

As I consider my future role as an educator, I realize that my personal philosophy regarding education revolves around my desire to be an encourager, a flexible leader, and a responsible instructor in regards to my students' education and social interactions. I believe that any student can learn if giving the appropriate tools and encouragement to achieve individual academic goals. As a teacher, I feel it is important to remember each day presents a new and different set of problems with variants of potential solutions. And most importantly, I believe an educator must realize the lasting impact he or she can leave with their students not only in academic readiness, but also in boosting confidence to navigate the hardships of our society.

As a mother, I have the privilege of witnessing first-hand the results of encouragement in a child's life, especially within the classroom. Unfortunately, many of our students today enter the classroom with no sense of worth and an expectation of failure. As an educator, one of my primary goals is to acknowledge those students who need a "cheerleader" in life and the classroom. As a substitute teacher, I have witnessed the sparkle in a child's eyes when a stranger sees something special in them, and refuses to let them give up on themselves. It may be a positive word or presenting information in a way they have never heard, but applying whatever tools are needed to reach a student to help them learn is invaluable in the classroom. I have seen that encouragement and alternate methods of learning translate into success; no matter how small it may seem to the outside world, to that student, simply understanding a concept or completing an assignment means the world to them. Experiencing a student's attitude move away from being discouraged because they were encouraged is beautifully rewarding not only for that child, but also for me.

One aspect of teaching that is appealing to me is the fact that every day will not be the same. The lessons will be different, the school and class dynamic will change, and each student will display their ever changing individual needs. I feel the ability to be flexible is an enormously important responsibility, and every teacher should embrace the fluctuating environment and adapt to it accordingly in order to reach their students effectively. There are so many things that can happen in a classroom or within a school that can have a huge effect on how your students learn. As an educator, it is my responsibility to acknowledge these changes, realize when a teaching method or classroom policy is working or not, and then learn from it and adjust. Establishing a good working relationship with fellow teachers and administrators is crucial to being successful in the classroom because you can share experiences with one another to Just because we are educators does not mean we should stop looking for ways to learn. I feel that when students see a teacher confront adversity or change with a positive attitude in order to find an effective solution, it teaches them to adapt when needed as well. There will always be challenges, but our reactions to them provide a lesson for each of our students.

Finally, one of my most important philosophies of education is found in a teacher's ability to be a responsible instructor of both educational curriculum and social interactions. Obviously, my job as an educator will be to provide the instruction and tools necessary to reach my students so they can learn. Providing organized, clear curriculum in various forms is essential to being an effective educator. I also feel it is important to balance new technology with standard methods of learning. I don't feel there is any way to effectively replace the value of reading a printed book or writing in your own hand, however in a technologically advanced world, it is important to prepare students to utilize and responsibly access the technology available to them.

The social dynamic for students has changed tremendously, partly because of the availability of technology. Students today face new social challenges, stresses, and hardships unlike any generation before them. The family dynamic has changed and technology, while beneficial, gives students access to a world that they often need to be protected from. As a teacher, it is so important that we are engaged with our students' lives and all the things they are exposed to. Many students lack the guidance and support they need at home, and as a teacher I hope to fill in the gap in that area of their lives if need be. I feel that teachers must be ready and willing to provide guidance in the lives of their students because in some cases we may be the only adult willing to teach them how to cope with the world around them. I want to create a classroom environment that provides a safe place to turn when the world around them seems to be crumbling down and help them navigate successfully through any situation. I believe a child is more willing and more capable to learn if they feel safe and trust that the teacher leading them has their best interest at heart.

Perhaps my philosophy of education should be more focused on teaching techniques or classroom management, but having had the opportunity to experience the diversity of children in many different grade levels, I have learned that few children are willing to learn if they don't feel valued or that the teacher is genuinely invested in them. Teaching techniques change, school expectations change, and curriculum will change, but one thing will always remain... As teachers, we must understand the significance of the roles we play in the lives of our students and ensure that they leave our classrooms knowing that they are valued. If we do that, the ultimate goal of teaching effectively will happen.