, a caring community forms around students and begins its work” (School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share). An article from the Journal of Instructional Psychology states “parental involvement is highly important for pushing the public school systems to higher standards” and “improving parental involvement with public schools can improve schools.” (Machen, Wilson, and Notar)

In addition, my goal to inform, involve and collaborate with the parents of my students ties in perfectly with the school’s action plan for family collaboration currently being worked on. Ness Elementary is in the process of creating a one-
year action plan for forming partnerships between school, family and community. Goals for the 2010-2011 school year include enhancing communication between home and school and improving school climate by providing opportunities to educate and engage parents and community members in our school.

Process

Implementing my goal to inform, involve and collaborate with families began last spring when the other kindergarten teacher and I worked with our literacy coach to develop a packet for incoming kindergarten students (See evidence 65, 1g1). Because students' ability levels vary so much when they enter kindergarten, we wanted to create a resource that parents could use to work with their students at home. Along with a baggie of supplies, such as scissors, pencil, alphabet strips and crayons, we provided suggestions of how to use these supplies to help get the students ready for kindergarten. Examples of these include writing their name, learning letters in the alphabet and reading to their child. When a family registered for kindergarten, they received this packet along with the other registration forms.

The next step in implementing my goal was to establish communication with my student’s parents before the first day of school. I made folders for each of the families that contained a parent handbook and parent volunteer letter (See evidence 66 and 67, 1g1). The folders were passed out during our kindergarten open house the day before school started. Usually I am bombarded with questions or concerns on the first day of school, but this year the first day of school ran very smoothly with limited questions from parents. I was also able to
form partnerships with many families early on because I had many parents interested in volunteering. I contacted each parent that turned in a volunteer to thank them and set up a schedule for helping in the classroom. Although the number of parent volunteers has dwindled throughout the school year, I still have two mothers and one grandmother that help out in the classroom often.

I continued to send new and updated information out to the parents of my students through a monthly newsletter, Kindergarten News (See evidence 68, 69, 70, 71 and 72, 1g1 and 1g2). These newsletters provide reminders about important upcoming dates and information about what the class is learning about. They help inform the parents so they are able to enforce what we are learning at school. Parents can ask more specific questions about their child’s learning now and make more personal connections. It is also a great way to remind parents of the expectations for school throughout the school year, such as not to bring toys and to bring a backpack everyday. Evidence 73, 1g2 is another example of a way I communicated with parents about their child’s learning progress this year. The first progress reports went home in November. I included a parent letter with the progress reports to help explain the report card and the grading process.

To encourage a two-way communication with parents, I sent out a letter to families in February inviting them to help during our Valentines Day Party (See evidence 74, 1g2). I included two areas on the letter: one area for parents to sign up to help at the party and one area for parents to sign up to donate an item. Twelve parents responded to this letter and I contacted each parent in regards to the party. Another piece of evidence that displays two-way communication is the
conference letter I sent home in March (See evidence 75, 1g2). Parents signed up for their preferred conference times and I sent out the final schedule with an extra reminder with what day and time we were to meet. Spring conferences ran very smoothly and I had each one of my families attend our conference. Parent emails have been limited this year, but evidence 76, 1g2 displays a time I was able to email a parent about an incident that happened at school. The parent responded quickly and the behavior was resolved. The last example of how I collaborated with parents is the fieldtrip letters (See evidence 77, 1g2) in which I inform the families of my students where we are going on our fieldtrip and the connection to learning.

As a result of these strategies, I was able to form a strong partnership with parents and families to support student learning. Entry 1g displays how I communicated to parents and families the child's learning progress throughout the year. I demonstrated how I address barriers in multiple contexts and I used regular two-way communication to help ensure student success.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence #</th>
<th>Description of Practice</th>
<th>Name of Evidence</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>1g1</td>
<td>Welcome to Ness Elementary</td>
<td>Spring 2009</td>
<td>Letter and Information for new students</td>
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<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>1g1</td>
<td>Volunteer Letter</td>
<td>September 2009</td>
<td>Sign up sheet for parent volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>1g1</td>
<td>Parent Handbook</td>
<td>September 2009</td>
<td>Explanation of rules, procedures and curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>1g1, 1g2</td>
<td>October “Kindergarten News”</td>
<td>October 2009</td>
<td>Updates about curriculum and reminders</td>
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<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>1g1, 1g2</td>
<td>November “Kindergarten News”</td>
<td>November 2009</td>
<td>Updates about curriculum and reminders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>1g1, 1g2</td>
<td>December “Kindergarten News”</td>
<td>December 2009</td>
<td>Updates about curriculum and reminders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>1g1, 1g2</td>
<td>January “Kindergarten News”</td>
<td>January 2010</td>
<td>Updates about curriculum and reminders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>1g1, 1g2</td>
<td>February “Kindergarten News”</td>
<td>February 2010</td>
<td>Updates about curriculum and reminders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>1g2</td>
<td>Parent Progress Report Letter</td>
<td>November 2009</td>
<td>Explanation of grading policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>1g2</td>
<td>Valentines Day Letter</td>
<td>February 2010</td>
<td>Sign up sheet and letter about party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>1g2</td>
<td>Conference Letter</td>
<td>March 2010</td>
<td>Sign up sheet and letter about conferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>1g2</td>
<td>Parent Email</td>
<td>March 8, 2010</td>
<td>Email regarding an incident at school</td>
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<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>1g2</td>
<td>Parent Letters</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Letters to parents about upcoming fieldtrips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis and Reflection

I was able to form partnerships with parents and families early on in the school year through the use of the kindergarten registration packet, volunteer letter and parent handbook (See evidence 1, 2, and 3, 1g1). I was able to communicate students learning progress to parents through monthly newsletters and parent letters (See evidence 4-13, 1g1 and 1g2).

The use of two-way communication was a great strategy to incorporate parents into our Valentines Day party and to ensure attendance at conferences. The Valentines Day party was a huge success with a lot of parent involvement. Spring conferences ran very smoothly and it was the first time I have had each one of my families attend. Usually I have one or more parents not show up or need to reschedule. Emails and parent phone calls have been limited this year so a goal I would like to enforce for next year is a positive contact phone log, where I contact a different family each week to discuss their child’s progress and give positive reinforcement.

I think my greatest success from the school year comes from my monthly newsletter, Kindergarten News. It has been a great way to stay connected to the students and their families and to help keep parents informed. Many parents have expressed their appreciation for the newsletters. I have noticed that parents ask more specific questions about their child’s learning now. Instead of a parent asking how their child is doing in writing, they can ask how they are doing writing about small moments (See evidence 68, 1g1 and 1g2). The newsletters have also been a helpful way to remind families of the expectations during the course
of the school year. I haven't had to make one negative phone call this year about toys, backpacks or dressing appropriately. I will definitely continue to send out Kindergarten News again next year.
Cover Sheet: Standard 2a

2a Evaluating the effects of his/her teaching through feedback and reflection.

   2a1 Conducts assessments during instruction making adjustments to instruction as necessary.

   2a2 Uses multiple sources of classroom-based summative assessments such as school district and state data to identify needed changes and make instructional adjustments.

   2a3 Seeks and receives feedback from a variety of sources. Engages in reflective analysis of the best use of information.

Brief Description of Entry

Evidence in entry 2a demonstrates different ways in which I evaluate my teaching using feedback and reflection. I have created charts and trimester targets to enable myself to monitor student understanding more closely. I have used different forms of assessment throughout the school year. I have also used DIBELS to progress monitor students and create individualized improvement plans. Feedback from peers, instructional coach and my principal have all helped me reflect on my instruction as well.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

I was able to show how I evaluate my teaching through sources such as assessments, charts and observations. Assessment charts demonstrate how I conduct assessments during instruction, allowing for adjustments when necessary. (2a1) Assessments, progress monitoring and improvement plans
show how I use multiple sources of classroom assessment to make necessary instructional adjustments. (2a2) Principal evaluation and observation notes offer feedback and reflective analysis. (2a3)

Goal and Rational

My goal was to evaluate the effectiveness of my teaching through different sources of feedback and reflection. Research suggests two great ways to receive feedback are through peer coaching and peer observations. These strategies allow time for discussion and modeling. (Beers, Learning Driven Schools: A Practical Guide for Teachers and Principals.) Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon (Supervision and Instructional Leadership) suggest establishing a purpose and goals before beginning a peer coaching program. Professional Certification standards made this easy because every time I invited a peer or coach into my classroom, I was able to state clear objectives for the purpose of the observation. Therefore, the feedback I received from these experiences was very valuable in evaluating my instruction. I also utilized collaboration time, which is an aspect of our school’s improvement plan and made many inquires to our new instructional coach throughout the year to help achieve my goal.

Reflection has become a vital aspect of teaching today. The article Learning Through Reflection, states that “reflection is thinking for an extended period by linking recent experiences to earlier ones in order to promote a more complex and interrelated mental schema. The thinking involves looking for commonalities, differences, and interrelations beyond their superficial elements. The goal is to develop higher order thinking skills.” In order to achieve this, I
spent time creating and using assessments, charts and graphs throughout the year that would enable this type of reflection. Entry 2a contains these resources.

Process

The first step in achieving my goal of receiving feedback and reflecting on my instruction was to create assessment charts that would enable me to evaluate progress throughout the year. The Kindergarten Year Round Assessment (See evidence 16, 2a2) was a great tool to track a student's progress, but by using the Kindergarten Math Standards Trimester Target Chart, I could more accurately see if a student was on track with what was expected at each trimester (See evidence 78, 2a1). This chart uses the kindergarten math standards and trimester goals to evaluate for proper student growth. One example of this is standard K.1 in which students are expected to count to 100. Many students may be able to perform this task at the beginning of the year, but a reasonable expectation for first trimester would be counting to 25.

Another chart that used standards to evaluate student learning and assessment is the Daily Writing Checklist (See evidence 79, 2a1). I used this chart to determine where each one of my students was in writing at each trimester. I assessed certain standards for each trimester. These two charts were very helpful in assessing students during instruction and making adjustments to instruction if necessary. For example, if I noticed many of my students are not able to count to 25 by the end of the first trimester, I adjust my teaching to add more practice with counting. If I notice many students are receiving a two in using
correct spacing on the writing rubric, I adjust my teaching to review the concept of using spaces.

The final chart I used to keep track of student progress is the DRA Level Chart (See evidence 80, 2a1). The writing in light print was completed after I assessed students in January and the dark print was the results from DRA testing in May. This chart mostly helped me keep track of what reading level each child was at and it offered a great visual way to show their reading progress this year. A quick assessment tool I use often that is very successful with kindergarten students is thumbs up or thumbs down (See evidence 30, 2a3). This allows me to quickly see if my class is following along or if they need me to slow down and repeat parts of the lesson or directions.

I used multiple sources of assessments this year to help me evaluate instruction. One of the classroom-based summative assessments I used was the Kindergarten Year Round Assessment (See evidence 16, 2a2). I also used the school mandated assessment DIBELS. Using DIBELS gave me the ability to progress monitor students often this year. Evidence 81, 2a2 is an example of the graphs I used to check if a student was on track for meeting their target goal. In most cases students usually were on track, but if they were below their aim line, I knew they needed additional work in letters and sounds. Based on scores from DIBELS and DRA, our schools literacy coach and I developed Individualized Reading Improvement Plans for students that were below grade level (See evidence 82, 2a2). These plans were kept in the student’s assessment folder and sent home at the end of the school year. Another form of classroom-based
assessments I used to provide feedback about student's growth was Baseline Group Tests (See evidence 83, 2a2). These were quick tools I used to assess reading readiness and phonological skills in between using the Kindergarten Year Round Assessment and DIBELS.

Entry 2a displays different ways I have received feedback from multiple sources. The first piece of evidence is from an observation from our schools instructional coach (See evidence 1, 2a3). I asked him to visit our class during a math lesson and watch for student engagement. My ability to make connections and use multi-sensory learning were noted throughout the observation. We discussed the lesson and he helped me come up with a different strategy to measure the objects used in my lesson.

My Evaluation Report from my principal is the next source of feedback on my instruction and skills as a teacher (See evidence 84, 2a3). He made many positive comments, such as I use first rate instructional skills; I plan well and utilize different strategies to engage students. He also noted that discipline is rarely a problem in my class and I interact with students and families in a fair and ethical manner. Evidence 85, 2a3 contains notes about my lesson that went along with the observation. My principal notes that I use clear instructions and have clear expectations. I use affirmation and positive reinforcement throughout the lesson.

