

Sonya Alvarado Rosales

Elvira Elementary School

2016 Rodel Exemplary Teacher Finalist

Learning from a mentor

“ My mentor taught me that every child is different and every child learns at a different pace. Teaching is about having the patience to understand their needs, their culture, where they come from, and what their learning styles are. Then use those insights to create lessons that connect learning to real-life experiences and always remember that every child needs to be challenged. One quote I always instill in my students is, "It's better to try than to not try at all!"

Making data-driven decisions

“ An essential part of my instruction involves analyzing student data. Analyzing student data on a consistent basis helps me prioritize my teaching. Both summative assessments and formative assessments are essential in allowing me to differentiate instruction. Data allows me to focus on students' strengths and weaknesses and determine how to support their learning needs. I continually use student data to plan intervention and/or enrichment lessons.

A tip for new teachers

“ Whenever possible, connect your classroom discussions, curriculum, and activities to students' lives, community, and culture. Learn as much as you can about your students and make real connections. This will ignite their interest and enthusiasm for learning.

Engaging students

“ I believe that it is imperative to teach with enthusiasm. If the students observe you being enthusiastic about teaching, they will demonstrate enthusiasm for learning. I create lessons that keep students motivated and engaged by building on their prior knowledge and interest. I continually incorporate real-life experiences into the learning.



Sonya Alvarado Rosales
Elvira Elementary School

Sunnyside Unified District

Second grade

Experience: Eight years in education including four years as a third-grade teacher and four years as a second-grade teacher; currently serving as a member of the School Leadership Team and the PBIS Team; previously served as a member of the Student Intervention Team, assisting in monitoring and reviewing teacher data to help brainstorm intervention ideas that address concerns for learning, behavior, motivation, and childhood development (language/speech and motor skills)

Degrees: A.A. in Liberal Arts; B.A. in Elementary Education K-8 from University of Arizona; SEI Full Endorsement

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.

The 2016 Rodel Exemplary Teachers will be announced on November 29 at www.rodelaz.org.