

December 12th-16th

Monday morning began my last week at the practice center. It was already planned out as a very irregular week. I would barely be teaching the kids, but I would be seeing them. On Monday I didn't have the students from 3-1 because their homeroom teacher was absent. I dedicated my time that day to observing Mrs. Trinta and helping her out with whatever she needed throughout the morning. On Tuesday, Mrs. Trinta and I had a meeting at the University of Puerto Rico in Humacao, right across the street. I went first at 10:30 am to the amphitheater where the English Department had an activity for the students. They wanted to recognize our effort and celebrate that I was finishing my studies and practice. They played pictures and videos of our coolest moments while being students from the English Department. I got to see my college friends like Chris, Laura, and Gaby. I grew closer to Susana because we shared the practice center and the Cooperating Teacher. I had a great time that I definitely thought I wouldn't have. My group of friends from college broke down after the pandemic and I thought I was on my own, but I am not. All my classmates, Nydia, Daniela, Orvin, they all showed me that I was not. They all texted me during my practice, they wished me the most beautiful things that day and I couldn't be happier.

At 12:30 we went to the campus cafeteria to share lunch with our cooperating teachers and supervisors. I saw Dr. Anibal Munoz, one of the first professors to educate me and pull me towards education. I also saw Professor Evelyn Gonzales. It was nice to meet her in person since the class I took with her was virtual and I only saw her virtually. Of course, when my supervisor and mentor entered the amphitheater, I felt like a kid when his mom was back. She's been the engine of my career. I had so many doubts about me being good enough to teach and she was the first to open my eyes and say that I'm a "natural". I was so glad to be surrounded by nice people who support me and believe in me. Meeting Mrs. Baella was also nice since she was my Cooperating Teacher online and I never got to meet her. I met Professor Balaguer as well, a very nice, funny lady who also gave her best advice. We had fun, she shared experiences from our practices, we met each other and had lunch together. That was the last time I stepped foot in my dear university.

The next day Mrs. Trinta was going to be on a school trip and I was supposed to give the TWS Post Test to my group but once again, they were absent. I observed Mrs. Ruffat give her Spanish, Science, and Math class while working on my InTASC. I went to the library and got some more copies that I needed, including a last-minute handout that Mrs. Trinta sent for me to teach 4-1. I taught them for the last time, gave them the material C.T. sent and then a coloring Christmas activity. I had fun with them and many of them gave me their paintings. I also told them that I am moving to the United States and they said their goodbyes even though they would see me the rest of the week. On Thursday the students from ELACS had their "Carrera del Pernil" so it was a no class day. We went to the community baseball field before the students. Mrs. Trinta was the animator, and I was with the teacher who handed the certificates to the winners. The lunchroom team allowed me a chair and Mrs. Trinta gave me her umbrella. I saw all the races and stayed until it was over. Compared to how I thought it would be, it was a small thing. I remember when I was a kid, the turkey race was a big thing, the distances we would run were longer, there would be mother volunteering to sell "empanadillas" and soda. This time,

the park was abandoned, first of all; and the terrain where the kids were running was full of bumps and holes. However, they had fun, the races were successful and even parents participated. After the activity was over, we all went to our classrooms. I thought I wouldn't have to teach students but, four kids from my practice group were left at school and I had to take over them. I just moved the tables forming a square and we sat, talked, and they colored a handout from last week.

Friday came by, and even though my plans were to be absent on Friday and go to the Christmas Party on Monday, I couldn't do it. Friday became my last day with the students, teachers, and school personnel. I observed Mrs. Trinta with 4-1 while arranging all the paperwork that the school principal had to sign. Mrs. Betancourt visited today so I got to say my goodbyes to her too. I walked the kids from 1-2 to the lunchroom and saw my practice group there as well. At 12:00, I told Mrs. Trinta I was feeling the nerves that I didn't feel throughout the whole practice experience because I was saying goodbye to my kids. I had prepared presents for them with letters for each one of them and a toy. I received gifts from many students, from my C.T., from 3-1's homeroom teacher, and from my practice supervisor. I wanted to gift them back and so I did.

This is the last weekly reflection about my practice experience and I just want to say it was the funniest, coolest, sweetest experience. Nothing like I imagined; I knew there would be struggles and stuff but honestly, the greater moments were more than those negative ones. It wasn't easy, don't get me wrong. Anxiety had me by the neck, my dad moved out of our house, I missed (miss) my boyfriend to the point it makes me much more anxious, money has been an issue, and driving has been one of the biggest challenges. However, here I am, writing the reflection for week number eighteen. This is just the beginning of the beginning. Mrs. Velez graduates next December 22nd, 2022 and will fly to the states to represent the English Department of the University of Puerto Rico.

Thank you for reading me.