



Teacher of the Year application form

Created: 12/15/2016 • Last updated: 05/26/2017

The Louisiana Department of Education recognizes that great teachers and school leaders are critical to student success. Annually, the Department, in partnership with **Dream Teachers**, honors the state's most exceptional teachers through the Teacher of the Year program.

The Louisiana Teacher of the Year awards program recognizes and honors outstanding teachers who are making exceptional gains with students, pushing them to achieve at the highest levels in the state. Their commitment to student success exemplifies Louisiana's teaching profession.



Teacher of the Year - basic information

Basic information *2018 Louisiana State Teacher of the Year*

Are you part of a district or a charter?	District
Division level	High School
Candidate's first name	Kimberly
Candidate's last name	Eckert
Candidate's title	Mrs.
Candidate's (year-round) email	kimberlyeckert@brusly.k12.la.us
Candidate's phone number	225-222-2222
Ethnicity	Two or more races
School address	630 Vaughn Dr, Brusly, LA 70719



Reflection Question #1

Created: 12/31/2016

Last updated: 01/20/2017

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Student Data and Reflection

What were your goals for students last year? What were the most important things you did to achieve these goals? Did students achieve your goals? If so, what led to students meeting the goal? If not, what would you have done differently?

Response is limited to two pages or less (up to 1,400 words.) Only include text in your response. Visuals will not display correctly in this text box. If you must include a visual to accompany your essay response (not preferable), please upload as a separate document using the Optional file upload feature below. Be sure and label the document accordingly.

Before returning to the classroom last year, I was incredibly prepared with a distinct advantage for students since I had just recently stepped out of my role as an instructional coach. I had worked so deeply with English teachers that I had a strong grasp of the types of concrete and intangible skills

they often found lagging in students as well as the frustrations they faced when trying to help students reach them. My goals for the year were essentially created from a simple question to teachers of English courses: Exactly what skills would you love a student to have when they walk in your door at the beginning of the year? What I got in response were not things that were insurmountable to deliver: Students should comprehend what they read, have proficient writing ability, be knowledgeable about literary elements and grammar, be able to think at high levels, and be able to communicate their ideas. This wish-list mirrored Louisiana Standards and the expectations all parents and the community have for our students. I immediately set out to work. My goal was actually so very simple... teach them the behaviors and skills they needed to reach these goals. Almost too simple, right? I think sometimes we overlook the simple in pursuit of the complicated. If students don't know how to communicate effectively, let's teach them how. If students are having a hard time comprehending what they read, let's teach them that too!

From that list I generated two Student Learning Targets and multiple personal targets. The SLTs involved students demonstrating achievement in reading level as evidenced by SRI and demonstrating proficiency in English content and skills as demonstrated by Eagle-based EOC questions for English II (the grade my currently untested students would be progressing towards). I knew that in order to help students achieve these goals, intangible goals were also needed. So in addition to infusing content, I structured the entire year around also teaching students how to help me view and interpret their quantitative/qualitative data, putting in place strong goal-setting structures, and hinging nearly every lesson around student awareness of performance. At the end of the day, the standards in place for Louisiana are rigorous and the demands are high. If students are not reflective learners invited to learn WITH us, they won't move to their highest potential at nearly the same rate.

As a result, students met their goals and raised me to set the bar even higher. I attribute this to the fact that my experience in the past as a reading interventionist helped me approach reluctant readers with any necessary strategy to work through the likes of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Odyssey*. The confidence they gained, alone, is what helped them shatter their expected growth outcomes. I knew that I was good at moving struggling readers higher; so in addition, I made a special effort to research and implement methods to increase growth in the highest of my readers. Advanced students so often fail to be appropriately challenged, so I worked very hard to meet these needs as well. That focus alone produced growth unprecedented in my experience with students already displaying strong ability in reading. Although I no longer teach special education in isolation, ensuring growth for everyone really tested my range as what I will always consider to be specialized instruction. Building student confidence and raising reading

ability opened the door for rapid growth in analyzing, comparing and interpreting literature. I'm so glad I attended to this area with every student from those several grades below to several grades above grade-level in reading. Often, reading standards and scaffolding fall to the wayside to meet with the demands of EOC and ACT. Compounding the problem, training in this area is not usually the focus of those embarking on a career in teaching secondary English. However, high school is perhaps the last chance students will have to hone reading proficiency. Once students are reading within appropriate levels and have the tools they need to access elevated text, so much of the work of the other reading and language standards becomes far easier for both teachers and students.

As for the ability for students to think and converse and write, I visited conversation structures daily as students explored more academic ways to express themselves, disagree, delineate, support, etc. Using structures like daily group conversations, presentations, literature circles, and Socratic seminars gave students the ability to work through the thinking and language barriers that can make writing so difficult. I helped the students to understand that if you can think it and speak it then you can write it! Because this practice, willingness and confidence was fostered daily, students were completely ready to write OFTEN. This made my ability to shape feedback strong from the start, as students worked with me to improve their writing without a lot of the shutdown we, sadly, so often see... particularly when readers/writers struggle.

Optional file upload

(No response)



Reflection Question #2

Last updated: 01/19/2017

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Instructional Practice and Reflection

Please reflect on your video lesson and respond to the following questions. What was the objective in this lesson? To what extent did students meet the objective? How do you know? How is this lesson connected to your overall goal for students this year? Cite specific examples.

Response is limited to two pages or less (up to 1,400 words.) Only include text in your response. Visuals will not display correctly in this text box. If you must include a visual to accompany your essay response (not preferable), please upload as a separate document using the Optional file upload feature below. Be sure and label the document accordingly.

In this lesson, the objective was that students would be able to analyze theme through generating questions, making connections, and exploring diction. All students met the objective by the end of the lesson, but to varying degrees of depth. That they met the basics of the objective was clear to me as evidenced by their discussions, listening to their self-reflections, listening to student

feedback, reading their preparation notes, and by reading their written response where they reflected over the lesson as a whole they submitted before leaving. Essentially, the entire class period was designed to give me a constant stream of formative information so that I could stop and make adjustments as we went.

The day before, I conducted mini lessons for each role as it related to the objective but since the students coming into the roles had different abstract ideas and themes selected, not all students were able to deeply think about their particular theme with the benefit of others preparing for the same thing. While this is ok for where we are in the unit and year, I know that before the culminating writing task we have much more work to do digging into elements that impact theme as a whole. Lessons are already underway targeting just that. As a jumping off point, this was a strong start and definitely built on the many skills and standards I continuously embed in day-to-day lessons. Since in-depth demonstration of figurative language and its impact is an emerging standard in this lesson, I can see that the students still need ongoing support and opportunity to develop this skill as well. The standard comprising figurative meaning has gigantic impact, so it definitely won't be developed overnight.

