

Philosophy of Teaching

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I believe a teacher is one of the most influential people in a child's life. Education is not something to be taken lightly. I have strong beliefs and values that influence how I approach teaching in the classroom and my commitment to education. These beliefs are based upon Dewey's *The School and Society* (1902) and the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

First of all, I believe all children deserve a teacher who cares deeply for them in and out of the classroom. My classroom environment is a positive, welcoming one in which every student feels like they belong. A child must feel safe and secure before they can open their minds to learning new things. It is important I know my expectations and my students know and understand my expectations in order to have a respectful and supportive learning environment. I strive daily to create a positive and caring classroom environment for all students.

Secondly, I believe all children deserve a teacher who is passionate about education and well prepared to teach every day. I am committed to doing whatever it takes to help my students learn and be successful, in and out of the classroom. One of my favorite quotes is, "The function of schooling is not to enable students to do better in school. The function of schooling is to enable students to do better in life" (Flinders & Thornton, 2009, p. 329). My lessons are directly aligned with the Common Core Standards and the curriculum of my district. I rely on research-based instructional strategies and my fellow colleagues for guidance and advice on how to best teach my students the first grade subject matter.

Finally, I believe in Dewey's (1902) "learning by doing" method. Dewey explains how difficult it is for a child to connect what he is learning in school with his life outside the school. In order for education to be worthwhile, teachers must bring the outside world into the school for closer examination, understanding, questioning, and application. The only way to internalize motivation to learn is to directly correlate the subject matter with the students' interests (Dewey, 1902). This is where I believe in the power of technology. I use YouTube videos, Google images, and other various electronic sources daily to build background knowledge and vocabulary for my students. Students use technology devices constantly outside of the classroom and I believe students should be using them daily inside the classroom to guide their exploration, interests, and discovery of subject matter.

In conclusion, I believe the purpose of school is to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in life. School is a place where students develop their interests and the motivation to become a life long learner. As Dewey says, the child itself is the curriculum and the goal is to help a child reach their individual potential (1902). I want to be the supportive, caring, and encouraging teacher who pushes her students to be the best they can be. I will do whatever it takes to provide my students with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful. I will assist them in identifying and applying their own unique talents and abilities in order to become a valuable and contributing member to our society.

References

Dewey, J. (1915/1902). *School and Society & The Child & the Curriculum*.

Flinders, D. & Thornton, S. Eds. (2009). *The Curriculum Studies Reader* (3rd ed.)
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