

Kylie Brickey

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### Philosophy of Education

Education encompasses so much more than simply what a student learns at school. It is the first step toward figuring out who we are and what we want to do in life. As a sixth grade math and science teacher, it is important to remember that each student I come in contact with is just beginning this journey. So, to foster an environment in which students can grow intellectually and mature into young adults is of the utmost importance. As a teacher, one of my goals is to help students along a safe, nurturing path to find themselves. In order to achieve this goal, I will create an environment that is conducive to learning, that fosters an appreciation for diversity, and helps them to grow into informed, successful young adults.

To begin, the environment that the student is placed in has a major effect on how they learn. I will make my classroom structured and organized so that the students always know what is expected of them. I will provide them with a few rules clearly posted in the classroom, and I will make my expectations of behavior clear verbally and written. In regards to punishment, I will be fair and just to each student, and always follow through on the punishments that I have set. I believe that the first step in achieving excellence in education is for the students to know what is required of them. In order to teach to each student's learning ability, I will make instructions in multiple formats such as reading them out loud and having them written for students to look over on their own. During a lesson, I will teach the material, but be open to class discussion to see where they may need more help. My notes and lessons will be readily available to each student so that they can review the lesson if needed. I believe that having access to the material we learn in class is essential to understanding and learning.

Next, in-class discussions are key to learning students' individual and diverse personalities. My classroom will be an open, safe environment where students can express their individual beliefs and opinions. As a teacher it is important for me to learn about my students' lives and personalities so that I will know how best to teach them. Teaching compassion and appreciation for other people is essential for young adults. In life students will encounter numerous people who are different than themselves, and they must learn how to appreciate that diversity. Students must know how they feel about different subjects, and they must learn how best to express those feelings without condemning others for their beliefs. Having the ability to be respectful of those with differing opinions is an important skill that any productive member of society possesses. I want to be the teacher that instills this into my students.

Next, not only do I want to make learning easy for my students and instill understanding and compassion in them, but I want to help them grow into mature adults. I want to teach them how to be responsible and how to make thoughtful decisions. Schools should teach students how to be productive members of society, and this is one of the most important life skills that I can teach them. My class will serve as just a stepping stone in their lives, but for the short time that I will have them as my student I will teach them how to make the most of their education. My class will have strict deadlines and assignments that truly prepare them for later stages of their schooling. As much as possible, I want to give them a glimpse into their future and instill in them a passion for learning so that they might be able to achieve the goals they set for their lives. I want them to take pride in doing what is honorable, what is right, and what is just. I want them to see the difference in right and wrong. I want them to be able to know what they need to do and follow through with it. As a teacher I will have the power to change students' lives, and I plan to use it. The students I will have in class will one day be the driving force in decisions made for

my community, my state, and maybe even my country. It is my duty to myself, my fellow citizens, and my students to teach them the skills they need to make the right decisions in life.

In conclusion, education is much more than just notes, tests, and listening to a teacher talk. Education is about fostering a spirit in children that will make them want to grow into individuals that can be whoever they want to be. It is about teaching them how to make decisions, to be accepting of others, to be responsible, and to be good students. Education should not be based on the teacher, but instead, the students. After leaving my class, my hope for my students is that they will have mastered the material we have learned, and that they will also have had an experience in an environment conducive to learning, having felt appreciated for their diversities, and having learned how to be a productive member of society.