Quantitative goals for my students this year are to improve their Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) scores and to gain deeper mastery of skills and knowledge directed towards next year's EOC while setting them up for success no matter which academic pathway they choose. It is imperative in my English classes to directly target reading ability because so many of my students start off below reading level. I would make very little headway without reading strategies I've embedded. Without improving student ability to access what they read, they would have far too difficult a time targeting the writing and language standards. Quantitatively speaking, the students are clearly firmly rooted in the content and are used to demonstrating their knowledge and application of ELA through my demands for use of academic language and expression of evidence-based reasoning. For example, in the lesson students refer to the text quite comfortably, are able to generate questions that show deep understanding of the material, are able to refer to literary elements with ease, and can generate scenarios and examples that they verbalize articulately. These are all exemplars of our standards. These conversations and use of language and text have grown exponentially since August, and show me that they are rapidly approaching targets in place.

However, the qualitative goals I set and work VERY hard to achieve with students are really what shine in lessons like this. Those qualitative goals, are what will carry them through any standardized test, any course, college, and life. It is not lost on me that my students are able to

give constructive feedback, support each other, identify their needs for growth in an excited way, and keep trying when they're not there yet. Having my students learn, apply, and practice these "soft skills" are what will directly allow them success further down the road well beyond my class. This is also what makes them work WITH me in pursuit of our academic standards. Strategies and structures embedded into class every day are what have sharpened students' ability to initiate and participate in conversation of their own design while building on ideas, synthesizing information from any direction (novels, personal experience, each other, me, research, other content, etc.) Also, the fact that they are being constantly coached to be reflective learners is really the crux of how fast they are able to take feedback and make immediate changes. By the end of the year, I expect my class to become flipped where students create and lead well-developed lessons and the demonstrate knowledge of the content. Because of our positive academic environment, the ease the students have with supporting each other, and their commitment to growth, I know that we're on track to meet those expectations. I hope it is evident that we've worked very hard each day to get to where we are in this lesson and that these students will be ready for virtually any challenge by the end of the year because they are being prepared to reflect, think, and problem solve through their personal obstacles and challenges of the content.

Provide Link to Teaching Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18cPMVDYUB8&feature=em-upload_owner#action=share



Reflection Question #3

Last updated: 01/19/2017

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Personal Impact Reflection

Please describe how you have demonstrated leadership qualities that contribute to the work of the profession. Also include how you have invested and inspired colleagues, families, students and the community in efforts which lead to student success.

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When I was in fourth grade, I clutched my first, VERY prestigious leadership victory after an intense political campaign: secretary of the Marksville Elementary School 4-H Club. During my rise to the top, I honed and harbored two conclusive ideas about leadership after asking a lot of people a lot of questions:

- 1) true leaders bring out leadership in others and
- 2) Leaders aren't always the people in charge... ANYONE can be a leader.

I'm sure these adages started off in a simple and unsophisticated form digestible to a nine year old, but in my whole life, I have never wavered from these beliefs. Knowing the way I approach leadership instantly helps one understand the contributions I've made to my profession.

Throughout my career, I have occasionally woven in and out of the role of "manager", but I have always been a leader. Every decision I make is with a commitment to making students more successful. After all, one day they will all be leaders. Many of them have already gotten started.

Within education, my first job and truest educational passion was and remains Special Education. In this role, not only did I get to work in an amazing position, I got to do so as an inclusion teacher to over twenty teachers throughout those years. I fell in love with that role because, though it was challenging, I was able to learn from and support so many with my knowledge of strategies and my commitment to finding what's effective. In this role, teachers got to see first-hand every day how effective solid leadership is no matter how unassuming the leader. They saw me live and uphold my values for our profession: Have passion for what we do, always communicate with the KIDS and each other, remain focused on our goal not the excuses that make it hard to reach, when you don't know how then LEARN how, be accountable... we're not powerless in the classroom, empower EVERYONE with the tools and mindset to take charge of their own learning, and perhaps most importantly... stay innovative. Education can't afford ruts.

Because teachers that worked closely with me daily saw that I was not only truly committed to these values, but also committed to the teachers themselves, I was selected to be a mentor teacher in the TAP system after having been in the classroom only three years. Although I constantly feared my lack of experience would be a problem in a sea of experienced professionals in core subjects, it never was. Teachers (and people) can be cynical, but not when they sense genuine dedication to the work we all strive to do.

After serving as a TAP mentor for two years, I continued to move in the direction needed by students. I took on the role of TAP Master Teacher. In that time, I shared absolutely everything I knew as well as my approach for collaborating to learn what I don't in terms of educating our students, using data in meaningful ways, field testing strategies, working hard, and enjoying the work. I even got to return to my love of co-teaching for much of the time to support my teachers! I'm also happy to say that I cultivated passions for many of my coworkers on their journey towards

making greater impact through taking seeking leadership roles.

My role changed considerably when my school district created the position of Instructional Coach/Reading Coach at Brusly High School... where I now call home in the district. I probably learned and led more in that one year than I ever have before! Using what I'd previously learned, I was able to impact the way the school traditionally looked at PLC's and the usage of data. I was able to show the power of using reading data and reading strategies across the curriculum to build student success. Best of all, I was able to stress the need for providing as much support as possible for students who struggle in the form of reading interventions. I grabbed the reins that year and provided the interventions myself, proudly sharing the results I knew I would get! Results get people excited!!

Ultimately, the fourth grader in me reminded me that the strongest leaders do NOT have to be in managerial roles. I saw that in my new school, my actual actions as a teacher would speak MUCH louder than my words as an instructional coach. I asked to return to the classroom last year. That action alone made people stop and look. I suppose people don't often see someone make a fervent pitch to willingly be surrounded by 125 freshman after having an amazing leadership role outside the classroom. I was able to send such a strong message: Teaching kids IS amazing and important and awesome! I don't think I could ever give it up for long. Teaching is the hardest thing we'll ever do, but nothing compares to it. To me, the ability to send this message and to joyfully stick behind it IS true leadership.

