

Philosophy of Education

I am currently an education major at Thiel College in my senior year and I am from Knox, PA. I come from a very small town which has had a great influence on why I chose education as my future career. I also come from a low socioeconomic area which has impacted me greatly. Growing up in this area provided me with many mentors that shaped me in to the person I am today, many of which were educators. As I became older, it became apparent to me how much of an influence my first-grade teacher had on who I wanted to be for the rest of my life. This person cared for my emotional and overall wellbeing, along with my success inside and outside of the classroom. This has shaped my belief and philosophy on education. I believe that as an educator you will put your students needs first, understand the importance of individualized learning, create a safe and healthy learning environment, and have a true passion for the content that you are incorporating into young children's lives. Curriculum, assessment, classroom environment, instructional practices, and professional responsibility are all components that a successful teacher needs to understand for themselves and their students to be successful.

Curriculum and assessment are the main components that govern what a student should know and understand. Curriculums should be engaging and lay out the skills a student should acquire (Tomlinson and Imbeau, 2011). Within the curriculum, students can practice both content and standards and apply that to real-world skills. Big ideas should focus on topics that can be discussed within the content and also outside of the classroom to tie in prior knowledge and relatability. Once a curriculum is in place, assessment comes into the picture. The two different kinds of assessment are summative assessment and formative assessment. Summative assessment is a way of measuring a student's progress and is completed at the end of a unit. Examples of this are standardized tests or a book project. Formative assessment is a way to track

students learning outcomes throughout a unit. There should be a mixture of both summative and formative assessments in the classroom. Each of these assessment types contribute to how a student displays their understanding because each child learns in different ways. Assessment can be differentiated from grading because an assessment does not always have to be a part of a physical grade. Assessment can simply be looking around your classroom and being able to recognize which students understand the material and which students are facing challenges. A teacher's job is to make sure these students will be able to receive the proper help and instruction to not allow the challenges during simple assessment to excel. At the end of a unit, a student should be able to relate the content to the real world and be able to take big ideas and apply them to every day life. Those relationships should be what is applied to a student's final grade.

The use of technology in the classroom has become a useful tool for me as I continue to take courses that allow me to learn about the positive impact technology has on students. It is important to include the incorporation of music at a young age as well as technology that is capable of having an impact on children. Technology can be used in forms of assistance for students with special needs or as an overall classroom tool. Over my course of mentoring and becoming part of the classroom as well as teaching lessons, I have used technology by showing music videos or playing formative or summative games to check for understanding.

Another important part of becoming an educator is knowing how to sustain a comfortable classroom environment. A teacher should always have the students best needs in mind. The physical appearance of the classroom as well as the energy of the classroom are both factors that set a student up for success. If teachers show a student that they genuinely care about them as a person and who they are overall, a student will participate and want to be a part of a great education. Asking questions and becoming involved in a student's daily life will allow them to

feel important rather than jumping straight to disciplining a child in a harsh way and never speaking to them about what was wrong (Young, 2014). To establish a culture for learning, an educator must also show the students that they have a passion for what is being taught. Being excited about content contributes to a classroom environment. Student management involves being in contact with parents, establishing a set of fair classroom rules, and using perception whenever it comes to behavioral problems. Creating an environment where students want to learn means you have to involve your students in educational decisions. You can do this when setting up classroom rules, deciding guidelines for a rubric, or even taking into consideration what your student's interests are and what they want to learn. A classroom should have different centers and areas that spark a student's interest in learning and provide them with materials and resources to engage themselves in educational content. At the end of the day, a classroom should mirror the type of society and world that we want students to actively be a part of and contribute to (Tomlinson and Imbeau 29). By thinking of a classroom as a reflection of what we would want society to look like, it allows us to see into our future community but also have the ability to create a sense of community within the student body. By applying rules and becoming a role model that displays empathy, kindness, and love, students will follow those actions. When teaching, using words like "friend" or "partner" when talking about students allows the development of a community inside a classroom.

The most important part of instructional practices is that every student learns in a different way. When a teacher takes the time to get to know their students, where they are coming from, or how their intelligence is categorized, success is far more accomplishable. Students must always be engaged before anything else. Finding interesting topics that you know will capture students' attention is very important. An easy way to do this is to take prior

knowledge or real-world examples and insert them into a lesson plan. Teachers need to stay on task and make sure they are maintaining focus, but it is easy to link interesting topics to the standards. A good lesson has many different areas which includes an anticipatory set, an input part of the lesson, a deeper understanding section, and a closure along with homework or an assessment that can happen in the following days. Whenever a teacher provides feedback for a student, they need to give the students an explanation for why they received the grade they did. The only way for a student to succeed is if they are part of their instruction and know what their own goals are. Good feedback happens when a teacher looks into a student work and finds the exact spot where they went wrong and puts themselves in the student's shoes. This involves students being a part of the discussion as well. Students may have underlying struggles that we do not always know about as teachers. Finding their strengths as well as their challenges when looking at their work will make for the best feedback. If instructional practices are done correctly, what needs to be taught will also be what a student wants to learn.

As an educator, a person will be able to act professionally in and out of the classroom. The way that a teacher displays him or herself is critical because they are acting as a role model for the students looking up to them as well as the community. Reflecting on one's own teaching allows the best education for the classroom. A good teacher will reflect after a lesson and keep track of the positive and negative parts. Being a professional means constantly improving your own education (Brandt 1993). In order to present yourself as an educator, you can further your knowledge by attending development courses and becoming a part of the community. Communicating with families and parents offers a great opportunity to display professionalism as a teacher. Keeping parents up to date with their students progress whether it is through a website or meetings will let families know that you care for their child all around.

Overall, there are many key factors to a career as an educator who changes the lives of their students in a positive way. Each of these different components allows the teacher to grow as a person as well as the students to do their best educationally. Each teacher is different in the way they run their classroom and simply the way that they chose to educate their students. As long as a teacher has each child's best needs at interest and provides effective curriculum and assessments, classroom environment, instructional practices, and a professional responsibility, they will be successful in their career.

Work Cited

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