

Lillian Salgado Linn

Avondale Middle School

2016 Rodel Exemplary Principal Finalist

A tip for new principals

“ My tip to a new principal would be to have a clear, focused vision and take your time to make changes. Coming into a new setting is always overwhelming. One must assess the environment and make a list of priorities. Change is difficult for all and ensuring you have buy-in is key. Take your time to make changes, but always have a clear "FOCUSED" vision. Gradual change with buy-in will have a longer lasting impact.

Setting high expectations

“ Expectations are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of every quarter. We review our code of conduct daily. When issues arise, teachers inform administration and we meet with students and parents to ensure communication is clear. Teachers go through a rigorous evaluation process as well as frequent walkthroughs. They receive feedback on their teaching and use student data as a measure to help determine next steps.

Learning from a mentor

“ I have been very fortunate to have wonderful leaders as mentors. Dr. Randy Watkins taught me to always assess my areas of strength and weakness. He taught me to surround myself with those who will complement me. As a leader of a middle school setting, I have surrounded myself with instructional coaches that have assisted in my growth of middle school content. My instructional strength was elementary education, but thanks to those who surround me, I have grown in my skill set.

Making data-driven decisions

“ As a principal I ensure my teachers are consistently receiving professional development that will positively impact student achievement. My leadership team and I determine our needs by using student and teacher data. We tier our teachers based on need and ensure support is provided. Our professional development and student intervention groups are driven by data. We make adjustments throughout the school year based on our teacher observations, student data, and walk-through information.



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Avondale Middle School
Avondale Elementary District

430 students in grades 5-8

Experience: 21 years in education including two and a half years as a principal, one year as an assistant principal, one year as an instructional coach, and thirteen years as a classroom teacher

Degrees: B.S. in Human Development from University of California at Davis; California Teaching Credential from CLAD- National University; M.Ed. in Administrative Leadership from Grand Canyon University; AZ Teacher/Principal Certificates with endorsements in ELL, Bilingual, and Early Childhood

Rodel, in partnership with Social Venture Partners Arizona, developed the Rodel Exemplary Principal Initiative to recognize outstanding school principals and populate a pipeline of highly skilled school leaders for Arizona's most challenging schools.

The Rodel Exemplary Principals are selected for their demonstrated ability to lead high-need schools to success by inspiring their staffs to develop a campus that is high achieving, safe, orderly and welcoming.

Each cohort of Exemplary Principals provides professional development, field experience and mentorship to a class of Rodel Aspiring Principals. After learning from the best, Rodel Aspiring Principals are better prepared to lead their own high-need schools.

The 2016 Rodel Exemplary Principals will be announced on January 10 at www.rodelaz.org.