I also sought feedback from our administrative intern that was working in our building this spring. She visited my classroom and was able to observe teacher and student behavior that correlated with my Professional Certification
standards (See evidence 30, 2a3). She observed different types of instructional strategies used in my classroom, that I interact with students in a respectful and caring manner and students listen appropriately during instruction.
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<th>Evidence #</th>
<th>Description of Practice</th>
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<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>2a1</td>
<td>Kindergarten Math Standards</td>
<td>November, March and May</td>
<td>Math Checklist to help identify trimester targets</td>
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<td>79</td>
<td>2a1</td>
<td>Daily Writing Checklist</td>
<td>Throughout school year</td>
<td>Writing checklist used to determine student areas of need</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>2a1</td>
<td>DRA Level Chart</td>
<td>January and May 2010</td>
<td>Chart to show growth and progress in reading</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>2a2</td>
<td>Kindergarten Year Round Assessment</td>
<td>Throughout school year: Oct., Feb. and May</td>
<td>Assessment for alphabet, sounds, sight words and math concepts</td>
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<td>81</td>
<td>2a2</td>
<td>DIBELS Progress Monitoring Graph</td>
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<td>Graph from DIBELS that monitors progress</td>
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<td>Document stating assessment scores and future reading goals</td>
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<td>83</td>
<td>2a2</td>
<td>Baseline Group Tests</td>
<td>Throughout school year</td>
<td>Assessments testing reading readiness and phonological awareness</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2a3</td>
<td>See, Think, Wonder</td>
<td>November 2009</td>
<td>Instructional Coach Observation</td>
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<td>84</td>
<td>2a3</td>
<td>Principal Evaluation Report</td>
<td>November 2009</td>
<td>Annual Evaluation from principal</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>2a3</td>
<td>Math Story Problems</td>
<td>November 2009</td>
<td>Observation notes from principal</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>2a3</td>
<td>Observation Notes</td>
<td>May 2010</td>
<td>Peer observation notes of classroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis and Reflection

I was able to demonstrate the different ways in which I evaluate my teaching using feedback and reflection. Assessment charts show how I conduct assessments during instruction, allowing for adjustments when necessary (See evidence 78, 79, and 80, 2a1). Assessments, progress monitoring and improvement plans show how I use multiple sources of classroom assessment to make necessary instructional adjustments (See evidence 16, 81, 82 and 83, 2a2) and principal evaluation and observation notes show how I received feedback on my teaching this year (See evidence 1, 30, 84 and 85, 2a3).

I learned how to analyze data more closely during this process. I think receiving feedback and reflecting often on my instruction made my teaching more purposeful and meaningful to my students. Data from assessments showed students made amazing improvements in learning and all but a few students ended the year reading at a first grade level. The use of breaking down standards on assessment charts to create trimester targets was very helpful, as well. Assessments, charts and graphs helped create goals for myself as a teacher and enabled me to reflect on instruction throughout the school year. Gathering feedback from different sources provided me with guidance and positive affirmation. The next step in this process would be to expand the use of peer observation because I really enjoyed having other adults in the classroom during instruction and thought it was a very beneficial way to gain different opinions and perspectives. I plan on establishing a schedule that would allow me to work more closely with our instructional coach next year. Monthly observations
and discussions would really help expand my ability to evaluate the effectiveness of my teaching.
Cover Sheet: Standard 2b

2b Using professional standards and district criteria to assess professional performance and plan and implement appropriate growth activities.

2b1 Uses criteria such as research and professional standards to assess performance and set professional goals. Goals respond to new information and experiences.

2b2 Develops a comprehensive learning plan for each growth area, methods for obtaining growth, timeline of anticipated activities and resources.

2b3 Collects evidence showing how student learning opportunities and achievement connect with teacher's professional growth plan.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 2b displays how I use professional standards and district criteria to assess my professional performance. I have conducted educational research on kindergarten reading assessments and I have developed learning plans to expand my performance as a teacher. Assessments, collaboration notes and pictures show how I have planned and implemented appropriate growth activities.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Through research, growth plans and other forms of evidence, I was able to demonstrate how I use professional standards to assess professional performance. Based on my research about different methods of reading
assessments for kindergarten students, I created a Research Report for EDUC 601. (2b1) Professional growth plans were developed in the areas of assessment, classroom management and math. (2b2) A collection of evidence, such as assessments, collaboration notes and pictures illustrate how I connected student learning with my professional growth efforts. (2b3)

**Goal and Rational**

My goal was to plan and implement professional growth activities using professional standards and district criteria. One of my greatest areas of concern as a teacher was the need to accurately assess my students. Having limited experience with ways to assess five year old students, I decided to use this topic to develop my research report for EDUC 601. Not only is reading one of the most important skills for a child to learn, but as kindergarten teacher, I should be the front runner in this endeavor. Approximately 30% to 40% of children do not demonstrate basic levels of literacy today in the United States. (Allor, Preventing School Failure). I conducted countless hours of research on what was the most beneficial reading assessment to use in kindergarten and tested different ways to figure out if DIBELS effectively assesses the skills needed to become a successful reader.

Every teacher in the West Valley School District is required to fill out a Professional Growth Goal and Activities Sheet (See evidence 87, 2b2). Research fully supports the importance of teachers having an individual professional development plan to guide their thinking, learning and growth. One source states that teachers who develop professional growth plans are more
likely to gain new information on curriculum and instruction and reflect on their teaching (Beers, Learning Driven Schools: A Practical Guide for Teachers and Principals). I incorporated math into my growth plan, as working to improve math strategies is one of our school's improvement goals. Further work on my professional certification enabled me to create three different professional growth plans. I chose the use of assessment to correlate with my research report, classroom management and math to correlate with other professional goals.

Process

Completing my goal of using professional standards to assess my professional performance began two years ago during work on my research report for EDUC 601 (See evidence 86, 2b1). First I collected research about DIBELS and then compared it to two other types of reading assessments in order to find the most effective reading assessment tool. The other two assessments were The Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) and The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). In order to determine if DIBELS is an effective reading assessment tool, I compared DIBELS results to the results of assessments such as a letter and sound assessment, CAP and sight word assessment.

The first comprehensive learning plan I created was a district mandated Professional Growth Goal and Activities Sheet (See evidence 87, 2b2). Because math became such a large focus at my school this year, I identified improving math strategies as my growth goal. Ways in which I would accomplish this include sharing ideas through collaboration and aligning math lessons to the new math standards. Collaboration notes (See evidence 89, 1b3) along with the
multiple problem solving activities (See evidence 24, 43 and 44, 2b3) discussed throughout my portfolio are evidence of completing my goals in this area. Collaboration notes show how the kindergarten team identified areas of concern in math and possible activities and materials to meet the standards.

My first professional growth action plan for my professional certification was to research different assessment tools and learn how to use results from DIBELS (See evidence 88, #1 2b2). The Kindergarten Year Round Assessment, DIBELS, CAP, DRA and progress monitoring charts all demonstrate how I was able to accomplish this plan (See evidence 16, 18, 19 and 20, 2b3). By administering different types of assessment often throughout the year, my instruction would be more accurate and student growth would be more visible.

Using appropriate classroom management strategies was my next professional growth plan (See evidence 88, #2 2b2). I researched different techniques used for classroom management, observed teachers and implemented a Step Chart. Evidence 9, 10, 11 and 29, 2b3 are pictures that show my chart used for classroom management and students interacting positively with each other.

My last growth plan was to improve math strategies and connect standards to curriculum (See evidence 88, #3 2b2). Again collaboration notes and problem solving lessons demonstrate how I was able to accomplish my third plan (See evidence 24, 43, 44 and 89, 2b3). After collaborating and researching alternative math strategies, the kindergarten team implemented new lessons to supplement our existing curriculum.
### Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence #</th>
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<td>2b1</td>
<td>Kindergarten Reading Assessments</td>
<td>Summer 2008</td>
<td>Research Report for EDUC 601</td>
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<td>87</td>
<td>2b2</td>
<td>Professional Growth Goal and Activities Sheet</td>
<td>October 2009</td>
<td>Professional Growth Plan for aligning math standards</td>
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<td>88</td>
<td>2b2</td>
<td>Professional Growth Action Plans</td>
<td>2009-2010 School Year</td>
<td>Action Plans for Professional Certification</td>
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<td>16, 18, 19, 20</td>
<td>2b3</td>
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<td>Throughout school year</td>
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<td>24, 43, 44</td>
<td>2b3</td>
<td>Problem Solving Lessons</td>
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<td>The Missing Side, Read It, Draw It, Solve It, and other Worksheets</td>
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<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>2b3</td>
<td>Collaboration Notes</td>
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<td>Analysis of Kindergarten Math Strands Chart</td>
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<td>9, 10, 11, 29</td>
<td>2b3</td>
<td>Classroom Management Pictures</td>
<td>Throughout school year</td>
<td>Pictures of students and Step Chart</td>
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</table>

### Analysis and Reflection

Through research, growth plans and other forms of evidence, I was able to demonstrate how I use professional standards to assess professional performance. My research report, Kindergarten Reading Assessments, displays how I use educational research to assess my performance and improve my instruction (See evidence 86, 2b1). I developed professional growth plans in the areas of assessment, classroom management and math (See evidence 87 and 88, 2b2). Assessments, collaboration notes and pictures serve as evidence of
how I connected student learning with my professional growth plans (See evidence 9, 10, 11, 16, 18, 19, 20, 24, 29, 43, 44 and 89, 2b3). These pieces of evidence all demonstrate that I followed through with my plans and made successful growth.

Results from my research report conclude that DIBELS does assess the two important components of reading in kindergarten: phonemic awareness and phonics. It does not, however, always offer the most accurate results. Figure 3 from my research report shows how a student knew all 52 letters and 26 words but still tested an intensive level according to DIBELS (See evidence 86, 2b1). I also found the ARI does measure the five important components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension, but it is better suited for second grade or higher. I found DRA did not provide information about phonemes and phonics like DIBELS, but it is a useful tool for determining a student’s reading level. Therefore, I determined the use of DIBELS is beneficial as a screening tool and way to check progress but other sources of assessment should be used along with it.

Developing professional growth plans was a great way to help create goals and work on ways to improve as a teacher. I feel I have made positive improvements in the areas I identified: assessment, math and classroom management. The next step would be to look at other areas of our curriculum, such as reading or science and align it accordingly to kindergarten standards. I plan on using collaboration time next year to continue this work.
Cover Sheet: Standard 2c

2c Remaining current in subject area(s), theories, practice, research, and ethical practice.

2c1 Demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge for content area and articulate scope and progression of student learning.

2c2 Demonstrates knowledge of Essential Learnings and/or Grade Level Expectations and connects them to processes required for students to meet standards.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 2c demonstrates how I remain current in my use of instruction. I attended a Learning Improvement Day and two workshops on our new kindergarten science unit this year. I used the new math standards to create corresponding lessons and identify student targets for each trimester. I also used writing standards this year to create a checklist to evaluate student progress.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Attending workshops and creating assessment charts based on standards help me to remain current in subject areas, theories, practice, research and ethical practice. Clock hour forms prove I attend workshops in order to demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge for different content areas. (2c1) Charts I use for assessment and to identify trimester targets demonstrate my knowledge of Grade Level Expectations and how I connect them to student learning. (2c2)
Goal and Rational

My goal this year was to remain current in subject areas by attending workshops and connecting Kindergarten Grade Level Expectations to student learning. After attending The Learning Improvement Day, I learned math would be the focus this year in our district. Therefore, I incorporated math into my professional growth plans. Half of the school year’s collaboration time was spent aligning curriculum to the standards and planning new math lessons. The goal for the second half of the school year was to focus on writing. Again, time was spent aligning curriculum to writing standards and creating a building-wide scope and sequence.

The author of the book, Working on the Work, states some of the most effective professional development opportunities include attending workshops and conferences, time for collaboration, developing professional growth plans and college coursework (Schlechty, 2002). One study from the ScienceDaily found that a teacher changes their focus after graduation “from finding research based information to finding information that can be used as teaching material in the daily work with students.” This does seem to be the case with many teachers, but to remain current in subject areas, theories, practice, research and ethical practice, teachers must continue to seek research based information. I plan on doing that this year by attending workshops, collaborating with other teachers and coaches, creating professional growth plans and completing my professional certification.
Process

The West Valley School District offered a Learning Improvement Day before school started this year (See evidence 90, 2c1). The day consisted of analyzing district WASL scores and brainstorming ways to improve math. At Ness Elementary, we continued that work by aligning our current math curriculum to math standards. The Kindergarten Math Strands Chart is a result of that work (See evidence 89, 2c2). For each standard, we identified if our curriculum was high, low or average in meeting the standards. The arrows beside each standard represent this information. Then we identified some different activities and materials we could use throughout the year to meet those standards and in some cases, make our curriculum stronger.

