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PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."

William Butler Yeats

My philosophy is based on the belief that education is a vital tool that can teach children the fundamental skills necessary to live successful lives as confident and informed citizens. I decided to become a teacher to make a positive impact on the lives of children and to engage them in meaningful thinking and learning. I believe that teaching is a highly rewarding profession that allows me to change the lives of students and to effectively provide them with the skills and attitudes necessary to build their character and achieve success. It is my mission to instill a love of life-long learning and to ensure that my students are capable of thriving in today's world.

Throughout my career in education, I have strived to maintain strong connections with my students. I believe the perfect relationship between student and teacher is one built on open, honest communication, and mutual respect. Elementary school children need a learning environment that is safe and accepting, where they feel their input and involvement is encouraged and wanted. Too many times, I see children at an early age labeling themselves as "smart" or "dumb" – a picture of themselves that is hard to erase. My goal is to make certain every child I encounter feels that they matter and have something wonderful to contribute. I endeavor to help children realize the gifts and abilities they have within themselves and to find that drive and inner motivation essential to grinding through the challenges and obstacles life throws at them in order to reach their full potential and realize their dreams.

My teaching style is focused on student-centered learning and I provide the best methods and strategies necessary to guide and inform students. When I teach, I incorporate whole class discussion sessions, differentiated instruction, real world applications, and cooperative learning strategies to provide students with the necessary tools to develop critical thinking skills. I incorporate interactive activities, technology, and manipulatives to strengthen learning and retention of the learning material. Furthermore, through social interactions, experiences, and reflecting on new skills, students can apply their prior knowledge to new experiences. My teaching style is dynamic in this respect, constantly evolving as needed to adapt to students' needs – not the other way around. I am a very enthusiastic, energetic classroom leader with a good sense of humor, and I bring these qualities with me to school every day. I firmly believe that if the teacher is excited and interested, the students will be, too.

My hope is to leave students with a positive impression of education, and to feel they had a teacher who always had their best interests in mind. I hope my students never stop questioning the world around them, continue to embrace learning throughout their lives, and are respectful of themselves and others. I want students to feel they had a dedicated and knowledgeable teacher who brought curiosity and creativity to the educational process.

As Yeats said, "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." The opportunity to ignite a spark in students' learning is what fuels my passion for teaching.