

Philosophy of Education

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“Teaching is the one profession that creates all other professions.” Unknown.

Teaching is the backbone to all things in life. From the very first step a baby takes to learning to play a video game with a grandchild, teaching is right at the forefront. Teaching is where the journey starts. Whether young or old, previously educated or completely uneducated, big or small, career oriented or trade seeking; education is where it all begins, and teaching is how we get there. Life begins with a teacher.

Professionalism is defined as the competence or skill expected of a professional. Those words in conjunction with the teaching profession can vary and waiver greatly depending on the person, time, place, circumstance and even generation. Professionalism holds key values with some additives to put emphasis on those values. Character, conduct, integrity, reliability, optimism and competence are a few professional characteristics that hold merit in any profession out there. The teaching world is slightly different because you’re not always dealing with adults or other professionals. Relatability, patience, rationale, geniality and a high sense of efficacy are critical values when instructing minds. Every teacher must find their professional niche, let it adapt to their surroundings and sculpt it into the type of professionalism their heart desires.

The course of study is the single most integral part of teaching. Curriculum is the basis of the everyday classroom. Following the curriculum and instructional standards mandated by the state is a requirement for all teachers. With that being said, teachers are the lecturers, the facilitators, the mentors, the advisors and the guides. Teachers are the curriculum distributors and administrators. Teachers are the ones who take that state mandated curriculum and reshape it into light bulbs flashing on in a

kindergartener's head, enhance it into future goals for a struggling high school junior and maximize it into a career for a 45-year-old trade school student. Curriculum is the core of education but we, as teachers, are developers.

Teach the way they learn! Period. End of paragraph. Turn the page. Teaching methods are simple. You teach the way they learn. Step one would be to get to know the students. Next, figure out how they learn best. Last, use your high sense of teacher efficacy to teach them that way! Trial and error, questionnaires, classroom activities, assessments; the list can go on and on with ways to determine the best teaching method for a child to not only be academically successful but to also flourish socially, physically, emotionally and linguistically. There is no better teaching method out there than to TEACH THE WAY THEY LEARN!

Classroom management is all about organization. Time organization, room organization, lesson plan organization, even down to noninstructional schedule organization. It can be critical to ensure appropriate behaviors, accomplish timely schedules and follow structured curriculum. Classroom management is teacher dependent and teacher specific. Each teacher has their way of managing their own classroom. It can vary greatly and generally depends on what works best for the teacher and the students collectively. A teacher must, again, find their groove and determine what best creates an orderly, respectful and productive classroom environment for all. Maintaining a copacetic classroom is imperative to ensuring successful learning.

Assessment is a very broad term. At first thought, it means testing. In the education setting, it means testing a student to see where they are academically and/or where they should be in a classroom. The problem with this term is that assessment in

teaching really means so much more. Academic testing is its primitive tendency, but a teacher can learn so much about a student, and how to teach a student, by completing other assessments. Evaluating a student's participation during center time can give insight to struggling areas in their world that may not come out on a pencil/paper test. Monitoring a student's daily behavior can disclose the nature of their home life which in turn effects their school life. Having the ability to gauge a student's temperament can help a student shine even on bad days. All of these are types of more unconventional assessment that are just as important as basic academic testing. After all, it is about the whole child, right?

As teachers, we worry about the aforementioned topics. We stress over them and hope we do them right and well. We aspire to be as professional as we can be while providing adequate curriculum using appropriate teaching methods while managing our classrooms sufficiently and accruing valuable assessments. It's a lot to take in. It's a lot to give as well. Teachers have lives depending on them just as much as any other profession, just in a different way. Teachers shape minds, build social skills, develop self-esteem, break down emotional barriers, open eyes to new worlds and create futures, and those are just some highlights. Teachers play fundamental roles in every life they touch. Therefore, it is crucial that a teacher know these factors and recognize that they hold a student's life in their hands every single day that they walk through those school doors. A teacher must embrace that responsibility and live for it. A teacher must search every corner of the world for what can best help that student learn, grow and succeed and then give everything they can to immerse that student in

achievement. After all, “It is not so much what is poured into the student, but what is planted that really counts.” Unknown.