Our district is in the process of adopting Foss Science Kits. Each grade level receives a new kit every year until they are all introduced. Last year, the kindergarten teachers were trained on our first kit, called Animals Two By Two. This year our new kit is called Wood and Paper. I attended two workshop sessions on how to properly use the kit and teach the material (See evidence 91 and 92, 2c1). The workshops were very beneficial and I learned a lot of background information about wood and paper, how to use the supplies in the kit and how I could integrate this topic into reading and writing.

I use charts regularly based on the standards to help ensure students are meeting Grade Level Expectations for Kindergarten. One example is the Kindergarten Math Standards in which I have broken down math standards to develop trimester goals (See evidence 78, 2c2). This chart helps me monitor
student’s progress in three increments: first trimester, second trimester and third trimester. Every math standard is listed, but in reasonable increments throughout the year. Another example of how I connect standards to student learning is with my Daily Writing Checklist (See evidence 79, 2c2). This checklist helps me identify a student’s area of need or standards that may not being met. I use these two charts throughout my instruction to review Grade Level Expectations and make connections with student learning.

The final chart is a product of collaborative work among all the teachers and principal at Ness Elementary. It is a writing scope and sequence chart for grades kindergarten through fifth grade (See evidence 93, 2c2). Time was spent analyzing grade level expectations and curriculum in order to create a schedule of writing and year long learning targets. This document not only helps ensure I am right on track with writing instruction, but it enables other teachers in the building to know exactly what I am teaching in writing and when and what is expected from my kindergarten students by the end of the year. Likewise, I can then see how first grade builds on those skills and what their year long learning targets are.
## Evidence

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<td>Clock hour form from Learning Improvement Day</td>
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<td>2c1</td>
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<td>9-14-09</td>
<td>Clock hour form from science workshop</td>
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<td>10-19-09</td>
<td>Clock hour form from science workshop</td>
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<td>89</td>
<td>2c2</td>
<td>Kindergarten Math Strands Chart</td>
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<td>Chart used to connect math standards to lesson plans</td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>2c2</td>
<td>Kindergarten Math Standards</td>
<td>November, March and May</td>
<td>Math checklist to help identify trimester targets</td>
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<td>79</td>
<td>2c2</td>
<td>Daily Writing Checklist</td>
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<td>Writing checklist used to determine student areas of need</td>
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<td>93</td>
<td>2c2</td>
<td>Ness Writing Scope and Sequence</td>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
<td>K-6 scope and sequence for writing</td>
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</table>

## Analysis and Reflection

I attended workshops and created assessment charts based on standards to help me remain current in subject areas, theories, practice, research and ethical practice. Clock hour forms prove I attended workshops to demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge of the content areas I teach (See evidence 90, 91 and 92, 2c1). Scope and sequence charts and standards charts used for assessment show how I connect Grade Level Expectations to student learning (See evidence 78, 79, 89 and 93). These resources were extremely helpful this
year in expanding my knowledge of curriculum and instruction. I learned more about the subjects of math and science and how to incorporate standards into my instruction.

One area in which I would like to continue this work would be in reading. Our district adopted a new reading curriculum for next year called, Reading Street. The district will be offering workshops next year on this new program and our building’s collaboration time will focus on implementing Reading Street into our classrooms. I plan on attending any workshops available and incorporating reading into my professional growth plan for next year. I also plan to continue my work of creating charts and checklists to ensure my instruction is properly aligned. I use many reading assessments and other helpful resources, but a chart that contains reading standards broken into trimester goals would serve as invaluable to my reading instruction.
Cover Sheet: Standard 3a

3a Advocating for curriculum, instruction, and learning environments that meet the diverse needs of each student.

3a1 Identifies educational issues and raises awareness in order to support learning for all students.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 3a demonstrates how I advocate for students in the areas of curriculum, instruction and learning environments. I used instructional lessons to help identify important issues and became involved with the PTO. I went above and beyond for one project this year by completing a survey for the district about kindergarten readiness.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Planning and implementing lesson plans, attending meetings and volunteering extra time, display how I identify educational issues and raise awareness in order to support learning for all students. (3a1)

Goal and Rational

My goal was to be an advocate for curriculum, instruction and learning environments to help meet the diverse needs of each student. Teachers are often students most important advocates and working in an elementary school with a very high free and reduced lunch rate (almost over 70 percent) increases the need to support student learning in any way I can. The article, Fighting the Good Fight: How to Advocate for Your Students Without Losing Your Job
suggests teachers observe colleagues, attend staff development sessions and volunteer for committees and school events. Use of collaboration and staff development are discussed in many other areas of my portfolio. This entry will focus on a few activities I have completed in addition to normal teaching obligations. Two activities that I took part in this year, the Storytelling event and a PTO meeting, are activities on Ness' One Year Action Plan for School, Family and Community Partnerships for next year.

Process

The first example of how I was able to identify an issue and raise awareness to improve student learning was through the use of The Welcome to Ness Elementary packet (See evidence 65, 3a1). I worked with the other kindergarten teacher and our literacy coach to develop a packet for incoming kindergarten students. Because students' ability levels vary so much when they enter kindergarten, we wanted to create a resource that parents could use to work with their students at home. Along with a baggie of supplies, such as scissors, pencil, alphabet strips and crayons, we provided suggestions of how to use these supplies to help get the students ready for kindergarten. Examples of these include writing their name, learning letters in the alphabet and reading to their child. When a family registered for kindergarten, they received this packet along with the other registration forms. This year our school held a Storytelling event in June. I volunteered to attend this event and pass out kindergarten packets to incoming students. We had seven new kindergarteners attend this activity and receive their packet.
My next opportunity to advocate for students this year was in December. The weather was starting to get really cold and I noticed many students were coming to school without proper warm clothing. I knew our school counselor had received a couple of boxes full of knitted hats that had been anonymously donated. The other kindergarten teacher and I decided to plan a reading lesson about Jan Brett’s story, The Hat. After the story, every student was able to pick out a hat. They were so excited about their new hats that they all quickly put them on and wanted to wear them the rest of the day. The class was eager to pose for a picture and this story made it into the December issue of the district’s newsletter (See evidence 94, 3a1).

I volunteered to work on a special project this spring for my school district. Our district wanted to use a pilot system called The Early Development Instrument (EDI) to help assess kindergarten readiness. The EDI is a teacher-completed checklist that assesses children’s readiness to learn at school in five different areas: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development and communication skills and general knowledge. It also includes two additional checklists regarding the child’s special skills or problems. Evidence 95, 3a1 displays an email regarding the survey work.

The final two opportunities to advocate for students include attending a PTO meeting and implementing personal safety curriculum. I identified the need to attend more functions held by the PTO in my Needs Assessment located in tab three of my portfolio. Evidence 96, 3a1 is an agenda and information from a
PTO meeting I was able to attend in April. We discussed the program Watch Dogs that would encourage dads to volunteer at school and become more involved in their child’s education. I also helped plan the Play Day in which the whole school participates in outdoor activities on the second to last day of school. Evidence 97, 3a1 is an example of how I used an important issue to advocate for students. Ness Elementary has curriculum to teach the topic of Personal Safety. I sent the letter home to parents and implemented a few appropriate aspects of the curriculum into my instruction. I read a book about the right and wrong ways to touch another, we watched a short video about a boy who learned the touching rule and we discussed how parts covered by our bathing suits our private parts. My students were very mature throughout this process and took the information very seriously.

Evidence

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Welcome to Ness Elementary</td>
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<td>Letter and information for new students</td>
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<td>94</td>
<td>3a1</td>
<td>West Valley Report Card “Deliberate Acts of Kindness”</td>
<td>December 2009</td>
<td>Article and picture of activity to help students</td>
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<td>3a1</td>
<td>Survey Email</td>
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<td>Email about the Early Development Instrument Survey</td>
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<td>3a1</td>
<td>PTO Agenda</td>
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<td>Information from PTO Meeting</td>
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<td>97</td>
<td>3a1</td>
<td>Parent Letter</td>
<td>May 2010</td>
<td>Letter sent to parents about Personal Safety Curriculum</td>
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Reflection

I displayed how I identify educational issues and raise awareness in order to support learning for all students by planning and implementing lesson plans, (See evidence 94 and 97, 3a1) attending meetings and school events (See evidence 65 and 96, 3a1) and volunteering extra time to work on projects (See evidence 95, 3a1). I enjoyed participating in these activities this year and think providing students with additional resources, such as school supplies and clothing, really help families living in a low income neighborhood. Even though the EDI survey was a lot of extra work, I am excited to see the results and to see how they can help our district next year.

I will definitely attend more PTO meetings next year and attend school events that interact with students. Our PTO is planning to hold a Book Bingo night where students and families come to play bingo and they receive new books as prizes. Another event I plan on attending next year that I have helped out with in the past is Ornament Night. This event gives families the chance to make ornaments for their Christmas tree and students can make presents for their parents. Both of these events serve as great opportunities for students to receive help and resources in a fun way. One way I could expand advocating for curriculum, instruction and learning environments would be to regularly meet with our special education teacher to ensure that students with special needs are having their needs met. We meet during IEP meetings but I think additional collaboration could only benefit students.
Cover Sheet: Standard 3b

3b Participating collaboratively in school improvement activities and contributing to collegial decision making.

3b1 Uses performance data and research of best practice in collegial efforts ensuring optimum implementation of instructional program.

3b2 Honors school-wide agreements and expectations in support of school improvement efforts. Shares nurturing, positive relationships and a safe environment.

Brief Description of Entry

Entry 3b displays how I have used collaboration to implement instructional programs and how I have honored school-wide agreements and expectations this year. I have collaborated on a district level using performance data, such as WASL trends and results, to improve instruction. I have collaborated with the kindergarten team to analyze math curriculum and standards. I have also collaborated building wide to help create important documents. Staff development hour forms show time and frequency of numerous collaboration meetings.

Explanation of how the Entry demonstrates the state criteria

Through collaboration notes, school documents charts and forms, I demonstrate how I participate collaboratively in school improvement activities and how I contribute to collegial decision making. The use of WASL charts, collaboration notes, standards charts, school improvement plan and scope and
sequence charts show I use performance data and research in collegial efforts to ensure implementation of instructional programs. (3b1) Meeting schedules, agendas, staff development forms and collaboration notes prove how I honor school-wide agreements and expectations to support school improvement. (3b2)

Goal and Rational

My goal was to participate in school improvement activities and contribute to collegial decision making through collaboration. Time for collaboration is becoming more popular in schools around the country and research shows that it has a positive impact on students, teachers and the school climate. Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon (Supervision and Instructional Leadership, 2007) suggest effective collaboration activities include aligning curriculum with grade level expectations, researching best practice methods, completing teacher observations, sharing lesson plans, strategies, and student work. Other ways to achieve this meaningful collegial activity is for the district or school to provide for common teacher preps or late start/early release time.

School districts that have time allotted for collaboration have high teacher moral and student achievement (Cotton, Principals and Student Achievement: What the Research Says, 2003). Alvy and Robbins from The Principal's Companion (2003) propose that creating a culture of collaboration could be the most successful school improvement initiative. The West Valley School district offers each teacher 18.75 hours to be used for collaboration. The Ness Elementary School Improvement Goals state teachers in our building will use that time in PLC Collaboration Groups focusing on math and writing (See evidence
100, 3b1). This time must be used before or after school, but it enables teachers to participate in some of the activities suggested by research: aligning curriculum with grade level expectations, researching best practice methods and sharing instructional strategies.

Process

The first step in participating in collaboration to improve school activities was to attend the district's Learning Improvement Day. We used the District WASL Trend Chart and results to determine math as our area of most concern (See evidence 98, 3b1). We also worked on an Analysis of "Grade Level Overview" that enabled teachers to look more closely at how math is used at their grade level (See evidence 99, 3b1). To continue this work, the kindergarten team filled out a chart to connect math standards to curriculum and student learning (See evidence 89, 3b1). Results of this work include creating a standard based math assessment with trimester targets and implementing new math teaching strategies. We also used this time to find and research supplemental math curriculum and developed many problem solving lessons.

The Ness Meeting Schedule is one piece of evidence that shows the date, time and purpose of each collaboration meeting (See evidence 101, 3b2). The first part of the year we focused on developing connections between math standards and instruction. Most of these meetings were by grade level with opportunities to meet with the grade below and above. The second part of the year the school focused on best practices in writing. Each meeting was broken down into an aspect of our writing curriculum. For example, on April 14th work
and conversation surrounded expository writing. Evidence 102, 3b2 is an example of the agenda from that particular meeting. One important document that came as a result of many collaboration meetings is the scope and sequence chart for writing (See evidence 93, 3b1). It contains a schedule of writing for grades kindergarten through fifth grade and year long learning targets for each grade level.