I have continued to assist my school in every leadership capacity that I am asked to take on because my desire to serve and to improve and to inspire is ever-present. I continued to serve as a Teacher Leader for the district up until this year. I am on the BHS Leadership Team and still assist with the planning and conducting of PLCs. Most recently, I've shared my passion for high student achievement through technology integration at the Region II Mini-LACUE 2016 (BYOP- Build Your Own Project) and WBR Summer Technology series with the same content. I have also provided frequent professional development and support for LSU's Learning Specialists for Student Athletes through Project ROAR (Rediscovering Opportunities through Advanced Reading). Further, I have presented recurring presentations for teachers at BHS: "Say What? Speaking and Listening in Today's Classroom", "Note-taking without Note-Giving", and "Collaboration: Other People Make you Smarter!".

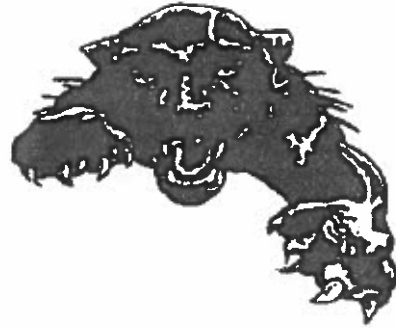
In years past, I have also presented at many professional development events for digital application in both remedial and challenge-based technological partnerships such as a LACUE Tech

Slam Moderator, CEC (Council for Exceptional Children) Super Conference (COMPASS: Where are we Going?), CEC Super Conference (Collaboration and Co-Teaching Journey- Making it Work with Technology), the WBR Tech Summer Series (various topics), WBR Fall Focus (Project Based Learning and Vlogging in the classroom), and WBR Summer Summit (Technology Integration for Learners with Unique Needs). My work with students was also featured in LACUE Publications for my flipped classroom: "Using Technology to Personalize Learning for Struggling Readers".

Without partnership with the community, parents, and business leaders, NONE of my classroom initiatives would have taken flight. I've earned competitive grants through the West Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce and West Baton Rouge Center for Academic Excellence... awards which have all been directly applied toward students for everything from books for Vlogs and Blogs to funding to publish and print literary magazines designed and edited online. I also frequently reach out to parents and social media to assist in building viewership and confidence for various student-made projects and initiatives. Some of my students are presently developing initiatives through Genius Hour involving their interests such a student-made scholarship and creating websites for various non-profit fundraising. Again, none of these things would be successfully without the amazing support given to me by their parents and the community.

At the end of the day, the best of my leadership can be seen in the 90+ young leaders I affect every day. One look in my classroom shows them collaborating, showing passion and accountability, remaining focused, communicating, innovating, and inspiring (me most of all). I'm proud to be a part of any community they one day lead and teach any child they are one day the parents of. The fourth grade 4-H secretary in me could never have envisioned the community I would one day impact. Leadership has lasting effects that way.

Brusly High School



~~Principal: Walter Lemoine~~
Principal: Walter Lemoine

~~Assistant Principals:~~
Julie [redacted] & Warren Lemoine

To Whom It May Concern:

I am honored to recommend Kim Eckert for WBR Teacher of the year. Kim is an outstanding educator and dedicated co-worker, and an invaluable asset to Brusly High School.

Kim has been at BHS for three years. She originally came as faculty coach and PLC coordinator. She did an outstanding job and took our PLC groups to teacher driven, high functioning teams. She helped teachers implement new strategies to raise the level of engagement in the classroom. Kim supported our teachers through mentor and modeling lessons. Even though she is no longer in the role of faculty coach, she still mentors teachers and is their "go to" person when they need to discuss classroom performance.

While we miss Kim as our faculty coach, last year she decided to go back into the classroom. Teaching is her passion; and if you observe one class, you will see and feel her enthusiasm and love for her students. Kim consistently uses differentiated instructional strategies, technology, and individual teaching to reach all of her students. She sets a very high standard for all of her students, and she conveys to all of her students that they can succeed. Kim is not just a motivator but a doer. She structures each of her classes differently to meet their needs. She is also not afraid to change if a structure or strategy is not achieving the desired results. I could give you numerous examples of her excellent work, but I will share one from last school year. She had a class of all ability levels and they were struggling with writing. She grouped her students by their similar needs. Each group had a ten minute session with her on their specific weakness. While she met with each group, the other groups were working on different work to strengthen their writing skills. It was the perfect example of differentiation. It took tremendous planning to have a different mini-lesson for each group. Students that often perceived as lazy or unmotivated in other classes will work hard in her class. She has a unique ability to make each student feel valued.

Mrs. Eckert is invaluable to Brusly High School. In her three years, she had changed the culture of our school. Kim is one of the hardest workers that I've ever worked with. She works continuously for her students. They are her priority. She has been invaluable to me in collaborating on strategies and changes in education. Kim serves on our PLC Leadership team and was an integral part of our AdvancED committee. She has also been a teacher leader.

I have worked with many outstanding educators in my thirty-one years in education, and Kim Eckert is the best educator that I have ever worked with. BHS is lucky to have her.

Sincerely,


Julie [redacted]
Assistant Principal

November 28, 2016

To the West Baton Rouge Teacher of the Year Selection Committee:

Trust me: my favorite classroom rule. Although to be truthful, I cannot take credit for it. Years ago, my colleague and friend put it on her wall and asked her students to do just that. It seemed an unusual rule, but by the end of the year, those students were able to see the value in everything she had taught them. They trusted her. So, it is with a deep sense of pride and a feeling of true excitement that I write this recommendation for that teacher, Mrs. Kimberly Eckert, for this year's West Baton Rouge High School Teacher of the Year. There is no one more deserving, more worthy, or more capable of representing our esteemed district!

Seven years ago, I was hired as a brand new 8th grade English teacher at Port Allen Middle School. Understandably, I was a ball of nerves walking into that room on the first day. As I struggled in those first few months, I wanted to give up and admit that this was not the career for me after all. But by the grace of divine intervention, Kimberly Eckert was my inclusion teacher during my third hour class. I watched her with the kids. I listened to the way she presented information to them. I took note of how loving, how caring she was with students to whom no one else could get through. And I learned. I grew. She was my sounding board, my ever-present guide into the world of education. I truly credit most of what I am as a teacher today to what I learned from her years ago.

