Courtney Painton

Observation Notes (Spanish I)

11/5/14

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation** (content knowledge, knowledge of students, knowledge of standards, goal setting)

I am impressed by your planning and preparation. You knew precisely what content you were covering in your 8th grade Spanish I class: new Spanish vocabulary words preceded by a daily “bell ringer” with a focus on recognizing errors in Spanish. Learning activities were designed to practice and reinforce instruction. Instructional materials supported the content and were ready to go.

*Planning and preparation are key as you serve so many different student groups on a daily basis. You have done an amazing job of being prepared and ready to go the minute students enter your classroom, at both the high school and the middle school level. I have noticed this every time I have come to observe you. You have put in the time and it shows. Way to go!*

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment** (mutual respect, culture for learning, managing procedures, managing behavior, safety)

I noticed as students entered your classroom, you were greeting them by name. As students were working independently, you were encouraging and respectful and constantly providing feedback as you moved about the room.

You managed behavior in a respectful manner. An example of this was when Zack was having a difficult time at his table. You very quietly asked, “ Zack, will you sit next to Nick please?” Zack moved to a different spot. *Being proactive, in a respectful way, not only prevents behaviors from getting out of hand, but also allows students to maintain their dignity. You also used teacher proximity as a proactive way to remind a table of students of appropriate behavior.*

Transitions were smooth and timely. Class began at 1:14 and by 1:15 students were in their seats and you had started the Wednesday “Miaucoles “ cat video, which transitioned to the bell ringer activity. *You facilitated transitions so quickly that little instructional time was lost. Materials and technology were ready to go and classroom routines functioned very smoothly. Feel good about this, Courtney. It’s an indicator of an effective teacher.*

*Something to think about and consider is giving students more wait time after a listening cue. It sometimes feels like it takes forever for 100% attentive listening but it is worth it. Students tend to remind each other of expectations. Try counting silently to yourself as you wait and I think you will be surprised at how little time it actually takes for the group to quiet down.*

**Domain 3: Instruction** (communication skills, questioning/discussion techniques, student engagement, feedback, responsiveness)

Expectations for learning were clear as you started class today: video; recognizing errors in Spanish; new vocabulary; video/song which related to new vocabulary followed by independent practice (song worksheet). Clear directions and procedures were specific to each learning activity and students understood what they were expected to do.

You used actions connected to vocabulary to help learners remember words, *You presented lots of information in a variety of ways: spoken, written, kinesthetically, and musically. Lots of opportunities to reach all learners in a multitude of ways. Very important.*

You provided individual feedback by moving about the room during small group and independent work. As you were projecting content on the mimeo board for students to translate, you were positive and encouraging: “This paragraph is long, but I know you guys can do it. . .” and “We have a few sentences to translate. I know you guys can do it. . .”

*Something to keep in mind when correcting together is to write the correct answer as well as have students say it, especially with a foreign language. With content projected on the mimeo board, correcting errors, both verbally and written, helps students see the correct word as well as hear it. It also makes it easier for learners to “track” a paragraph.*

*Courtney,*

*It was really fun to hang out with you in middle school on Wed. It’s been a month since I have seen this group of 8th graders and they have come a long way. You have done a great job with them: lots of learning taking place and classroom dynamics are much calmer. You are doing a great job. Thanks for your commitment, hard work, and tons of planning for good instruction.*