The last activity I participated in to support school improvement efforts was a special collaboration meeting after the release of school. Our principal had a few special issues he wanted teacher input on so I volunteered to attend the meeting that took place the week after school got out. We discussed our staff retreat for next year, planned reading in-service days, and started to plan how we would use our collaboration hours for the following year (See evidence 104, 3b2). I’m glad I was able to attend this meeting because I already feel more prepared for all the different activities that will be occurring next year.

I have kept track of the time spent working on collaborative projects throughout this year. A way to keep track of this time besides the use of notes and agendas is through the use of the Staff Development Day/Hour Form (See evidence 103, 3b2). This form allows myself, peer teachers and my principal to look back on the work and activities. I also use these forms to reflect on what was accomplished and how much time was used on a certain task.
<table>
<thead>
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<td>Analysis of Grade</td>
<td>August 2009</td>
<td>Notes from school collaboration on math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Level Overview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>3b1</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>Chart used to connect math standards to lesson plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Math Strands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>3b1</td>
<td>School Improvement</td>
<td>2009/2010</td>
<td>School goals and PLC Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>School Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>3b1</td>
<td>Ness Writing</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
<td>K-6 scope and sequence for writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and</td>
<td>school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sequence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>3b2</td>
<td>Ness Meeting</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
<td>Schedule for school-wide collaboration and staff meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>3b2</td>
<td>PLC Agenda</td>
<td>4-13-10</td>
<td>Agenda for collaboration about expository writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>3b2</td>
<td>Staff Development</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
<td>Forms keeping track of collaboration time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hour Forms</td>
<td>school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>3b2</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>6-15-10</td>
<td>Notes from collaboration meeting to plan for next year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis and Reflection

I demonstrated how I participate collaboratively in school improvement activities and how I contributed to collegial decision making this year through collaboration notes, school documents charts and forms. Using WASL charts, analysis of grade level overview and a kindergarten math strands chart show how data and research were used in collegial efforts to ensure the implementation of new math strategies (See evidence 89, 98 and 99, 3b1). Evidence 100, 3b1 demonstrates our school’s goals for working in collaborative groups and the Ness Writing Scope and Sequence chart displays one product produced during collaboration (See evidence 93, 3b1). Meeting schedules, agendas, staff development forms and collaboration notes all prove how I honor school-wide agreements and expectations to support school improvement (See evidence 101, 102, 103 and 104, 3b2).

I feel the time spent collaborating with other teachers has been very valuable to my teaching this year. Meetings produced many important resources and documents that I used in my instruction this year. With the adoption of a new reading curriculum next year, I am pretty certain reading will become a major focus area for our district and at our building. Time on late start days will be spent learning about the new curriculum and researching best practices in reading. I plan on aligning the new reading curriculum to kindergarten reading standards with my partner teacher next year. I also plan on using collaboration to create a reading standards chart to provide trimester goals to be used in assessing student’s progress.
Reflection on Learning in the Process

Greatest Learning

Working on my professional certification has been the most valuable experience of my teaching career. Although I feel my instruction and use of reflection have greatly improved all-around, my greatest area of learning would have to be the ability to gain student voice and track student progress. Before I started this process, I thought it would be impossible to obtain student voice from kindergarten students. I have seen the value in incorporating student voice into my teaching and I have learned some great strategies for receiving that information. Further more, the tools and resources I used this year to monitor student progress were very helpful and successful.

Next Steps

I plan on continuing to use the skills and strategies I have learned throughout my professional certification experience. I created many charts, documents and resources that I will use again next year. I plan on continuing to reflect and evaluate my use of instruction and assessment through collaboration. I will extend the work I completed with math and writing this year to incorporate the subject of reading for next year. A major goal for next year would be to learn about our district’s new reading curriculum and align it to the kindergarten standards. I would also like to increase the use of technology in the classroom to enable student’s early exposure and practice with computers. The last goal for next year would be to increase parent contact by creating a parent call log.
Use this form in conjunction with the 3 standards and 12 criteria

Name: [Redacted]

**Building and Assignment:** Ness Elementary, Kindergarten

**Standard/Criterion:** 1) The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by: (b) Using a variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1 - Need Assessment and Goal Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Professional Growth Area of Focus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your self-assessment using the Descriptions of Practice, discussions with your Professional Growth Team, and the review of school/district plans will provide guidance on a specific area for growth within the selected criterion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students are assessed the first week of school based on math concepts, alphabet identification, phonemic awareness, and a standardized reading test called Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, (DIBELS). Students are also assessed frequently averaging four times a year. The results from DIBELS are primarily for teachers and data can be difficult to interpret or misleading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>B. Rationale</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What will your students be able to do as a result of your professional growth that they are not now able to do?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Students will be able to use a variety of assessment tools and understand how those tools measure their performance
- Students will be able to examine their work and reflect on their achievement
- Students will be able to participate in communication with parents regarding their learning progress and assessment data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 2 - New Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Based on your rationale, what new skills and knowledge (grounded in research) will you need to build your capacity in this area? Be Specific.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I will need to receive additional training on the standardized reading assessment, DIBELS so that I may accurately evaluate student’s progress and share data with parents and students. I will need to research and implement different formative and summative assessments throughout the school year. I will also need to research best practice concerning involving students in the assessment protocol. Student involvement is limited in kindergarten so this will be a challenge.
Step 2: Professional Growth Action Plan

What specific growth activities will you engage in to obtain the identified new learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>TARGET DATE</th>
<th>RESOURCES NEEDED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess all students</td>
<td>First week of school</td>
<td>Alphabet chart, phonemic awareness test, math test and DIBELS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess all students</td>
<td>First week in November</td>
<td>Alphabet chart, phonemic awareness test, math test and DIBELS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use CAP and DRA testing to assess students reading ability</td>
<td>Second week in January</td>
<td>Concepts of Print Test and DRA reading kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess all students</td>
<td>Last week of February</td>
<td>Alphabet chart, phonemic awareness test, math test and DIBELS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess all student</td>
<td>First week of June</td>
<td>Alphabet chart, phonemic awareness test, math test and DIBELS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with Literacy Coach to receive training and information about DIBELS</td>
<td>Throughout school year</td>
<td>Literacy coach and DIBELS information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share results with parents at conference time</td>
<td>First week in October and first week of March</td>
<td>Assessment Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 3: Evidence Proposed

What evidence might you gather to demonstrate the impact of your professional growth on student learning as stated in Step 1?

- Class assessment records
- Samples of various assessments used for different learning targets
- Notes from conferences with students about their learning
- Student reflection notes
- Peer-observation notes

Step 4: Collaboration with the Professional Growth Team

Arrange to consult with your Professional Growth Team and share your plan. Make revisions to your plan based on feedback.

APPROVAL OF PLAN (TEAM MEMBERS)

Jaime Jeffries
Date: 10-1-09

Date: 10-1-09

Date: 10-3-09
The next steps will be completed toward the end of your professional certification program and used in your final portfolio and presentation – but should be considered as you work on achieving your professional growth plans. (See below.)

### Step 6: Evidence Presented Upon Completion

Briefly describe the actual evidence of impact on student learning. If the description and evidence is located in an Entry in your portfolio, please reference its location here. You do need to rewrite your description here.

**1b- Using a variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction.**

I assessed students the first week of kindergarten to better gauge the impact on student learning. I also created an assessment folder to monitor progress throughout the year. This folder contains their progress on letter sounds, lowercase and uppercase letters, reading and writing sight words and writing concepts. Entry 1b contains a copy of these assessments. Entry 1b also contains results from the assessment DIBELS and an example of DRA testing from this year. I asked students to reflect on their work more this year, monitor their own growth, set goals and use a rubric to assess their writing. Evidence from student learning in these areas is located in entry 1b.

### Step 7: Reflection/Implications

**Focus Question:** As you reflect on your progress in this area of focus, what are some next steps that might guide future learning? This section may also be reflected in your Portfolio and simply referred to here.

The assessment folder was very helpful in monitoring student growth and progress throughout the year. I used these folders during conferences with parents and to help fill out report cards. The only area in the folder that I would like to change for the next year is the math portion. I need to change some of the ways I assessed a few of the math concepts. I would also like to continue my research of ways to include students in the assessment process more.

### Completion Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Date: 8-10-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marianne L. Dalley</td>
<td>Date: 8-12-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

University Representative
Use this form in conjunction with the 3 standards and 12 criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: [Redacted]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Building and Assignment:** Ness Elementary, Kindergarten

**Standard/Criterion:** 1) The knowledge and skills for effective teaching which ensure student learning by: (c) using appropriate classroom management principles, processes and practices to foster a safe, positive, student-focused environment.

---

### Step 1: Needs Assessment and Goal Selection

#### A. Professional Growth Area of Focus

Your self-assessment using the Descriptions of Practice, discussions with your Professional Growth Team, and the review of school/district plans will provide guidance on a specific area for growth within the selected criterion.

I teach my students how to vote the first week of kindergarten. We use voting everyday to decide on the weather. I involve the class in making rules for our workshop sessions, as well. Students seem to have a difficult time following the expectations and I have a difficult time following through with consequences. Last year I would simply put students name on the board which would result in a five minute time out. I need to establish a more structured classroom management plan.

#### B. Rationale

What will your students be able to do as a result of your professional growth that they are not now able to do?

- Students will be able to contribute individually and as group members to a positive, safe, and supportive learning environment.
- Students will be able to accept responsibility for their behavior
- Students will be able to articulate clear consequences for their behavior

---

### Step 2: New Learning

Based on your rationale, what new skills and knowledge (grounded in research) will you need to build your capacity in this area? Be Specific.

First I need to research effective classroom management procedures for kindergarten. I will interview teachers in my building to gain new ideas. I will also observe a teacher in my building who holds weekly classroom meetings where students may discuss problems or behavior issues. Based on the new information, I will need to develop a classroom management procedure that is clear and concise in the eyes of a five year old. The plan must be simple to follow and have clear consequences.
### Step 3 - Professional Growth Action Plan

What specific growth activities will you engage in to obtain the identified new learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>TARGET DATE</th>
<th>RESOURCES NEEDED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research classroom management strategies Implement classroom management plan</td>
<td>Fall 2009 Fall 2009 First week of October and first week of March Throughout school year</td>
<td>Research books and articles Posters Teacher notes Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Step 4 - Evidence Proposed

What evidence might you gather to demonstrate the impact of your professional growth on student learning as stated in Step 1?

- Video of classroom
- Observation notes from peer teacher or principal
- Student reflection notes
- Posters

### Step 5 - Collaboration with the Professional Growth Team

Arrange to consult with your Professional Growth Team and share your plan. Make revisions to your plan based on feedback.

**APPROVAL OF PLAN (TEAM MEMBERS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jaime Jeffries</td>
<td>10-1-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Signature]</td>
<td>10-1-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Signature]</td>
<td>10-3-09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*The next steps will be completed toward the end of your professional certification program and used in your final portfolio and presentation – but should be considered as you work on achieving your professional growth plans. (See below:)*
**Step 6 - Evidence Presented Upon Completion**

Briefly describe the actual evidence of impact on student learning. If the description and evidence is located in an Entry in your portfolio, please reference its location here. You do need to rewrite your description here.

1c - Using appropriate classroom management principles, processes and practices to foster a safe, positive, student-focused environment.

I started the school year using a step chart to help with classroom management. I involved the class more this year in making rules and decisions. Evidence of this is located in entry 1c. Entry 1c has pictures of my step chart and a poster the students helped me make for the rules of readers workshop. Peer observation notes display how my class accepted responsibility for their own behavior and how they contributed to a positive, safe and supportive learning environment. Entry 1c also contains examples of how I gave individual feedback to students through the use of a Friday Report and Bee Slips.

**Step 7 - Reflection/Implications**

Focus Question: As you reflect on your progress in this area of focus, what are some next steps that might guide future learning? This section may also be reflected in your Portfolio and simply referred to here.

The use of my step chart really helped with classroom management this year. Students had clear warnings and clear consequences. Behavior problems rarely, if ever, occurred. One thing I would like to implement for next year would be a parent call log. I rarely had to make parent phone calls about behavior problems this year, but I would like to have made more positive phone calls. A parent call log would be a great way to keep track of how often I contacted the parent and the reason for the call or email.

**Completion of Form**

Candidate

Date: 8/10/10

Marianne L. Danley

University Representative

Date: 8/13/10
Use this form in conjunction with the 3 standards and 12 criteria

Name: [redacted]

Building and Assignment: Ness Elementary, Kindergarten

Standard/Criterion: 2) A successful candidate for the professional certificate shall demonstrate the knowledge and skills for professional development by: (c) remaining current in subject area(s), theories, practice, research and ethical practice.

---

Step 1 - Needs Assessment and Goal Selection

A. Professional Growth Area of Focus
Your self-assessment using the Descriptions of Practice, discussions with your Professional Growth Team, and the review of school/district plans will provide guidance on a specific area for growth within the selected criterion.