Since that first year teaching together, I have had the privilege to serve in many professional roles with Mrs. Eckert. We worked closely in inclusion classrooms and interventions together. We were selected as Mentor teachers in TAP together, and then eventually, I mentored under her, as she was urged by so many to fulfill the role of Master teacher at our school. It is rare, indeed, to find teachers who want to do anything but their own work during their planning time. At PAMS that year, there were few days that I didn't see English and Social Studies teachers flocking to her room during their free period in order to gain insight and advice on their instruction. That's simply the type of person and teacher Kimberly is; she has a rare gift that enables her to empower those around her through her vast knowledge and willingness to give of her time.

Since beginning her career in education in West Baton Rouge nine years ago, her dedication to the communities in which she works is unparalleled. She has sponsored clubs like Beta, which provided kids the opportunity to travel, compete, and have experiences that they normally would not have been able to encounter. She eagerly started a Port Allen chapter of Girls on the Run, where amazing young girls who didn't quite adhere to the mold of a typical teenager happily stayed a few days after school each week in order to be a part of something special. Mrs. Eckert also didn't hesitate to help when the BHS Danceline needed a new sponsor halfway through the season this school year. Her desire and ability to shape the youth in our parish is something that I still can't quite wrap my head around. It's so ingrained in who she is.

Mrs. Eckert's accolades in education go on for days! She has won LACUE awards, presented at more conferences than could be named, and been the epitome of what a true educator should be in every facet of the profession. In her roles as instructional coach the past few years, she has surely reached and enlightened many other teachers, who in turn have helped numerous students. But my favorite thing about Kim is that even though her career path was clearly leading to prominent leadership roles, she wanted to be with kids again. This prompted her move back to the classroom. This is her nirvana; it's the place she is at her best. I would just smile this past year when I received phone calls with what she deemed a "crazy" idea for a lesson, when I knew just how powerful it would actually be. Take, for example, the time her freshmen at Brusly High created their very own magazine after reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Those students will remember that book and those lessons for the rest of their lives. And isn't that what teaching and creating life-long learners is all about?

I am grateful for Kim on so many levels. We have shared our personal and professional lives for seven years, and there is no one I respect or admire more. She is my first call when I need help working through a lesson. She is in her classroom early in the mornings. She is there on Sundays. On holidays. She is up all night planning the best lessons she can plan because she *truly* believes that is what her students deserve. Just as Mrs. Eckert asks of her kids each year, I ask the same of you: trust me. There is no one who embodies the love and dedication that a Teacher of the Year should more than her.



English III/English III AP/Department Chair
Port Allen High School

It is my honest pleasure to recommend Ms. Eckert for the Teacher of the Year award. Ms. Eckert, my 9th grade English I teacher, helped me push limits that I never thought were even possible. None of us in class did. Taking her class for a my 9th grade year and then going back and taking her again this year for a Speech class I didn't need, I feel as if I am now more than qualified to give an honest opinion on Ms. Eckert on behalf of everyone she touches when she teaches.

I enjoyed my times in Ms. Eckert's class, and I know that any task that is given to her she can teach it thoroughly while exceeding the expectations that are given to her. Energetic, exciting, ebullient are all words that describe not only Ms. Eckert's personality but her teaching styles. She never, ever seems to have a bad day. She is incredibly hardworking, patient, and honest making her fit to teach really anyone! Along with her English lessons being extremely impressive, without her extremely bubbly personality she would not get the end results that she usually gets. She made us really want to work hard.

Throughout the entirety of her class, she always made not only me but absolutely everyone else feel as if they were so important and that they were capable of doing anything that they set their mind to. Pushing you to the limit, even though it would sometimes be stressful, she made you accomplish goals that you set, then made you switch the goal if it was too easy. Her exciting personality makes everything we do, no matter how little or small, feel as if we have done something so magnificent.

There was never a dull moment and there was never a moment where I said that I wasn't understanding or that I wasn't interested in what we were learning no matter how uninteresting it would be in any other class. She would not only change the minds of students that did not want to learn but also encourage and prepare students who are. In her class no one is denied and no one is put down, no matter what! There are students I've been to school with all my life that have never worked as hard as they did for Ms. Eckert.

Walking into Brusly High was without a doubt the scariest day of my life. I was worried that I wasn't as smart as the rest of my classmates. I thought that I wasn't ready to handle the expectations of my teachers or even the expectation I had towards myself. But with the efforts Ms. Eckert put into me, she showed me that not only was I smarter than I ever imagined, but that I had the chance to be great. After taking her class I went into my English II class not as scared and not as worried because I knew that Ms. Eckert had taught me everything I needed to be successful. Even better, everyone knows she's right there if we still need her.

While her talent which is very undeniable, her love for English and really for all of us is what makes her different from other teachers. So if I had to choose to one word to describe Ms. Eckert it would be inspiring because she is the reason why I love English. And if I had to use one word to describe her classroom, it would be preparing because after her class I was more than prepared, and I was confident that I would never have to feel as if I couldn't do something again. I'll always figure it out. Overall Ms. Eckert is without a doubt the best teacher I have ever had. She taught me so much and pushed me harder than any other teacher I have ever had.

Sincerely,


10th Grade Student
Brusly High School

Kimberly Eckert

5710 Monroe Vista Drive, N. Orleans, LA 70124, (504) 885-1963, kimberly.eckert@lsu.edu

EDUCATION

Northwestern State University	
Masters of Education in Special Education	December 2013
Reading Specialist Add-On	May 2015
Bachelor of Social Work	December 2004
Louisiana Resource Center for Educators	August 2008
K-12 Special Education Certification/6-12 English/Language Arts Certification	

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

West Baton Rouge Parish School Board August 2008-Present

English I Teacher (Brusly High School)

- Lead, teach, motivate, support, challenge and develop students at all levels
- Facilitate learning experiences for students while enhancing skills in reading, writing, speaking/listening, technology
- Mentor teachers seeking growth and assistance
- Serve on PLC leadership team, providing PD and assistance with data and planning as needed

Instructional Coach (Brusly High School)

- Developed/Monitored school wide reading progress-monitoring for Freshman
- Provided coaching, modeling, and team teaching to teachers as needed
- Provided pull-out reading intervention to identified students
- School-wide 504 Coordinator

TAP Master Teacher (Port Allen Middle School)

- Certified NIET Evaluator- Evaluate and Assess teachers/Mentors according to TAP/NIET Rubric
- Analyze school-wide student data to develop school-wide goals
- Oversee planning, facilitation, coaching and follow-ups of PLC's for teachers
- Research, design, field-test student and teacher strategies
- Provide classroom coaching, modeling, and team teaching to career teachers daily
- Teach students an average of two hours a day in cross-curricular settings

