

To whom it may concern:

I would like to thank John and Merline Engle, Alex Myril, and the staff at Children's Academy for welcoming my niece and I. It was an honor and privilege to be part of their school. At the request of the Engles, I am enclosing a brief summary of my observations.

Observations of classroom teachers and students at ADECA

My remarks are for your Kindergarten group only, as I have no Pre-kindergarten experience of my own. My observations were limited to the classroom environment and instruction. However, from what I observed, I was able to ascertain some of the planning and preparation that went into creating the day's activities. The Pennsylvania Department of Education utilizes Charlotte Danielson's four domains when evaluating teachers. Those domains are 1) Planning and Preparation, 2) The Classroom Environment, 3) Instruction, and 4) Professional Responsibilities. I will use these domains as I share my observations and thoughts.

Planning and Preparation:

Each teacher's practice demonstrated understanding of the important concepts in the concept area. In the Kindergarten room, the instructional outcomes were stated and posted. They were appropriate for this grade level. The instructional strategies used were suitable for all types of learners, and the teachers assessed every student in each activity. The teachers used resources available to them to design a series of learning experiences aligned to their instructional objectives. Those resources also helped to fulfill the need of individualized instruction for each student.

The Classroom Environment:

The interaction between teacher and students and among students was polite and respectful. The teachers were warm and caring with all the students, while still maintaining a standard of acceptable behavior. Expectations were high for each student. Pride in work was demonstrated by all with very little instructional time lost when moving from activity to activity. For example, the teachers rearranged the furniture quickly when transitioning from one learning activity to another.

Instruction:

Expectations for learning, including directions and procedures were clear to all students. Communication with students was appropriate for their level. The students were constantly engaged; the time allotted for each activity did not allow for student's to get distracted or bored. Both the teachers and the students sang, spoke alone and in choral, wrote on the board and on paper, and even used clay to create letters. Teachers were flexible with their instructional plans to accommodate

questions and visitors. All students were assessed during each activity, whether it was as a small group or alone.

Professional Responsibilities:

The importance of family involvement is important to the staff at the school. The families are made to feel welcome, important and necessary. The teachers reflect on the day's events at the end of each school day. John and Alex shared with me some of the professional development that occurs for the teachers of the Academy.



In summary, I was extremely impressed by the quality of instruction that occurred in the Kindergarten class. If these teachers were in Pennsylvania they would be considered proficient, if not distinguished in some categories. The only suggestions I would make is to include more use of the written word. When teaching a letter, display words starting with that letter. For example, the kindergarten group was the dragonflies. Make sure the word dragonfly is displayed prominently so teachers can point to it when they sing or speak the word. I don't know if this is currently happening, or will happen, but I also encourage the teachers to read to the group as a whole and also in small groups where they follow along on the pages. Literacy is necessary for all learning to occur. I feel one cannot do enough in getting students to be literate and enjoy reading.

Sincerely,

Camilla J. Kasales