I attended a training last year where we learned about the new math standards and then reviewed our current math curriculum, Everyday Mathematics, by The University of Chicago Mathematics Project. We found that it falls short in many areas of the new kindergarten math standards. I would like to align math lessons and assessments to the new standards. WASL scores in math are low across the district so I think focusing on the content of math would be beneficial to the whole district.

B. Rationale
What will your students be able to do as a result of your professional growth that they are not now able to do?

- The teacher will be able to consistently demonstrate depth and breadth of content area
- The teacher will be able to articulate the scope and progression of student learning
- The teacher will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Grade Level Expectations and connect them to the content required for students to meet the standards

---

Step 2 - New Learning

Based on your rationale, what new skills and knowledge (grounded in research) will you need to build your capacity in this area? Be Specific.

I need to align our math curriculum to the standards, see which areas require supplementary curriculum and then research those alternative methods. I need to research current best practice for teaching math in kindergarten. I will also join a collaboration group that will focus on improving math school wide. Teaching methods, lesson plans and assessment ideas will all be discussed during this collaboration time.
### Step 3 - Professional Growth Action Plan

**What specific growth activities will you engage in to obtain the identified new learning?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>TARGET DATE</th>
<th>RESOURCES NEEDED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze district-wide data</td>
<td>Last week in August</td>
<td>District WASL scores from at least previous three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend school wide math collaboration meetings</td>
<td>Once a week starting October</td>
<td>Student work and math curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>throughout school year</td>
<td>until the end of the school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research alternative math curriculum and</td>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>Research books, research articles, and curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supplementary curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td>reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align math curriculum and assessment with new</td>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>Math curriculum and new standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Step 4 - Evidence Proposed

**What evidence might you gather to demonstrate the impact of your professional growth on student learning as stated in Step 1?**

- Notes from workshops and training sessions (clock hour forms?)
- Book study notes
- Collaboration notes
- Research notes

### Step 5 - Collaboration with the Professional Growth Team

Arrange to consult with your Professional Growth Team and share your plan. Make revisions to your plan based on feedback.

**APPROVAL OF PLAN (TEAM MEMBERS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jaime Jaffies</td>
<td>10-1-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[signature]</td>
<td>10-1-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[signature]</td>
<td>10-3-09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next steps will be completed toward the end of your professional certification program and used in your final portfolio and presentation – but should be considered as you work on achieving your professional growth plans. (See below:)

### Step 6 - Evidence Presented Upon Completion

Briefly describe the actual evidence of impact on student learning. If the description and evidence is located in an Entry in your portfolio, please reference its location here. You do not need to rewrite your description here.

2c- Remaining current in subject area(s), theories, practice, research and ethical practice.

The first half of the year I used collaboration time to focus on math. The other kindergarten teacher and I looked at data and studied the new math strands. We found that our curriculum was low in meeting the needs of K-5. Core Processes: Reasoning, problem solving, and communication. We researched ways to implement more problem solving into math time. Examples of some of these problem solving lessons are in entry 1d. Entry 2c and 3b contain examples of notes and curriculum information used during collaboration.

### Step 7 - Reflection/Implications

Focus Question: As you reflect on your progress in this area of focus, what are some next steps that might guide future learning? This section may also be reflected in your Portfolio and simply referred to here.

I feel the kindergarten team made great achievements in math this year. We met with the first grade teachers to get ideas and gained advice from our instructional coach. Students received more exposure to problem solving this year and they were very successful during math assessments. I would like to incorporate problem solving lessons early on next year and expand our collaboration focus to include reading and writing.

| Completion of Plan                   | Date: 8-10-10
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Date: 8-12-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria W. Danley</td>
<td>University Representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verification of Completion of the
Professional Teaching Certificate
Through Eastern Washington University

Name ________________________ EWU ID# ____________

This form must be completed by the EWU Director of the Professional Certificate Program.

The Professional Growth Record has been completed, including the following performance indicators:

✓ A completed Professional Certification Portfolio
✓ An action research paper documenting positive impact on student learning
✓ An outline for a presentation of one of the 3 SPI focus areas of the portfolio to a designated audience
   (for your school district i.e. faculty meetings, PTO, school board)
✓ Oral presentation at Culminating Seminar of one of the 3 SPI Professional Growth focus areas.
✓ Written identification of future goals and professional career interests

The Professional Growth Record includes required SPI forms:

✓ Candidate Information Sheet 3-2
✓ Professional Growth Record 3-3
✓ Professional Growth Plans (three to five) 3-4 / 3-5 / 3-6

Please sign in one box only

Verification that this individual has completed the Professional Certificate Program at EWU. I have no knowledge of any relevant information related to the applicant's character or fitness that would adversely affect the applicant's ability to serve in a certificated role.

✓ EDUC 598 (4) Pre-assessment Seminar
✓ EDUC 520 (4) Methods of Educational Research
   Or
✓ EDUC 539 (4) Special Topics in Education
✓ EDUC 521 (4) Field Based Inquiry
✓ EDUC 598 (3) Culminating Seminar

Signature of the EWU Director of the Professional Certificate Program
Date: 8-12-10

Verification that this individual has been assessed during the Pre-assessment Seminar and it has been determined that he/she has met all requirements for the Professional Certificate. I have no knowledge of any relevant information related to the applicant's character or fitness that would adversely affect the applicant's ability to serve in a certificated role.

Signature of the EWU Director of the Professional Certificate Program
Date: ____________

Pro Cert Verification Form 12/07
CANDIDATE INFORMATION SHEET
State of Washington

Directions. Before you begin to fill out this form, please read all information describing standards, criteria, and indicators related to the Professional Certificate.

(1) Name of Candidate

(2) Home Address

(3) Daytime Phone No.

(4) Social Security No. ( )

(5) Identify Each Endorsement on your Certificate
   Elementary Education K-8
   Reading
   Curriculum + Instruction

(6) Name each College/University Professional Growth Advisor who has advised you.

   Advisor Harvey Alvy Institution EWU Dates 2008-2009

   Advisor Mariann Donley Institution EWU Dates 2009-2010

   Advisor Jeani Struss Institution EWU Dates 2009-2010
PROVISIONAL STATUS/EMPLOYER SUPPORT VERIFICATION
(WAC 181-78A-505)

Use this form to verify: (1) completion of provisional status employment or (2) support for an individual to enroll in the Professional Certificate program, if the individual has not completed provisional status employment.

SECTION A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TO BE COMPLETED BY CANDIDATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. NAME LAST FIRST MIDDLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ADDRESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. DATE OF BIRTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. CITY/STATE/ZIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. TELEPHONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. WA CERTIFICATE NO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. EMAIL ADDRESS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Complete Part 1 OR Part 2 only.

SECTION B

TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYER SUPERINTENDENT OR PERSONNEL DIRECTOR ONLY

Part 1. Verification of completion of Provisional Status Employment.

(Name of Teacher Candidate) employed as a teacher in the
West Valley School District #363 School District, approved private school, or state agency
providing educational services for student, completed provisional status employment on June 13, 2008

(Signature of Superintendent or Personnel Director) (Date)


Based on our knowledge/evaluation of this teacher candidate, we believe

(Teacher Candidate's Name) employed as a teacher in the
(Name of school district, approved private school, or state agency providing educational services)

approved private school, or state agency providing educational services to students, is ready to benefit from the professional
growth activities contained in the Professional Certificate program and we support his/her enrollment in the Professional
Certificate program at

(Name of college/university)

(Signature of Superintendent or Personnel Director) (Title) (Date)

FORM SPI 4421 (Rev. 7/07)
State of Washington

EDUCATION CERTIFICATE

CERTIFICATE TYPE: RESIDENCY TEACHER

ISSUE DATE: 07/08/2004

EXPIRATION DATE: 06/30/2013

ENDORSEMENTS: ELEMENTARY EDUCATION-PRIMARY
READING-SUPPORTING

YOU ARE EXPECTED TO COMPLETE REQUIREMENTS TO OBTAIN A PROFESSIONAL TEACHER CERTIFICATE DURING THE LIFE OF THIS CERTIFICATE

Randy Oom
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Alteration Renders This Certificate Null and Void

DO NOT REMOVE THIS PORTION OF THE CERTIFICATE

This certificate authorizes you to practice in Washington State.

*Endorsement(s) marked with "**" are based on Out-Of-State program.

Additional information regarding certification is enclosed.

For further information please refer to:

PO BOX 47200, Olympia, WA 98504-7200
Phone: (360) 725-6400
Email: cert@k12.wa.us
Fax: (360) 586-0145
Web: www.k12.wa.us/certification

If you receive information from a source other than the OSPI Certification Office, it is your responsibility to contact OSPI to ensure you have accurate information.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. THE CERTIFICATED PROFESSIONAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR BEING KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT CURRENT AND REVISED REGULATIONS. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER TO OBTAIN AND MAINTAIN VALID APPROPRIATE WASHINGTON CERTIFICATION TO PRACTICE IN THIS STATE.
Professional Growth Presentation

1b-Using a variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction.

1. Needs Assessment
2. New Learning
3. Action Plan
   - Assess all students during the first week of school
   - Assess students throughout the year: November, February and June
   - Assess students using CAP and DRA in January
   - Re-assess students on DRA in June
4. Evidence Proposed
   - Class assessment records
   - Samples of various assessments used for different learning targets
   - Notes from conferences with students about their learning
   - Student reflection notes
   - Peer-observation notes
5. Evidence Presented
   - Enrichment Program Eligibility Assessment
   - Kindergarten Year Round Assessment
   - DIBELS Reports
   - CAP Assessment
   - DRA Results
6. Reflections
Kindergarten Reading Assessments

by

[Name redacted]

Presented to the department of education of
Eastern Washington University
in partial fulfillment requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

EDUC 601 Research Report
Summer 2008
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Chapter 1- Introduction

Background

One of the most important skills for a young child to learn is to read. Reading opens the door to most other skills; it provides access to new information and new forms of thinking (Newman & Newman, 2006). However, in the United States today, approximately 30% to 40% of children do not demonstrate basic levels of literacy (Allor, 2006). This literacy deficit is an alarming and important challenge. This has prompted the United States Congress to declare “war” against illiteracy and demand greater teacher and school accountability. There have been many mandates and literacy reform efforts by the Federal Government in the past few years including the development of the National Reading Panel and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (Tierney & Thome, n.d.).

The National Reading Panel (NRP) has identified five essential components for reading success in response to a congressional mandate to help parents and teachers identify key reading skills and instructional methods. These components include: phonemic awareness or phonemes, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension (Tierney & Thome, n.d.).

- Phonemes are the smallest units of spoken language and involve teaching children to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken syllables and words.
Phonics instruction helps beginning readers understand how letters are linked to sounds to form letter-sound correspondences. Phonics also includes teaching spelling patterns and learning how to apply this to reading.

Fluency is the ability to read orally with speed, accuracy and proper expression.

Vocabulary is the reader's ability to understand the written text that they are reading.

Text comprehension teaches children about the active process that requires interaction between the readers and text (Schenck, 2005).

"The overall goal of the No Child Left Behind ACT of 2001 is to close, by the end of the 2013-2014 academic year, the achievement gap between high and low performing children" (Uyeno, 2006). High quality reading instruction in kindergarten through grade three that teaches the five essential components of reading identified above are being established because of this initiative (Schenck, 2005). Also because of NCLB, annual testing is required and standardized testing to measure school accountability is expanded (Wenning, 2003).

Due to the report from the NRP on the five essential components of reading, the initiative of Reading First was adopted and along with that came a reading assessment that promises to measure just these five elements. Additionally, federal funding guidelines strongly suggest using a reading
assessment tool called The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). DIBELS can be used as a screening system to identify students who are at risk, to monitor progress and to measure outcomes (Tierney & Thome, n.d.). Many elementary schools are starting to use the DIBELS Reading Assessment in kindergarten that tests the child’s word fluency, phoneme segmentation, letter naming fluency and initial sound fluency (Kamii, 2005).

Significance of Study

Many school districts are faced with the issue of choosing a school-wide reading assessment tool that will help get the students reading at grade level. School districts are looking for an assessment tool that will not only help teachers assess a student’s current reading level, but help guide teaching to improve reading levels throughout the school year. The West Valley School District is currently using DIBELS in kindergarten through grade three. Because my current school, Arthur B. Ness Elementary is using this assessment tool, I will examine DIBELS to see how it measures up against other types of reading assessments for kindergarten students. There are many other different types of reading assessments in the education world today and they all claim to be the best for assessing and teaching reading.