Reading Interventionist/Special Education Teacher/TAP Mentor Teacher (Port Allen Middle School)

- Certified NIET Evaluator
- Special Education Liaison/Team Leader/Trainer
- Implement/Provide/Design comprehension-based reading intervention
- Provide Inclusive/Co-instructed education in English, Math, and Reading
- Design and implement IEPs (Individual Education Plans) in compliance with IDEA
- Provide curriculum/activities support to Regular Education instructors

Best Buddies International

August 2006-August 2008

Program Supervisor- Louisiana High Schools

- Awarded \$50,000 grant from Drew Brees' Dream Foundation
- Awarded \$200,000 DHH grant
- Expanded Louisiana's Best Buddies chapters from 9 schools to 18 schools in one year. Also grew state membership from 111 active participants to 438 active participants
- Selected, trained and supervised Regular/Special Education chapter leaders and volunteers

Royal Institution of Great Britain, London, England

January 2005 – August 2005

Student Outreach Coordinator

Kimberly Eckert

110 Monte Vista Drive, Port Allen, LA 70710 (225) 833-1111 kimberlyeckert@yhschools.net

- Founder and Coach of Girls on the Run: Port Allen Middle 2011-2014
- Port Allen Middle School Junior Beta Club Sponsor 2009-2014



Teacher of the Year application form

Created: 01/07/2016

Last updated: 01/25/2016

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Teacher of the Year - basic information

Basic information *2017 Louisiana State Teacher of the Year*

Are you a part of a district or a charter?	District
District	Livingston Parish
Enter the name of your school	Albany Middle School
Division level	Middle School
Candidate's first name	Joni
Candidate's last name	Smith
Candidate's title	Mrs.
Candidate's (year-round) email	[REDACTED]
Candidate's phone number	[REDACTED]
Ethnicity	White
School name	Albany Middle School
School address	29675 Reeves Street



Reflection Question #1

Created: 01/07/2016

Last updated: 01/28/2016

Page 1



Student Data and Reflection

What were your goals for students last year? What were the most important things you did to achieve these goals? Did students achieve your goals? If so, what led to students meeting the goal? If not, what would you have done differently?

Response is limited to 2 pages or less

Student Data and Reflection

Every summer, I work to improve an area that my students showed difficulty with understanding. This past summer, I concentrated on making the science task easier to understand. Our school does a wonderful job of breaking down the data to show as much detail on our individual students as possible. Once that data is released, I insert it into an Excel spreadsheet that calculates the growth rate of each student. I use this information to set up the dynamics of my classroom. I can identify my weaker groups and my stronger groups and plan to differentiate instruction to meet their needs. Each year I am faced with the task of setting academic goals for my students and working to help them achieve those goals.

The ultimate goal that I aspire for my students to achieve has always been to progress their ability to think deeper while questioning their surroundings and to communicate ideas scientifically. There is a sign that I made for the back of my door to my classroom, and it says, THANK YOU for exiting SMARTER than when you walked in! This friendly reminder sets the tone of an active learning environment that I want my students to see in my classroom. I want my passion for science to be contagious!

Each year when I get my new group of students, I try to determine specific academic goals for each one of them. To do this, I gather as much data as possible regarding the incoming group of students. I review the class' state testing scores in science and final letter grade averages for the class from the previous year. I review the class' average scores in the specific content areas I teach: Science as Inquiry, Life Science, Science and the Environment. Once I have this information, I compare the scores to determine where the students seemed to struggle the most. I use the two areas that possess the greatest difficulty for the students on state mandated testing and select those concepts as their

academic goals to create my SLT's (Student Learning Targets). After I have determined the areas that need the most improvement, I spend two class days in the month of September and have a mini conference with each of my students. I speak to them about their previous scores, and together we complete a template that I created to help monitor their achievement. They are able to set a goal for themselves for the upcoming state testing. We also identify their strengths and weaknesses with testing and target to show improvement in their weaknesses. I started doing this two years ago, and I have seen a vast change in my students' testing scores. I believe setting an expectation that the student gets a part in determining gives them ownership of their progress.

The amount of improvement I set the goal at varies based on the students' scores and information provided to me. My SLT's are written on these two goals. Sometimes my goal for the students is for them to increase their scores in percentage points, while other times it is for them to be able to maintain their current level of understanding.

To determine whether or not my students are working towards accomplishing the goals I have set for them, I assess them throughout the year. The assessments fluctuate in all types of forms. Many of the summative assessments are paper-pencil tests, while formative assessments can range from snowball questioning to gallery walks, to task cards. Once a unit, I give an assessment on a science task that emphasizes strong literacy skills. The format of the assessments I use changes based on the content and the students' individual needs. Additionally, I enjoy allowing students to construct their own rubrics for an assessment or a project. I have seen the quietest and most reserved of students excel at building a rubric for an assessment, sometimes better than a teacher would. I find it important to incorporate their ideas and let them take the wheel for a moment when planning assessments.

At the beginning of the year, I pretest my students on all the GLEs that are assessed. Those scores are documented and the results are analyzed. Once I have discovered where their weakest areas are for each strand, I take note of highlighting the GLEs in each unit that need to be pushed. I use a pacing chart and an academic calendar to monitor this. When planning a unit, I take notice to those highlighted GLEs and spend more time emphasizing those concepts until the students have mastered that skill. As the unit progresses, I use short check point quizzes to assess students' understanding at different points in the unit. When a large group of students score poorly on a checkpoint quiz, we go back through it to establish understanding. I use differentiated instruction at its finest when I get to this point. I also push to assign more peer tutors to help the students teach one another. The students are presented with the same unit test they took before with a slight modification in wording to be certain that cheating does not occur. By administering the same test, I can gauge how much new information my students learned and concepts that need to be revisited in more detail.

In the 2014/15 school year, Albany Middle was deemed a top gains school due to receiving an SPS score of 107.3 We were categorized as an "A" school. We were the only middle school in Livingston parish to receive a top gains status. According to the data released, I contributed 15,000 points toward our school's score. This was a personal best for me.

Based on the students' sixth grade science ILEAP scores for 2013-2014, the content standards the students struggled with the most were the Science and the Environment standard and the Science as Inquiry standard. I decided to write my SLT's on those two standards. My first SLT was for my students to improve from a 27% to a 35% in the Science and the Environment standard. My students scored an average of 80% on this standard, achieving exceptional attainment. My second SLT was for my students to improve from a 25% to a 33% in the Science as Inquiry standard. Once again, my students scored an average of 73%, achieving full attainment improving which well exceeded their target of 33%.

