

Rachael Michelle de Fresart

Brunson-Lee Elementary School

2016 Rodel Exemplary Teacher Finalist

Making data-driven decisions

“ I use student achievement data, such as reading and math fluency assessments and teacher-made pretests, to help me plan and create lessons that are leveled appropriately and provide scaffolds. I use formative assessments to monitor and adjust within a lesson, so I am making sure I am meeting the needs of my students. This helps me determine who needs to be pulled and what needs to be taught in a small group for reteaching or enrichment. Using student data also helps me reflect on my teaching and guides my future lesson planning.

Learning from a mentor

“ The one takeaway I learned from my mentor was to always look for and celebrate student growth, both large and small, and use that information to help the students continue to grow. For example, during student teaching I was placed in a low English Language Development classroom, where few students were at benchmark in their reading fluency. I felt defeated in my practice until my mentor teacher encouraged me to look for and celebrate all growth, which made me realize how much they were learning and growing.

A tip for new teachers

“ I would tell a new teacher, that sometimes a lesson doesn't go as planned, or an activity that you spent hours creating doesn't turn out the way you want. Although it is easy to look at the things that didn't work, try to focus on the positive. By reflecting on the positives you will be able to refine your practice, connect and build on your students' current knowledge.



Rachael Michelle de Fresart
Brunson-Lee Elementary School

Balsz Elementary District

Fourth grade

Experience: Six years in education including five years as a fourth-grade teacher and one year as a first-grade teacher; currently part of the professional teacher growth committee; previously served on the leadership team and professional development committee

Degrees: B.S. in Elementary Education from Grand Canyon University; Standard Elementary Education, 1-8; Full SEI; K-12 Endorsement; Reading Specialist Endorsement, K-12

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.