Statement of Problem

The low rate of literacy among young children in the United States today is a very significant problem. The purpose of this project is to identify the most
valuable reading assessment tool to use when students enter school to help guide teachers in assisting emergent readers. Also, this study will examine the DIBELS Assessment screening system used in the West Valley School District and evaluate whether it tests the skills needed to become a successful reader.

**Research Questions**

Based on this above problem statement, the following questions need to be addressed:

1. What is the most beneficial reading assessment to use in kindergarten?
2. Does the reading assessment DIBELS effectively test the skills needed to become a successful reader?
3. What kind of interventions and teaching strategies help to improve scores on reading assessments for kindergarten students?
Definition of Terms

- Assessment- To determine the importance, size, or value of something in a standardized way (Ehringhaus & Garrison, 2008)
- DIBELS- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
- ISF- Initial Sound Fluency
- LNF- Letter Naming Fluency
- National Reading Panel- A panel of reading experts put together to assess the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read (Schenck, 2005).
- No Child Left Behind- A United States federal law (2002) that reauthorizes a number of federal programs that aim to improve the performance of United States primary and secondary school students. NCLB increases the standards of accountability for states, school districts and schools, as well as providing parents more flexibility in choosing which schools their children will attend (Schenck, 2005).
- NWF- Nonsense Word Fluency
- PSF- Phoneme Segmentation Fluency
- WASL- Washington Assessment of Student Learning
Chapter 2: Review of Related Research

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to research different types of reading assessments to find the best assessment to use for kindergarten students. This chapter will open with a discussion about relevant background information on the topic of literacy. Then I will describe important principles of effective literacy assessment and describe three assessments that may be used at the kindergarten level to test reading ability and monitor growth. The reading assessments that will be examined are The Analytical Reading Inventory, The Developmental Reading Assessment and The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy. The reading assessment DIBELS is currently being used at my school and will be evaluated based on several research studies. The next section of this chapter will contain research on important interventions and instructional strategies. Finally, the chapter will close with a summary.

Relevant Literacy Background Information

The literacy skills of United States’ children is a very disturbing concern, as approximately 40 percent of students cannot read at grade level. This national problem is being addressed by federal and state policymakers in an effort to increase literacy rates among students. Congress asked the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to form a panel in which they would review and evaluate various approaches to reading instruction. This became the National Reading Panel (NRP); they conducted a two-year study on how
students learn to read. The panel issued a report in 2000 that identified the five most important components of reading to be phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension (Brynilde, 2002).

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 used the panel’s findings as a foundation to establish The Reading First program under Title 1. The Reading First program hopes to establish high quality reading instruction in kindergarten through third grade that includes the NRP’s five essential components of reading. Also, this program requires states to provide evidence that they are using assessments for screening, diagnosis, and measuring of student progress in reading (Nagel, Schenck & Walker, 2005).

Brynilde (2002) reported that individual states are also coming up with their own reading initiatives. There are seven common strategies being used by state programs to improve their reading programs. They include:

1. Preventing and intervening with reading difficulties by giving struggling readers intermediate intervention

2. Providing or mandating particular comprehensive research-based programs

3. Providing additional or better data through the use of progress monitoring students

4. Providing teachers with skills and knowledge in research-based reading instruction
5. Using a diagnostic assessment that measures reading ability in print awareness, phonemic awareness, oral reading ability and comprehensive skills

6. Assessing kindergarten students readiness for school

7. Using an end-of-year performance analysis (Brynildssen, 2002 p. 2)

Nagel, Schenck, and Walker (2005) completed an analysis of state reading standards and assessments for grades kindergarten through third. This study took a random sample of 20 states and a panel of experts reviewed each state's reading content standards for grades K-3. The state reading content standards were evaluated to see how they reflected expectations for learning the five essential areas of reading, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Eight states claimed they assessed all five essential elements of reading. Only five out of the eight states truly tested for all required reading skills. This study discovered the most prevalent reading skill to be tested for is comprehension and the least tested reading skill tested is fluency. Also, the researchers found that 30 states administer statewide reading assessments in the third grade, 13 states do in second grade, 7 states in first grade and 6 states in kindergarten.

**Principles of Effective Literacy Assessment**

Educational assessments can be a very helpful and effective tool for teaching children. But when they are not used properly, they may provide incorrect results. One of the most important principles of formative assessment is
that assessment should be an ongoing process. True reading assessment should occur every time a child reads, writes or speaks, so that it becomes natural and expected for the student. The best forms of assessment are the routine, daily activities that a teacher does with students to determine growth. An assessment should be authentic and reflect real reading and writing. For a reading assessment to be authentic, it should ask the student to complete that task (Cooper 1997).

An effective assessment should identify the child’s strength. According to Vygotsky’s (1978) zone of proximal development theory, children construct meaning by advancing what they already know how to do as they work with the teacher. The assessment should inform the teacher of the child’s strengths and the teacher will give support in gaining new strategies and techniques. An effective assessment should be multidimensional as well because it gathers various forms of evidence, such as samples of writing, self-evaluations, student retellings, and records of independent reading (Cooper, 1997).

There are two main types of assessment used today in education. They are called summative assessment and formative assessment. Ethinghau and Garrison (2008) define summative assessment as something “given periodically to determine at a particular point in time what students know and do not know.” Summative assessments are usually spread out and occur after instruction occurs. Examples of these kinds of assessments are state assessments and end of chapter or semester exams.
Formative assessments are less standardized and usually contain a high level of student involvement. Teachers can use formative assessments to gauge student understanding at any time in the school year. Formative assessment enables teachers to make instructional adjustments and interventions during the learning process (Ehringhaus and Garrison, 2008).

Reading Assessments

The types of assessment this study will be researching are all formative in nature. These assessments are: The Analytical Reading Inventory, The Developmental Reading Assessment and The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy.

The Analytical Reading Inventory

The Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) is an informal reading inventory developed by Alden J. Moe and Mary Lynn Woods. An informal reading inventory is any authentic assessment tool used to observe, analyze, record and summarize data about a student's reading progress. The ARI is designed to be given to students in kindergarten through high school. It is a series of word lists and reading passages beginning at a preprimer level that get progressively more difficult. The results of this assessment help to determine the student's independent, instructional, frustration, and listening levels of reading. It provides the student strategies for problem solving and comprehension as well (Moe & Woods, 2003).
The ARI uses several components to create an accurate student profile.

The following areas are assessed in the ARI:

- The first component of this reading assessment is Reading Interviews. The Reading Interview section gathers such information as the student's interests, habits and strategies for book selection.

- The second section, World Lists/Initial Placement, determines the student's starting place in the narrative passages and if the student can comprehend the words.

- The Prior Knowledge/ Prediction Analysis section assesses the student's prior knowledge about the text and determines whether they can use prior knowledge to make a meaningful prediction.

- The next section of the ARI is Oral Reading Miscue Analysis. The student reads a passage as miscues are recorded to give data about the types and frequency of miscues, word recognition level and self correcting behavior.

- The fifth section, Fluency Analysis, gathers data about the student's ability to read smoothly and meaningfully.

- The Retelling Analysis component of this assessment determines the reader's comprehension of the text by retelling events about the passage.

- Comprehension Question Analysis is the final component of the ARI. Its function is to collect data about the reader's ability to comprehend and his/her level of thinking (Moe & Woods, 2003).
Developmental Reading Assessment

The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is a diagnostic assessment developed by Joetta Beaver. A diagnostic assessment is any assessment used to pinpoint a student's strengths, weaknesses, knowledge and skills. The DRA may be used from kindergarten through eighth grade. I will be using the DRA K-3 to assess students for this study. The DRA K-3 is specifically tailored to young emerging readers. It assesses student's performance in the areas of reading engagement, oral reading fluency, and comprehension. The DRA K-3 is based on what good readers do and scaffolds primary students through the stages of learning to read. According to research from Beaver (2005), good readers:

- Enjoy reading and have favorite books
- Select appropriately leveled reading material
- Read and sustain independent reading for long periods of time
- Use text features to help them preview a text
- Predict and pose questions before and while they are reading
- Read aloud with appropriate expression
- Read at an appropriate reading rate with accuracy
- Use effective strategies to problem-solve
- Construct meaning as they read and make connections
- Interpret what they read by making inferences
The DRA uses a system of leveled benchmark assessment books to identify a child’s independent reading level and document changes over time. The DRA defines an independent reading level as the student’s ability to "decode the text with an accuracy rate of 94 percent or higher, read with at least a moderate rate of fluency, and construct meaning before, during and after reading" (Beaver p. 4, 2005). The DRA allows teachers to determine students’ level of control of word analysis tasks, document students’ progress over time, group students according to their instructional needs and plan more effectively for instruction (Beaver, 2005).

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) is a curriculum-based evaluation tool developed by Roland Good and Ruth Kaminski from the University of Oregon. A curriculum based evaluation (CBE) is any measurement procedure that assesses student’s progress by using materials from instruction. Any CBE is designed to be brief in duration and structured so that measurement may occur frequently. The target grade level for DIBELS is preschool, kindergarten, first, second and third grade. Teachers may easily use the results from DIBELS because data is represented graphically to display individual and class information (Hall & Mengel, 2006).

Good and Kaminski based DIBELS on the research of early literacy and from this developed a system to measure the early indicators of reading (Hall & Mengel, 2006). These early indicators of successful reading were made into
seven subtests. They measure critical foundations for reading and predict future reading progress (Moats, 2003). This study will focus on the first four DIBELS subtests because kindergarten students are only assessed in these four areas.

- The first subtest is called Initial Sound Fluency in which students are shown 12 pictures and asked to identify the beginning sound. The score is the number of correct initial sounds given per minute.

- The second subtest is Letter Naming Fluency. Students are asked to name as many letters as they can out of a page of upper and lower case letters in one minute.

- Phoneme Segmentation Fluency is the third subtest in which students hear distinct words and produce the individual phonemes verbally. For example, the examiner says sat and the child must identify three different phonemes, /s/ /a/ /t/. The score is the number of correct phonemes in one minute.

- Nonsense Word Fluency is the fourth subtest. Students see written nonsense words and are asked to say the individual sound of each letter or read the whole word. The score is the number of letter-sounds correct in one minute. For example, the student would receive three points for reading "raj" or saying /r/ /a/ /j/ (Moats, 2003).
Research on DIBELS

Allor, Gansle, Denny (2006)

Allor, Gansle, Denny (2006) completed a research study on students who were experiencing difficulty with phonemic awareness. The purpose of the study was to demonstrate how teachers and paraprofessionals can use curriculum-based measurement to identify and evaluate the progress of students. The sample for this study included six kindergarten students that were selected based on low scores on the Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) subtest of DIBELS. The researchers predicted that struggling readers would successfully learn to read provided that early in their school careers they were given explicit and intensive instruction.

One paraprofessional was chosen to undergo training and implemented the intervention system with the students. She introduced the small group of students to a blending and segmenting intervention called The Stop and Go Game. She worked with each student for an average of 26 minutes per day. Data was collected daily based on the students performance on the PSF, and the results clearly show that all students involved in the intervention made substantial growth in their ability to segment phonemes, which leads to faster responses to initial traditional reading instruction. The researchers conclude that curriculum-based measurements do help to identify kindergarten students in need of intensive instruction and they do help to evaluate their progress.
Another similar research study in favor of using DIBELS is from Good and Kaminski (2001). This study used DIBELS and Curriculum-Based Measurement Reading within an Outcome-Driven Model of educational decision making. The goal of this study was to establish a prevention oriented assessment and intervention system to prevent reading difficulties. This model is supposed to help keep students on track for achieving reading outcomes. The researchers hypothesize that through this model of intervention, the students that they work with will show substantial progress. The first step in the process of identifying students for the sample size started with the results from DIBELS. The need for support had to be validated next to ensure the students chosen really need the additional instruction. The last step in the process was to plan accordingly for instructional support. This included having a clear instructional goal, a focus on essential skills, a plan for amount and type of support the student would receive, a specification of the logistics of who would teach the students; and a measurement plan to evaluate progress.

Data was collected through DIBELS three times during the year: fall, winter, and spring. A team of five testers were able to assess a class of 25 students in approximately 30 minutes. Students were placed into three instructional groups based on the data from DIBELS. These groups are called intensive, strategic and benchmark. Students received appropriate instructional support based on their reading level. For instance, a student that tested at the
lowest level of intensive instruction, received reading support in small groups in addition to normal classroom instruction of 20 minutes a day. After a year of implementing interventions and progress monitoring students using DIBELS, every student in the study was able to demonstrate a positive trajectory.