Based on the students' seventh grade science ILEAP scores for 2014-2015, the students that I taught placed 1st in the parish, and 4th in the state with top scores in seventh grade science. According to the school roster report for ILEAP scores, 85% of my students tested at the proficiency level which exceeded the parish's proficiency level of 81%. Might I add that our parish has a record of being successful with student scores. It's an accomplishment to beat the parish level. The dynamics of my students' scores are structured as follows: 11% Advanced, 39% Mastery, 35% Basic, 11% Approaching Basic, and 4% Unsatisfactory. Needless to say, when I received these scores, I wanted to frame them in my classroom just to show how very proud I am of all the hard work my students have done in the past year. I take pride in being able to facilitate my students on their climb to success. It definitely makes those long nights and re-teaching sessions worth every minute. This was, by far, my most difficult but yet most successful year of teaching, and I am proud to have exhausted all measures and improved areas where a need was shown. There is still room for improvement, so I am looking forward to the future.

I am a strong believer in assessing students effectively and following through with any type of misunderstanding that one may have. Too often I see teachers use exit tickets or some type of formative assessment as a closing, then they pull a grade from it and never go back to help

those who were not successful with their answer. I believe those are vital opportunities to help prevent a student from falling behind. It is necessary as a teacher to constantly assess and analyze students' understanding in an effort to help them continue to grow. Through formative and summative assessments, I try to gauge where my students are in relation to where I want them to be at the end of the year. It is my goal that by scaffolding and adjusting lessons to meet their needs, I can facilitate them to become more successful at achieving their goals and being proactive with their achievements. Each year is a new challenge that I plan to take on head first!



Reflection Question #2

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Last updated: 01/29/2016

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Instructional Practice and Reflection

Please reflect on your video lesson and respond to the following questions. What was the objective in this lesson? To what extent did students meet the objective? How do you know? How is this lesson connected to your overall goal for students this year? Cite specific examples.

Response is limited to 2 pages or less

Instructional Practice Reflection

All teachers aspire to make every lesson count. Students may not appreciate the dedication, time and money that teachers put in their lessons to make them 'pop', but they are happy to know that we are in it for the outcome not the income. You see, my favorite moments of teaching are when faces light up once students understand something or when voices exert an "Oh! I get it!" when a concept is connected, or when students write a thank you note to express their gratitude toward you for being patient with re-teaching them multiple times because they are struggling with the information. After teaching many years, I have discovered that good teachers teach to help students learn, and while great teachers teach students to make connections. I find that teaching science naturally lends itself to this paradigm. Science is all around us. We are using the foundations of the scientific method with almost every decision that we make from the moment that we rise to the moment that we rest. Our daily lives are structured around scientific strategies: to think critically, investigate problems when they occur, and to analyze ideas as being acceptable or not. How wonderful is it to teach a subject that I am able to remind my students that they are using in their daily lives! We are bridging the gap between the classroom and the world around them. It's truly a beautiful connection.

Education is an ever-evolving dynamic. As our students grow and change, so does education. Our educational processes are fluctuating to be better adapted to the lifestyles of the students which those processes affect. As a result of this shifting, I am working daily to implement more rigor by facilitating my students to not just know the correct answer but to explain their reasoning for why they think a certain answer is best. Students show full understanding when they can accurately explain and relay their thought patterns. Many strategies have been used to

aid students in fully explaining their thinking. One of my favorite strategies to use is what I call a BIG IDEA: Thinking like a scientist probe. This is something I modified using Page Keeley's development of science probes. My thinking probes give each student the opportunity to think on their own before collaborating on ideas with a peer. The students are given a specific situation and then multiple answer choices for it, but then it takes the students to the next level by requiring them to justify their reasoning. They do this individually and then write down their responses at the bottom of the page and then when I call time, I assess them using Pickers cards. We discuss their results and then I allow them to 'table talk' about their ideas and why revision may be needed. After collaborating their ideas with the other scientists at their tables, they were then to write down their new thinking to be turned in and assessed. The probe is tiered to meet the needs of my students. Below average students were given 'hint boxes' and annotated notes to facilitate their thinking. Above average students were given a more rigorous assignment with less guiding. Differentiating the assignment allows students to set the pace of their learning. Students want to be successful. The quest to have the correct answer draws students in; it allows them to compare their thinking to one another in order to build their thoughts.

Student engagement can be quite a difficult task. Each day is different than the last, and each student learns differently than his/her peers. In an effort to engage as many of my students in my lessons as possible, I attempt to vary the style of my lessons based upon the content and the students' learning levels. I target as many opportunities as possible to find a connection for my visual learners, kinesthetic learners, auditory learners, social learners and logical learners. I believe in allowing my students to explore the content before I explain it. By doing so, my students are able to tap into their investigative skills and dig deeper with their thinking without the aid of a teacher. The objective for this lesson was "The students will learn to illustrate and demonstrate how the process of diffusion and osmosis occur. The students will learn to relate these two processes to real life situation." (SCI.7.LS.3). I planned a lesson that allowed them to develop their own understanding of the process of diffusion and osmosis by using multiple resources, including their own prior knowledge, the ideas of their classmates, a demonstration of a real life example, and a 'cherry lab' tutorial on the SMART board.

The students were actively engaged throughout the lesson. All students participated in the visual/kinesthetic, real life example of how to prove the molecular dispersal of diffusion when they placed their heads down and raised their hands once they could smell the scent. They were participating, giving comments, and asking questions during the discussion of this hook as I connected it to other examples that we experience in our daily lives (cologne/perfume being sprayed, or when someone passes flatulence-which just so happens to be their favorite example). During the small group explorations with the different cherries, the students were making predictions and collaborating ideas with one another. The students were also engaged during the SMART board lesson as I explained the connection of the movement of water within the cherries. They were asking questions about the pictures and answering questions as I asked them. At the end of the lesson, many of the students were anxious to tell me what they wrote as their response to this assignment as we exited the classroom.

