

Philosophy of Education

Throughout American society, schools have been given many different labels. Some of these labels are positive and reflect nicely on educators and administrators, and others are negative and paint a false picture of what education should be. Depending on who you ask, a school may be described as a place for learning, a place for play, a place of rules or punishments, a place to socialize, a daycare center, a place of discrimination, a place of classification, a place of growth, or maybe just a place to receive a hot meal and a kind word. In my opinion, it is all relevant to context and experience. Personally, I view a school as a secondary home. Since children will spend more than half of their daily time in a classroom, it is important to establish a standard for education, then encompass those standards into care and support for the students. Children do not come to school for an education alone. Though education should take the forefront, teachers must be willing to provide care. Whether it be physical care or emotional care, it is crucial for teachers to step outside the box of what a school “should be” and adapt on a personal level. This mentality will allow for growth and understanding in the classroom and the school system.

I know my calling is to teach elementary. At such a young age, children only see the world that is directly in front of them, and what they live through every day. “*Talent is equally distributed, but opportunity is not*”, Leila Janah. These are words I believe every teacher should embrace. It reminds us that we never know what a child is up against. Teachers cannot change the harsh reality of poverty or despair, but teachers can change a child’s life. When I look at a child, I see a lawyer, a doctor, a teacher, a nurse, a business executive, an astronaut, a film producer, a zoologist, and much more. When a child cannot see that potential in themselves, it is vital that an educator pulls that inspiration out of them. We should continuously remind students

that an education will take you anywhere you wish to go, but it requires perseverance and hard work. Educators should never allow a student to make excuses for themselves. Never let a child become a statistic. When met with resilience or lack of effort, teachers must not give up. Eventually, students will reach an age where they must decide what kind of future they wish for themselves. In elementary, the importance is not to decide what career to take. The goal is to establish the self-worth and confidence to do such.

The teacher's role in the classroom is the facilitator, time manager, organizer, tutor, counselor, helping hand, resource, and even a learner themselves. To be an effective educator, a teacher must accept this wide array of roles. Teachers are caring adults who engage students in curriculum. Even when society refers to an educator as a "glorified babysitter", teachers must remember their importance and forge on building the future. While there will be plenty to doubt, but there will also be many who support and encourage. I will let those kind words or thoughtful actions inspire my classroom decisions. I believe it is about the student. If someone from outside the classroom can help make it better for the student, we should listen.

In my classroom, I will incorporate a variety of materials, methods and instruction. In doing such, I will be able to efficiently adapt to diverse learners. I believe every child possesses their own set of characteristics and needs. It is an educator's duty to build off those characteristics, adapt to those needs, and foster an environment learning that is compatible. Although ever changing, my curriculum will always put the educational needs of students first. My classroom management style will be a combination of assertiveness and flexibility. This management style fosters respect from students to teacher, as well as teacher to students. I will state clear expectations for my students in a clear and positive manner. Proactive approaches will be an absolute must, and reactive approaches will occur as necessary. I believe positive

reinforcement should be used as often as possible. Effective teachers manage their classroom and ineffective teachers punish their classrooms. Personally, I believe teaching is centered around classroom management and creating an environment where students feel safe, comfortable, and ready to learn. As I reflect on my thoughts for classroom styles, I also remember the importance of self-evaluation. I plan to actively assess myself and hope that I find myself in a school system that encourages constructive criticism among professionals.

I believe family engagement is a necessity in student success. With that being said, I fully understand that families will not participate if they do not feel comfortable with the school system or the teacher. Differences in teachers and families could mean differences in race, religion, culture, disability, sexuality, values, etc. It is not my place to judge the personal lifestyle of a family. It is my job to adapt to them. As a future educator, I vow to always consider parents thoughts, wishes, concerns and ideas and to actively involve parents in decision making. Collaboration will always be welcomed and encouraged in my classroom.

Education is necessary for progress within our society. For true education to occur, we must have passionate educators. I will never view education as a mundane system of academic requirements that every child should meet. Education is exciting! Educators have the chance to change a life. In doing such, you might just change the world. I will always push my students to be the best person of themselves and instill strong work ethics. I most absolutely believe that teaching will have many challenges, but I am prepared to face them. I will do my best to be a kind, motivating, and understanding teachers. I will always put the students first, and I will always work towards a deeper level of education.