Kamii and Manning (2005)

Kamii and Manning (2005) investigated the use of two DIBELS subtests, Phonemic Segmentation Fluency (PSF) and Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF). The purpose of the study is to determine whether these two portions of the DIBELS Assessment are a valuable and accurate tool for determining students reading ability. Researchers hypothesize that the PSF will be a good predictor of later reading achievement. The samples of students used to test this theory were 107 kindergarteners and 101 first graders. They were each given a writing task, The Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT), the PSF and the NWF. After the data was collected and analyzed, the researchers could not find a high enough correlation between the scores on the subtests and levels of current writing and reading. Kamii and Manning concluded that the DIBELS assessment was based on an outdated scientific theory and their data did not justify its use for evaluation of an instructional program.

Tierney and Thome (n.d.)

Tierney and Thome (n.d.) found that many teachers question the DIBELS’ Retell Fluency Subtest, in which students are expected to demonstrate reading comprehension by doing fast story retellings. Comprehension is such a strategic
and valuable reading skill, that it could not fully be tested by counting how many words a child can say in a one minute retelling of text. Tierney and Thome (n.d.) note that DIBELS may help teachers identify those students who need more intensive instruction, but argue that instructional decisions become based solely on improving test performance. Many schools and districts are starting to administer DIBELS, but Tierney and Thome (n.d.) found that many do not facilitate the use of the results. If the data from DIBELS is not being used to drive instruction, the time spent on assessing students in this way could be better used on reading instruction.

**Instructional Strategies and Interventions**

*Instructional Strategies*

A key part of effective instruction is when a teacher uses feedback from an assessment intervention to evaluate instruction and modify the instruction based on student progress (Good and Kaminski, 2001). Teachers can not rely on reading assessments alone to improve reading. Reading assessments are just a tool to establish a baseline for learning and to monitor progress. The results from these assessments should help drive instruction throughout the year. Brynildssen (2002) suggests teachers always start with a pre-assessment of where the child currently is and how much they already know. It is important to monitor progress throughout the year to document any changes or growth.
Once appropriate assessments are in place, it is important to use effective instructional strategies. Effective instructional strategies from the Saskatoon Public Schools (2008) used to increase students reading level are noted below:

- **Guided Reading**- The teacher provides support for small groups of readers as they learn to use various reading strategies, such as context clues, letter and sound relationships and word structure.

- **Explicit Teaching**- Contents is broken down into small parts and taught individually. Students are provided with guidance and structured frameworks. Topics are taught in a logical order and directed by the teacher.

- **Word Wall**- A word wall is an organized collection of words displayed in a classroom. This display is used as an interactive tool for teaching reading and spelling to children.

**Interventions**

There has been a great deal of recent research on the impact of early intervention among primary students. Clay (1993) suggests intervention programs often fail because they are started too late. Students should be assessed as soon as they enter formal school and immediate intervention should occur if they test below grade level. Suggestions for intervention strategies from the University of Texas (2001) include:

- Improving fluency by reading with a partner or with a tape recorder
• Improving phonological awareness by incorporating rhyming and segmentation of words

• Improving comprehension by activating a student’s prior knowledge with pre-reading activities, discussing vocabulary and learning decoding strategies

Summary

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 has prompted state reading initiatives and federal funding for improvement. The National Reading Panel identified the most important reading components in 2000. Unfortunately, statewide assessments are unable to properly measure these components. Research shows that the most important principles of effective literacy assessment relate to ongoing, authentic and multidimensional factors. There are two main types of assessment: summative and formative. Summative assessment occurs after instruction and formative assessment occurs throughout the learning process.

The formative assessments that I researched for this study include The Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI), The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS). Based on the information from these three assessments, it is clear to see each one may offer valuable insight about a student’s ability to read. The ARI includes many different components to help a teacher learn about students and their reading abilities. The DRA may be used to discover the student’s reading level and
document growth over time. DIBELS offers a quick way to target students learning and monitor progress frequently.

Research studies show that DIBELS may have a positive impact on student learning. This reading assessment tool is used to successfully screen students for intensive intervention. Also, DIBELS has been used to show successful progress. There have been research studies, however, that show DIBELS is an ineffective reading assessment tool. These studies did not indicate a strong correlation cases between DIBELS and reading success. There is also a fear that using DIBELS is a “waste of time” if the data is not being used to drive instruction.

A common thread from all of the research in this chapter is the importance of an assessment to determine a student’s reading ability and monitor progress frequently. Providing immediate intervention for students may impact the rest of their school career. Effective strategies to increase reading ability include guided reading groups, explicit teaching and the use of a word wall. Effective intervention strategies to use for struggling readers include reading with a tape recorder, rhyming, and activating a student’s prior knowledge.
Chapter 3- Project Design

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to find the most effective reading assessment to use for kindergarten students. I will first describe the demographic information of the targeted subjects used in this study. Next, I will describe my action plan for completing this project based on the literature from Chapter 2. The action plan will describe the process of collecting data and evaluating The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). The chapter will also describe the process for comparing DIBELS to two other reading assessments. The techniques I am using for data collection and a description of the implementation schedule will follow the action plan. The questions that will be answered based on this research include:

1. What is the most beneficial reading assessment to use in kindergarten?
2. Does the reading assessment DIBELS test the skills needed to become a successful reader?
3. What kind of interventions and teaching strategies help to improve scores on reading assessments?

Targeted Subjects

The data collection will take place in the West Valley School District. West Valley is a relatively small district compared to the surrounding districts of Spokane and Central Valley. It contains one high school, three alternative high schools, two middle schools, four elementary schools and one preschool. Arthur
B. Ness is one of the elementary schools in the district. Ness is in a relatively low income neighborhood with over fifty percent eligible for free lunch and twenty percent eligible for reduced lunch. Of the 355 students at Ness Elementary, over eighty five percent are Caucasian. There are eight Native American students, five Asian students, twelve African American students and twenty two Hispanic students.

“Our mission is to provide a foundation for every student to become a successful lifelong learner. Teachers and other staff members at Ness care deeply for their students. We work hard to maintain a nurturing atmosphere where all community members, (students, parents, volunteers and staff), feel welcome, trusted and valued. We believe that excellence is achieved by doing our personal best. We encourage every student to excel in their work and to prepare themselves for a successful future” (West Valley School District, 2008).

This year I am the only kindergarten teacher at Ness Elementary. I have twenty five students in my morning session from nine in the morning to eleven forty five. I have twenty five students in my afternoon session from twelve forty five in the afternoon to three thirty. The total of students is fifty, which is a class overload of two students. I have two students on an IEP for severe learning disabilities in the morning session and one student on an IEP for Autism in the afternoon session. I have one full time educational assistant and one part time educational assistant in both kindergarten sessions.
Action Plan

Description of Plan

This study began in September 2007 when each incoming kindergarten student was assessed using DIBELS. In addition to this reading assessment, I administered my own letter and sound assessment. Based on the scores of these two assessments, I identified four students from each class who were significantly below grade level and needed immediate intervention. Immediate intervention means these students will be given additional instruction time in the areas that are needed. Since that time these students have been working with an educational assistant four times a week for thirty minutes a day. They have been working on such reading skills as letter identification, phonics and phonemes.

Examples of these interventions from Chapter 2 include:

- Improving fluency by reading with a partner or with a tape recorder
- Improving phonological awareness by incorporating rhyming and segmentation of words
- Improving comprehension by activating student’s prior knowledge with pre-reading activities, discussing vocabulary and learning decoding strategies (University of Texas, 2001)

To ensure proper documentation, the students in this group will have frequent progress monitoring. They will be given the DIBELS test a total of five times to track progress and monitor growth.
Midway through the year, all kindergarten students were re-assessed using DIBELS. I put the rest of the students in reading groups based on this DIBELS score. Besides the one group that is receiving extra intervention with help from an educational assistant, each class has one other group that is identified as requiring intensive intervention. I have been working with this group once a week on letter identification. There are two groups that tested at strategic intervention from DIBELS, which means they are working slightly below what is expected of kindergarten. I have been reviewing letter identification with this group as well as working on letter sounds from the alphabet. One group of students in each class tested at benchmark level which means they are working at or above the expected kindergarten level. I have been reviewing letter sounds with this group as well as introducing patterned reading and sight words. Starting mid-year, these groups have been meeting once a week for twenty minutes to focus on their individual reading abilities.

In addition to using the instructional strategy of guided reading with small groups of students, I have conducted several whole group explicit teaching lessons (Saskatoon Public Schools, 2008). These lessons have gotten progressively harder starting with teaching letter formation and letter sounds. Towards the end of the year lessons include making predictions and inferring new information from text. I have implemented the strategy of a word wall as well for to help guide reading instruction. Our class word wall is in the front of the class and each word is listed below the letter it starts with in alphabetical order.
There is a list of thirty sight words kindergarten students are expected to know before first grade. These words have been gradually introduced to the students through the use of our word wall. (See Appendix A for list of words.)

Comparing Assessments

The next part of my action plan implements the use of two new reading assessments. The Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) and the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) have been researched and analyzed for effective use in kindergarten. The ARI determines the student's independent, instructional, frustration, and listening levels of reading (Moe & Woods, 2003). The DRA assesses student's performance in the areas of reading engagement, oral reading fluency, and comprehension (Beaver, 2005). Six students were chosen to be given the ARI and the DRA during the last month of school. I randomly chose one student from each level of DIBELS: intensive, strategic, and benchmark. Because I have two sessions of kindergarten, this number was duplicated to equal a sample of six students.

Data Collection

The data that I have been collecting this year from DIBELS has been all quantitative data. The reading assessment DIBELS provides a group print-out of all my students and their scores so that I can compare them and rank each student in the class. It also provides a graph for each individual student that has their starting point, current score and the end target for that child. I collected three different scores from each kindergarten student- one from the beginning of
the year, mid-year, and an end-of-the-year score. The eight students in the intervention group received an additional two progress monitoring checks. I used this data throughout the year as I met with parents at conferences and worked with students in guided reading groups.

In addition to collecting data from DIBELS, six students were chosen to take additional reading assessments. The extra reading assessments I administered were the ARI and the DRA. Because both of these assessments require the ability to read, I used them during the last month of kindergarten. The data that I collected based on these assessments included how accurate results were, student scores and how well they scored compared to their end of the year DIBELS score.
Chapter 4- Project Implementation

Introduction

This chapter will describe the methods of data analysis to complete this project. I will first describe the process for collecting data to find the most beneficial reading assessment in kindergarten. I will compare student scores on the Analytical Reading Inventory, the Developmental Reading Assessment and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills. Next, I will describe the way I analyzed data to determine if DIBELS was effectively testing the skills needed to be a successful reader. The last section of chapter 4 will use a series of graphs with data from DIBELS to answer my last research question about teaching strategies and intervention that improve scores on reading assessments.

Data Analysis

What is the most effective reading assessment tool?

The three reading assessment tools I chose to use for this project are the Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI), the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). The data that I collected based on these assessments included how accurate results were, student scores and how well they scored compared to their end of the year DIBELS score. Because the ARI and the DRA require the ability to read, I administered these assessments during the last month of kindergarten. They
were still difficult for a couple of the students to complete, as not all students are reading quite yet.

**ARI Results.** The first test I tried with my students was the ARI. The ARI determines the student's independent, instructional, frustration, and listening levels of reading. The first step in administering this assessment is to have the student read a list of words starting at a primer level, which is kindergarten level. They were not words that kindergarten students could recognize or even try to sound out. If the student missed less than five words out of twenty, I let them go onto the next level of words, which would be level one-first grade. There was only one student out of six that was able to go onto the next set of words.

How well the student scored on the word list determined which reading passage they would start on. I had all but one student need to start at the pre-primer level, which is a level slightly below kindergarten. The form I used to assess the student's performance asked the student to read the title and make a prediction about what they thought the story was about. As they read the passage to the best of their ability, I kept track of miscues and self-corrections. When the student was finished reading the passage, I asked the student to retell what they had just read and asked them comprehension questions. I had to rate each student on their reading fluency as well. Figures 1 and 2 (see page 31) show that only two students tested at a kindergarten reading level for the ARI and the other four students tested below kindergarten level.
**DRA Results.** The second test I administered was the DRA. I was a little weary to try the DRA because of the frustration level from my students during the ARI. I used the DRA K-3 Kit, which is geared more specifically towards early emergent readers. The DRA K-3 assesses students' performance on their reading ability and comprehension. Every student starts with the first book. The first few books use patterned text and even if a child is actually unable to read the words, they can look at the pictures for help. As the student reads I keep track of their miscues. Possible miscues include a substitution, repetition, self-correction, omission or insertion. I can also record when I have asked the student to try a word again or had to tell the student what the word was.

