

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

~ Richard Smith ~

The following Philosophy of Education is a statement of my views and beliefs on education and teaching, developed over many years of teaching. Education is one of the most important aspects of growth and development, providing children with the fundamental tools necessary to move forward in society as confident, knowledgeable citizens. Education is the means by which we ensure that our society continues to successfully evolve. It is incumbent upon educators to develop new and innovative ways to help children become successful in the future.

As a child, I can remember telling everyone that I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up, and I never deviated from this goal or lost focus during my high school and college years. When I entered the field of education, I realized my dream and was able to share my acquired knowledge with students. I hope to continue to share the lessons that I have learned along the way and encourage my students to reach for the stars and realize their dreams.

On my journey to becoming an educator, there have been individuals who have helped me develop my teaching philosophy. While a student teacher at St. Michael's University, I had the opportunity to work with a wonderful and caring veteran teacher, Norman Simons. He was a powerful mentor, and taught me the finer points of creating meaningful, relevant, and effective lessons. It was under his guidance that I learned how to remain flexible, open to change, and communicate successfully with both parents and students. He provided a solid support system and encouragement, as well as honest, helpful feedback so that I could learn and grow in my career. As a teacher today, I aspire to model his values and professionalism in the classroom.

Student success is the primary focus of education. My teaching style embodies the role of facilitator for student success. I model an enthusiastic approach to learning, endeavoring to create lessons that impart information in a way that students will successfully grasp. I believe this method of teaching creates enthusiasm on the students' part and encourages them to become engaged in the learning process. The students' emotional well-being also plays a vital role, and, as a result, I strive to remain a strong source of nurturing support, encouraging my students to do their best. I have the ability to "connect" with my students. I do that by getting to know them and their learning styles to ensure that each one is able to access the curricula.

Students must feel that they matter and that their views are taken into consideration; therefore, it is essential that faculty, parents, and the school community work together to create a productive and collaborative learning environment.

In conclusion, my ultimate goals as a teacher are: "To provide students with high quality instruction that meets the individual needs of each student. To create an inspiring and equitable learning environment in which students feel safe and secure. To leave a legacy that other teachers and students will remember: that I was a sincere individual with a true passion for his craft, who always came in early or stayed late to help a struggling student succeed."