To assess my students' attainment of objectives I used two methods – a Pickers multiple choice question assessment and the BIG IDEA thinking probe. The multiple choice question that was on their BIG IDEA thinking probe was assessed using Pickers on the SMART board to measure if the students understood the objective. The second assessment I used was the back side of the BIG IDEA thinking probe justification. This was a more rigorous assessment, seeing how the students not only had to justify their answer, but they also had to illustrate the process of transport that was occurring. Most students had the correct answer identified, except for 7 students that showed difficulty. I followed through with these seven students by giving them a practice page (as an exit ticket) to review and reassessed them the next day during bellringer time to make sure that they had full understanding. After reading the thinking probe justifications and reevaluate on the next day (Monday), I felt confident that my students achieved this portion of the objective as well. They were able to correctly identify and illustrate the process of diffusion and the process of osmosis while accurately explaining their thinking. This type of assessment perfectly aligns with my overall goal for my students this year by challenging them to dig deeper into critical thinking.

The next phase in assessing these objectives will take place as a constructed response question on their unit test. On the unit test, I will be assessing to see how much of their understanding of the process of diffusion and osmosis was retained. The students will be given a new thinking probe, based on the same ability to understand, explain and relate the process of diffusion and osmosis. I will compare their finalized justification from their unit test with the initial thinking probe that they did in class by stapling them together to be dispersed. According to the results of the student's responses, I will determine whether we need to revisit the content again or whether I can move forward with instructing a new skill to be mastered.

While planning this lesson, my focus was to have maximum student success in identifying the process of diffusion and osmosis. Their

involvement in all aspects allowed them to develop at their own pace. The differentiated instructional strategies allowed everyone a chance to learn, regardless of their ability level. Looking back at the student's justifications and explanations of their thinking, I think the lesson was quite successful. However, to improve the lesson, I would have liked to have been able to fit in the time to demonstrate the BIG IDEA scenario to help them visualize the probe. However, my students were able to complete a rigorous task successfully, connect real life examples and complete high order thinking questions independently. Through guided questioning, exploration and collaboration they were able to teach one another, rather than simply learn by instruction.

Provide Link to Teaching Video

<http://youtu.be/hqv9Kh9p2yI>



Reflection Question #3

Created: 01/27/2016

Last updated: 01/28/2016

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Personal Impact Reflection

Please describe how you've invested and inspired colleagues, families, students and the community in efforts that lead to student success.

Response is limited to 1 page or less

Personal Impact Reflection

FCA Sponsor: Last year I was able to take the role of becoming the FCA sponsor at our school. I can proudly say that our club grew exponentially in size and has fluctuated from non-active members to a large (400+) student body of active members. Teachers were seeing a shift in the classroom because their students wanted to attend the FCA meetings and to do so they needed to show academic proficiency. This accountability is the motivation that many of them needed. You see, during our FCA meetings, a window of opportunity is opened. The students have a chance to see me as a person and not just a teacher. A person that has a strong faith in Christ but humbly admits to making mistakes. A person that can say to them not only does Christ love them but I do too. A person that can pray for them when they are struggling and help them and their families in a time of need. We have focused on community outreach programs. I took my FCA leaders to a day retreat center to train them on how to be a Godly leader to their peers (see picture). We attended races for charity. We served food to the needy. We purchased and distributed smoke alarms and box fans for local families in need. We partnered with Operation Christmas Child and collected over 200 gift boxes for under privileged children. We set a devotional time in my classroom before school and we also implemented a student prayer session that was optional during their common's time. These students have taught me that there is so much more to being a teacher than just teaching. It's about reaching students through a personal connection so that they can see you as someone who cares for them and in return they feel valued.

Teaching with Primary Sources:

In 2014, I was invited to attend the Science Teachers Seminar at the Library of Congress

in Washington D.C. I joined 23 other science teachers from across the US to learn how to incorporate primary sources into the classroom. I discovered that primary sources are a key element that many classrooms are missing. Items created by eyewitnesses to history, these maps, posters, films, sheet music and iconic images immerse students in history, culture and science and give them the power to explore. Since applying what I have learned, my students are able to investigate and dig deep with their critical thinking skills when given a task. This was just the right touch of rigor that I was searching for. This implementation has facilitated my students to think like scientists and use evidence to make inferences and predict trends. I am currently a teacher leader that opens my classroom door to many SLU teacher candidates to witness primary source teaching in action. I continue to foster them into their classrooms.

Formative Assessments: Teachers are constantly assessing and analyzing students' understandings in an effort to help master skills. Last year, one of the areas that I saw a need for improvement was in implementing effective formative assessments. I try to 'pulse check' where my students are in relation to where I want them to be and by applying an effective formative assessment, I can measure whether or not students are grasping the day's objective. If so, we move forward. If not, I always revisit the content until they have mastered the skill and can pass the assessment. I'm constantly changing the forms of assessment that I use because I want my classroom to be different than others. I want it to stand out so that when students walk in, they are excited to learn something new. Currently, my favorite assessment tools are Plickers, Kahoot and sticky note exit slips. I have been so impressed with the results that I shared these strategies at a faculty meeting. Many teachers have jumped on board. These methods are time effective with assessment.



PONCHATOULA
High School

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

Joni Smith is a former colleague and friend. I had the pleasure of meeting Joni in February of 2004 and worked under her for over five years. She was my floor manager at our workplace before she became an educator in 2009. She was actually the person that inspired me to join the education world. Even though we work in different parishes, she has taken me under her wing to help guide me. I have been so grateful to have her in my life. Teaching can be a tough job at times and there were many moments that I felt lost. However, when we were able to get together and bounce ideas off of one another, I felt rejuvenated. I would just absorb her creative thinking and began to feel motivated by her contagious energy. Just last month, she phoned me to share a new and effective way of formatively assessing your students. She said she was so excited that she had to share it. She is exactly the kind of teacher that I want to be.

You see, Joni is an outgoing, positive individual who is a delight to know and with whom to work. She is well suited to carry on the work of an effective teacher in her school and an asset to her district. She has demonstrated her knowledge of science content in lesson plans, presentations and sharing that knowledge with coworkers. Last summer and fall, it was Joni who challenged me to revamp my unit outlines and focus on digging deeper into the curriculum so that I would be able to be more successful in the classroom. Her passion for teaching sparked my interest in rethinking and planning my curriculum that I was compelled to share what we did with my own faculty.

Joni is often asked to take leadership roles at her school. In addition, she serves as a supervising teacher for student teachers in the teacher preparation program at Southeastern Louisiana University. However, it is Joni's commitment to teaching excellence and desire for professional growth which have combined to impress me most greatly. She is focused on making an impact on student learning by contributing to both in-service and pre-service professional learning opportunities. She thinks perceptively, asks probing questions, and has a temperament well suited to contributing to being an effective instructor. She is appreciated by her peers and loved by her students. She has found her niche.