If the student scored ninety-five percent accuracy and answered the comprehension questions correctly, they read the next book. Once a student scored below that figure, it became their instructional reading level. I thought administering the DRA went very well and the students all had positive feedback about the experience. There are a series of nine books for kindergarten and first grade alone, so it takes awhile to find the appropriate level. For instance, student 3 from my morning session of kindergarten read 5 books before I determined his reading level to be 6-8, which places him as a mid-year first grade reader. Figures 1 and 2 (see next page) show that all students tested at or above a kindergarten reading level in the DRA. Two students even tested at a first grade reading level.
AM Kindergarten Assessment Results- Figure 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Student 2</th>
<th>Student 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DIBELS Score</strong></td>
<td>Intensive -Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>Strategic- Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>Benchmark- At Grade Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARI Score</strong></td>
<td>Level Preprimer-Below Kindergarten</td>
<td>Level Preprimer-Below Kindergarten</td>
<td>Level Primer-Kindergarten Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRA Score</strong></td>
<td>Level A- Early Kindergarten Level</td>
<td>Level A-2- Mid-Kindergarten Level</td>
<td>Level 6-8- First Grade Level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PM Kindergarten Assessment Results- Figure 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Student 2</th>
<th>Student 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DIBELS Score</strong></td>
<td>Intensive -Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>Strategic- Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>Benchmark- At Grade Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARI Score</strong></td>
<td>Level Preprimer-Below Kindergarten</td>
<td>Level Primer-Kindergarten Level</td>
<td>Level Preprimer-Below Kindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRA Score</strong></td>
<td>Level A- Early Kindergarten Level</td>
<td>Level 3- Early First Grade Level</td>
<td>Level 2- Late Kindergarten Level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Is DIBELS an effective reading assessment tool?*

The reading assessment DIBELS does meet The Reading First program requirement under Title 1 because it measures the five important components of reading, per the National Reading Panel. These components include: phonemic awareness or phonemes, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension (Tierney & Thome, n.d.) In kindergarten, however, DIBELS only measures phonemic awareness and phonics. To further analyze the validity and to see how
it measures up with Kindergarten Grade Level Expectations, I used the following teacher created assessments:

- Letter and Sound Assessment- I ask students to identify uppercase and lowercase letters randomly displayed on a sheet of paper.
- Print Concept Assessment- This is an assessment given to me by the former kindergarten teacher at our school. It measures how well students understand the concept of reading. For example, directionality, word matching and concepts of letters and words.
- Sight Word Assessment- This is a list of 30 sight words kindergarten students are expected to know before first grade. I simply show the student one word at a time and record how many they get correct.

Figure 3 shows even though DIBELS places students 1 and 2 below grade level, they are very close to achieving Kindergarten Grade Level Expectations for reading.

AM Kindergarten Assessment Results- Figure 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIBELS Score</th>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Student 2</th>
<th>Student 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intensive -Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>Strategic- Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>Benchmark- At Grade Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter and Sound Assessment</td>
<td>52 Letters 26 Sounds</td>
<td>52 Letters 26 Sounds</td>
<td>52 Letters 26 Sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Concept Assessment</td>
<td>20/22 Points</td>
<td>22/22 Points</td>
<td>22/22 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sight Word Assessment</td>
<td>20/30 Words</td>
<td>20/30 Words</td>
<td>30/30 Words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4 shows similar results with student 1 close to achieving kindergarten expectations and student 2 scoring the same as student 3 on all of my teacher-created assessments.

PM Kindergarten Assessment Results - Figure 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIBELS Score</th>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Student 2</th>
<th>Student 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intensive - Needs Substantial Intervention</td>
<td>Strategic- Needs Additional Intervention</td>
<td>Benchmark- At Grade Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter and Sound Assessment</td>
<td>49 Letters 18 Sounds</td>
<td>52 Letters 26 Sounds</td>
<td>52 Letters 26 Sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Concept Assessment</td>
<td>21/22 Points</td>
<td>22/22 Points</td>
<td>22/22 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sight Word Assessment</td>
<td>11/30 Words</td>
<td>30/30 Words</td>
<td>30/30 Words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do certain teaching strategies and interventions improve scores on reading assessments?

The final section in this chapter will analyze data collected on the use of an intervention group and the teaching strategies used to help improve their reading abilities. Four students were chosen from the morning session of kindergarten and four from the afternoon that scored at the Intensive level. According to DIBELS, this means they need substantial intervention. These students have been working with an educational assistant four times a week for thirty minutes a day. They have been working on such reading skills as letter identification, phonics and phonemes. The following graphs contain data collected from the progress of these students.
The first subtest kindergarten students take is called Initial Sound Fluency (ISF). This is only administered in the fall and winter. Students are shown 12 pictures and asked to identify the beginning sound. The score is the number of correct initial sounds given per minute. Every student but one had a positive increase in the amount of sounds they could recognize.

AM Kindergarten Initial Sound Fluency Results - Figure 5

PM Kindergarten Initial Sound Fluency Results - Figure 6

The second subtest kindergarten students take is Letter Naming Fluency (LNF). They are assessed three times a year in this area. Students are asked to
name as many letters as they can out of a page of upper and lower case letters in one minute. Figures 7 and 8 show all students made positive gains in this area as well.

AM Kindergarten Letter Naming Fluency Results- Figure 7

PM Kindergarten Letter Naming Fluency Results- Figure 8

Students take the next subtest, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF), twice a year starting in the winter. Students hear distinct words and are asked to produce the individual phonemes verbally. The score is the number of correct
phonemes in one minute. All students from the intervention group had a positive trajectory in this category of DIBELS as well.

AM Kindergarten Phoneme Segmentation Results- Figure 9

PM Kindergarten Phoneme Segmentation Results- Figure 10

Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) is the fourth subtest. Students take this test only in middle of kindergarten and in the end. Students see written nonsense words and are asked to say the individual sound of each letter or read the whole word. The score is the number of letter-sounds correct in one minute. Figures 11 and 12 also show growth in this area.
The graphs from DIBELS have been extremely useful in documenting progress and growth in my students. Not only do the graphs show the progress from each child, but it also shows scores in each area, including Initial Sound Fluency, Letter Naming Fluency, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency, and Nonsense Word Fluency. From this I was able to see exactly what area each child needed additional intervention in and if that score improved throughout the year.
Overall, these data has shown me which students have made progress this year and which students have actually regressed. These data has also enabled me to use quantitative numbers to create graphs on my student's progress. For instance, the following graphs represent the scores from the three DIBELS Assessments throughout the year. (See Appendix B for full report.) I can see from Figure 13 that the morning kindergarten session had students testing at the intensive level increase, the amount of students testing at the strategic level decreased and the students working at benchmark leveled off throughout the school year. Figure 14 shows a large increase of students performing at the intensive level on DIBELS. There is a decrease in both students working at the strategic level and the benchmark level.

AM Kindergarten DIBELS Scores- Figure 13
PM Kindergarten DiBELS Scores - Figure 14

![Bar Chart]

- Intensive
- Strategic
- Benchmark

Legends:
- [ ] Beginning
- [ ] Middle
- [ ] End
Chapter 5- Conclusions, Recommendations, Action Plan For

Next Year and Reflections

Introduction

The final chapter of my research project will contain my overall conclusions from this new and exciting journey. I will then give recommendations about effective reading assessments based on what I have learned as a result of the research review and my own action research. The next section will allow me to look back on my experience and reflect on my own growth through this project. The final section will contain my action plan for next year as I work to incorporate all the new knowledge I have gained.

Conclusions

Based on my research and data results, the Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) seemed to be a very effective assessment tool. It measures the five important components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension (Brynildsson, 2002). The interesting conclusion I came to from using this assessment, is that it is not well-suited for kindergarten students. My students were very frustrated with this assessment and scored poorly. I thought it was a solid assessment tool to find a student’s independent, instructional, frustration, and listening levels of reading. I would definitely use the ARI if I needed to know more about a child’s reading ability from second grade or higher. The list of words used to determine which grade level of passage to start on would be a great tool for fluent readers.
The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is a great way to find the reading level of a kindergarten student. This assessment tool does not provide information about phonemes and phonics like DIBELS does. From my experience, however, I think it picks up other important areas of reading that DIBELS lacks. Instead of using word lists and passages like the ARI, it is a system of books that my students were excited to read. The books at the kindergarten level were mostly patterned books. Even if the students couldn't read every word in a book, they could make a good guess by looking at the pictures. The DRA did take longer to find a student's reading level because each student had to start at the first reading level and keep reading until they had a certain amount of miscues.

Through my research and the process of collecting data, the reading assessment tool DIBELS, does seem to effectively measure the skills needed to be a successful reader. The National Reading Panel (NRP) identified five essential components for reading success and DIBELS assesses two of the essential components for successful reading in kindergarten students. These components are phonemic awareness and phonics. DIBELS does test for fluency, comprehension and vocabulary in first grade, typically when most students are starting to read.

Another important factor about this assessment tool is that DIBELS doesn't always render the most accurate results. For instance, one student tested at needing strategic intervention on DIBELS at the end of the year, which
means he or she is below grade level. This particular student happens to be working above kindergarten grade level—he/she knows all their alphabet, sounds, and kindergarten sight words and is reading at a first grade reading level. Inaccurate scores may result from two factors: it is a timed test and usually administered by someone other than the classroom teacher. This may increase the level of anxiety and inhibition in the students taking DIBELS.

The research I collected on teaching strategies and interventions for teaching reading and improving scores may have a positive impact on student learning. I incorporated the use of three new teaching strategies this year: guided reading groups, explicit teaching lessons and use of a word wall. These teaching strategies seemed to help advance the students in the areas of reading and writing. The intervention strategies used with the struggling students also seemed to help as they improved in all areas on the DIBELS assessment this year.

Recommendations

Recommendation #1- Use DIBELS simply as a screening tool and way to monitor progress.

A teacher should not rely on the scores from DIBELS too much as Goodman (2006) points out. It is also important to keep in mind the case studies of Tierney and Thome (n.d.) and Kamii and Manning (2005), which Goodman (2006) cites in his book *The Truth about DIBELS*. Goodman stresses that DIBELS is not curriculum and should never dictate what is taught in the
classroom. I have learned not to be obsessed about scores, but revel in the fact that over half of my students are reading simple books and writing sentences.

**Recommendation # 2- Use various sources of assessments.**

DIBELS only assesses two of the NRP's essential components for successful reading in kindergarten: phonemic awareness and phonics. Once students are starting to read, a way to assess for fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary must be incorporated. The DRA is an effective way to assess reading comprehension, but I would still need to find another tool to properly assess reading fluency and vocabulary.

**My Action Plan For Next Year**

I recently received the wonderful news that Arthur B. Ness Elementary School will offer a full day kindergarten program next year and I will be the teacher. This news could not have come at a better time as I develop an action plan to incorporate all that I have learned from my research project. I will have the extra time now to properly administer assessments and provide extra intervention strategies to struggling students. The length of time in class ended up being the only factor against me as I worked on this project. The time that I was able to administer assessments with my students was limited because each session of kindergarten is only two hours and forty-five minutes. I was limited to what assessments I could administer as well because most involved the ability to read simple sentences and I had to wait for the last part of spring for most of the students to have that ability.
The following is my action plan for next year:

Fall 2008

- Screen incoming students using DIBELS, sections ISF and LNF  
  (September)
- Administer own letter and sound assessment (September)
- Start guided reading groups (October)
  - Identify students needing immediate intervention
  - Increase time by 15 minutes for all guided reading groups to meet daily
  - Increase explicit teaching time to 40 minutes (20 minute lesson in the morning and 20 minute lesson in the afternoon)

Winter 2009

- Assess all students using DIBELS, sections ISF, LNF, PSF, NWF  
  (January)
  - Re-adjust guided reading groups if needed
  - Administer DRA to students scoring at benchmark from DIBELS
- Re-assess students on sounds and letters (February)
- Administer Print Concept Assessment (February)
- Incorporate use of word wall during explicit teaching lessons (March)

Spring 2009

- Re-assess students on sounds and letters (April)
- Assess students on kindergarten sight words (April)
• Assess all students using DRA to find reading levels (May)
  o Incorporate a way to assess students on vocabulary and fluency if they are reading
• Assess all students for kindergarten entrance DIBELS score (June)

Reflections

This research project has been a wonderful and powerful experience. I have gained many new skills and grown as a teacher like I could never have imagined. I gained the courage to ask questions about teaching and gained the confidence to welcome a variety of answers. During my first year of teaching kindergarten, the word DIBELS meant nothing to me. I didn’t know what it was or how I was supposed to use the received information. All I knew was that it tested reading somehow and was our school district requirement. I feel empowered now because I know exactly what DIBELS measures and how I can use that information to drive instruction. I feel empowered as well because I know that I can use other forms of assessment to guide my teaching. Using as many different forms of assessment as I can as a teacher will help to paint the most accurate picture of my students. The most rewarding part of this project for me was entering data in chapter 4. After I had completed the research and collected data, it was exciting to see how everything came together in the end. I am very pleased with the results of these data and excited that this research project had such a positive impact on student learning.
References


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