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Service Learning Final Reflection

I have always heard that the best way to find out if you enjoy something is to try it, and the best way to learn is to be subjected; this statement is definitely true to my service learning experience at Rancho Solano Private School. I am so grateful for the opportunity that I was given to be a part of a second grade classroom for 30 hours. This time was a grand learning experience for me in which I was able to make decisions and conclusions about my future. Through my time at Rancho Solano I learned how to interact with teachers and administrators as colleagues instead of authority figures, deal with real life situations that arise in the classroom, and that teaching is indeed the right place for me.

I had never been in a situation, before service learning, in which I was to treat administration and teachers as colleagues of my own. It was a very unique experience to be treated as a professional in training, and see the classroom from the teacher's side of the desk instead of the student's. I was able to talk with the principal, aids, and specials teachers. I also was subjected to real life situations which occur in the classroom, some of these include, sick students and injuries, tantrums, fights, and problems at home. Before service learning I had not realized what immense responsibility is on the teacher to analyze and react appropriately to these difficult situations. I believe that as a future educator, these experiences will help me run my own classroom.

Service learning helped me to solidify my decision to be an elementary school teacher. I enjoyed the 2nd grade, but I am still open to new experiences. Although I still need to test out

other grades, I am positive that I want to be with young children. During my service I was able to read to the students and have them read to me, engage in games with them, and bond with them, which was really special to me and made me feel like I was already a teacher. I found myself being proud of the students' accomplishments and hurt for them during their failures. Service learning ultimately made me decide to be a teacher.

I feel extremely blessed for the opportunity to go to a school and interact with real children in their environment. My mentor teacher was wonderful, and gave me so many unique experiences while I was at Rancho Solano Private School. I could not have asked for a better first taste of service learning. I will take the things I learned; communication with teachers and administration, dealing with real life situations, and my passion for teaching, with me throughout the rest of my schooling and my life.