I take great pleasure in recommending Joni Smith for the Louisiana Teacher of the Year.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Algebra I teacher, Ponchatoula High School

ALBANY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Rachel [REDACTED], Principal

[REDACTED]

John Hill, Assistant Principal

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

November 30, 2015

Dear Committee Members,

It is with great honor that I write this letter of endorsement on behalf of *Joni Smith's* candidacy for *Livingston Parish's 2016-2017 Middle School Teacher of the Year*. I have had the pleasure of working closely along-side Ms. Smith as her mentor and instructional coach since the start of the 2014-2015 school year. Ms. Smith's professionalism and commitment to education throughout this time period qualifies her for such a prestigious honor.

In all that Ms. Smith is involved in, she gives nothing less than her best. She is one of those teachers who is always going above and beyond, such as creating additional lessons and volunteering to work with students during our After the Bell tutoring program to offer more one-on-one instruction, purposefully and passionately organizing FCA events to ensure the enrichment of our students' faith and character, serving as an active member of our School Improvement Team Committee, and consistently offering suggestions for improvement based on personal classroom experiences in the areas of academics, communication, professional development, and discipline.

While remaining current with the latest instructional strategies and technologies, Ms. Smith is persistent in striving to reach a troubled or struggling student with simple, yet insightful, motherly instincts and empathy coupled with complete professionalism. Likewise, she can accelerate and challenge her brightest of students because of professional development experiences and innovations she continues to pursue and master, such as attending national conferences, continuing to enroll in graduate college courses, and actively attending district workshops and trainings after school hours. These efforts are proven and evidenced by her students' state standardized test scores which remain to be among the highest in our district.

Ms. Smith's motivation for excellence is not driven by accolades but by inspiring and impacting all those she comes in contact with each day. Ms. Smith has exhibited the ability of being firm but fair, having rules yet maintaining relationships, and remembering that her passion is found in teaching students whom she freely offers love, acceptance, and grace.

Without reservations, Ms. Smith's professionalism, positive attitude and energy, and passion for academic excellence makes her a compelling choice as *Livingston Parish's 2016-2017 Middle School Teacher of the Year*. Thank you in advance for considering this recommendation.

Once again, it is with great enthusiasm that I support the nomination of *Joni Smith* for this prominent award.

Sincerely,



Westside Jr. High School

6015 D [REDACTED] 70705
D [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Selection Committee:

It is my pleasure to recommend Joni Smith from Albany Middle School for *Livingston Parish's 2016-17 Middle School Teacher of the Year*. Joni and I were coworkers at Westside Junior High School in Walker, Louisiana, from 2009-2014. I was one of the lucky ones that was able to witness this young, vibrant teacher blossom into such a powerful educator. She truly has gotten better and better each year. In 2014, Joni became my mentor, and we continue to work together even though we are currently teaching at different schools.

Joni is an amazing science teacher that has so much passion that it contagious when I am around her. She has a heart for her students and such a great rapport with them. She works harder than any teacher that I have ever encountered. There are not many times that you can drive by her school and not see her car in the parking lot. She spends countless hours modifying lessons and creating new ways to differentiate instruction so that her students are successful learners. She is more than dedicated to her job. It is her life. Joni began mentoring me since I made a switch in curriculums from ELA to 7th and 8th grade science. She inspired me to be a better teacher through connecting concepts in a powerful way so that my students were not just memorizing, they were retaining! She is also the person that came up with the idea of connecting our science classrooms via Google Hangout. We are able to have our students communicate and compete from across the parish. They love it and it has been highly motivating for my students as well. I was able to help her lead a 'Technology in the Science Classroom' workshop at the school board to share with the teachers in our district. She facilitated teachers on how to use a 3D printer with the students and other uses of technology for formative assessments. I was the Vanna White.

No matter what school she works at, she is often asked to take leadership roles. She was a cheer sponsor, a science club sponsor, a homecoming sponsor and is now an FCA leader, School Improvement board member and a positive student behavior incentive committee member for Albany Middle School. In addition, she takes no second thought about helping other teachers that are in need. She is the 'go to' person for so many of us. She is making such an impact on the life of her students and her peers. There truly needs to be more teachers like her.

I proudly and humbly recommend Joni Smith for the *2016-17 Middle School Teacher of the Year*.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Westside Junior High

Science Teacher

Joni Smith

17114 Barksdale Lane
Hammond, LA 70403

205.576.5214
joni.smith@gmail.com

Objective

To build a long-term career as a middle school science teacher with opportunities for career growth and to keep up with the cutting edge of the teaching technologies.

Education

Bachelor of Science, General Studies - Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA
2002-2007

Louisiana Resource Center for Educators (LRCE) – Baton Rouge, LA
Summer of 2009

Skills Summary

- Experienced teacher with a strong desire to enhance students' understanding of the science curriculum content
- Highly self-motivated and energetic teacher: demonstrates planning, organizational and multitasking skills
- A desire to encourage leadership, organizational, communication, critical and higher order thinking skills among students

Professional Experience

Teacher, Science, grade 7, Albany Middle School,
Albany, LA, August 2014-Current

- Research, plan and teach lessons that promote higher order thinking skills in students
- Develop and implement assessments instructionally aligned with the Science Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum
- School Improvement Team Member, FCA Club Sponsor, After the Bell Tutor

Teacher, Science, grades 7-8, Westside Junior High,
Walker, LA, August 2009- May 2014

- Effectively improved the proficiency rate year after year
- Developed and implemented assessments instructionally aligned with objectives and guidelines from the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum
- Cheer sponsor-2 years, Science Club Sponsor-5 years, Homecoming Sponsor-3 years

Additional Related Experience

Primary Source Teacher Leader - Southeastern Louisiana University, (20014-present)

- Assisted teacher candidates with incorporating primary sources into their classrooms.
- Invited to be a guest speaker to entry level classes at Southeastern Louisiana University.
- Assisted professor with teaching other educators how to use the Library of Congress webpage and guided workshops.

Science CSI Summer Camp Participant/Tutor – Arkansas State University, (June, 2012)

- Trained under professors on how to utilize investigative skills in the classroom and then was able to share that knowledge with students that attended the camp (one week of training and one week of teaching).
- Researched, planned and several mini-science lessons such as extracting DNA from organic items, coordinated and participates in small group sessions.