Rationale: Standards 8

Collaboration Project

By Emily Hunter

To demonstrate my proficiency in Standard 8, I selected a collaboration project that I performed in an elementary school math classroom on the topics of word problems and long division. I was paired up with a third grade girl who needed help on these two topics. I included the following documents: Source of Evidence 10, daily lessons, pre-test, post-test, answer keys, and a matching game. I collaborated with this student’s teacher to create a collaboration project that would best help my student.

When I was looking for a student who would benefit from a collaboration project, I talked with the teacher of the classroom and told her that I needed a student who I could work with who was struggling in some area. My goal was to help this student improve in an area in which he or she was struggling. This teacher suggested that I work with a particular third grade female who was in her classroom. I asked the teacher what were some of the areas in which this student struggled, and she suggested division. I had been helping this student with her homework in some of my past observations, and I had noticed that she always seemed to have questions on word problems. I asked the teacher if the student was strong with word problems because I know that those are difficult for students to understand even at a much older age. The teacher said that would definitely be a good idea to review and help the student improve upon. Thus, I went about designing a plan to help this particular student. I created activities, practice problems, and games for the student to use in order to strengthen her skills. The student loved working the problems out on the whiteboard as well as practicing using her key terms to help her solve word problems. She really liked the matching game that I created. She wanted to play that over and over. I always had to make her practice her long division because she wanted to practice the word problems more than the division. I encouraged the teacher reinforced these skills throughout her school day. The curriculum that the teacher used incorporated the skills that I was teaching her during my tutoring sessions. There were problems where she would have to use her knowledge on word problems and her skills on how to solve long division problems. I also had her dad involved in helping her when she was home. Each day I gave her word problems and division problems to take home and work with her dad. This way she was seeing the material multiple times throughout the day. I feel that is very important to get the parents involved, and I think this definitely helped in the success of my collaboration project. At the end of the collaboration project, I gave a post-test to my student to help determine the outcome of the collaborative efforts. The data showed improvement. She increased her score by 57.5 points. She originally scored a 27%, but on the post-test, she scored an 84.5%. This shows a considerable amount of improvement. The student was able to get every single word problem correct. It was just the long division that tripped her up a bit. After analyzing the data, I discussed reasons for why the long division may have caused her a few issues. I used the data I collected to come up with some possible next steps, some of which included: more practice with long division, practicing the times tables that she was not as comfortable with (example: eight’s times tables), and working some other types of word problems to broaden her knowledge even more on how to solve different types of word problems. All in all, this collaboration project improved this student’s skills tremendously in the area of long division and especially in the area of solving word problems. It was all due to the fact that her teacher, her dad, and I were all working and giving this student the time and effort she deserved to help her grow and succeed in the classroom.

In past education classes, I had completed collaboration projects; however, I think this one was the most effective and most organized. I feel like I have come a long way since my first collaboration project in ED 210. I have learned so much about how to be a more effective teacher, and I was definitely able to use a lot of that new knowledge during this collaboration project. I understood the importance of getting the teacher and parents involved in reinforcing the material. I had learned how to create good assessments due to taking an education class based solely on teaching assessments. I had learned how to fill out the documents and reflect on learning. I also have had a lot of experience working with students in the classroom and using multiple instructional strategies to help my student learn the material in the way the student learns best. All of these elements came together very well, and this is why this collaboration project was a success. I think that in the future it would help to know the student a bit more, so I cannot wait until I have the opportunity to work with the same students for more than just a few days. Student teaching will really help me grow in that area because that is something I have not experienced. I also need to grow in the area of communication with the home because I really have not had too much experience with that. I think that participating in more collaboration projects will really help me grow and develop into a teacher who effectively uses collaboration in her classroom.