

Sarah Mikula

Maurice C. Cash Elementary School

2016 Rodel Exemplary Teacher

Collaborating for student success

“ Collaborating with colleagues is one of the most important and beneficial aspects of my job. As a special education teacher I need to communicate with my fellow teachers on a daily basis. This allows me to make sure my students are receiving the appropriate accommodations and modifications they need in order to make progress in both their general education classroom and in my resource classroom.

A tip for parents

“ One tip I would give parents is to be involved in their child's education. When your child comes home from school, ask them what they learned. This shows them that you care about school and that they should too. Also make sure to advocate for their needs. If you feel your child is not receiving the support they need, please share that concern. Parents are one of the most important tools to help a child be successful in school.

Learning from a mentor

“ One lesson I learned from a mentor was that you learn from your students just as much as they learn from you. Your classroom is a community and everyone in that community should share their thoughts and ideas with each other. This helps build rapport while ensuring that the students feel safe in their environment.

Engaging students

“ I engage my students in learning by discussing why they need to learn what I am teaching during every lesson. This allows them to apply the learning to their own lives which makes it personal and meaningful.



Sarah Mikula
Maurice C. Cash Elementary School

Laveen Elementary District

6-8 SPED Resource

Experience: Eight years in education including seven years as a sixth- through eighth-grade Special Education teacher, and one year as a first-grade general education teacher; currently serving on the school leadership team, Child Study Team, Teacher Assistance Team, and providing professional development for general education and special education teachers in technology and paperwork compliance

Degrees: B.S. in Elementary and Special Education from Saint Francis University

The Rodel Exemplary Teacher Initiative honors extraordinary teachers and asks that they each mentor high-potential student teachers.

What sets the program apart from typical student teaching programs is that mentor teachers are selected based on their outstanding student achievement in high-need schools, their ability to mentor new teachers, and the recommendation of their principals and Rodel's observation team. This ensures that student teachers are learning from the best. In addition, Rodel provides further training and support to both mentors and student teachers to assure Promising Student Teacher Graduates start their careers as outstanding educators.

Since 2004, 167 Rodel Exemplary Teachers have been named and more than 650 Rodel Promising Student Teachers have been mentored.