**Teaching Philosophy**

The question is often brought up as we grow, “what do you want to be when you grow up?” There is always a variety of answers that are given: fireman, business person, social worker, engineer, teacher, and the list goes on. Once we get to college and finally declare what we want to do with our major the question becomes, “why do you want to do this job?” The answers can come in a variety once again. I have decided to become a teacher and these are my reasons why.

I believe that all students can learn at high levels and that the teacher should persist in helping all students achieve success. Students can learn the material that is presented to them, but it is the teacher’s job to utilize the many different learning styles that his/her students have. The teacher needs to find out how a student learns and develops and provide learning opportunities that will support the students’ intellectual, social, and personal development. This comes when the teacher is committed to continuous development of individual students’ abilities and considers different motivational strategies that will help this development. The climate of the classroom can affect how the students learn too. This responsibility also falls on the teacher. The students need to feel that they are valued in the teacher’s classroom and that they can be free to learn and ask questions without fear of being bullied or made inferior by their classmates. This includes respecting individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, talents, and interests. Along with that the teacher should appreciate and respect the diverse talents of all learners and be committed to helping those students develop self-confidence and competence.

The teacher needs to show enthusiasm for the subject that they teach. If the students don’t see the teacher have passion for what they are talking about, the students will not have a
passion for that subject either. The more enthusiasm a teacher can show, the better, because the students will be more likely to listen and learn the material that is being presented. Teachers should be committed to using assessments to identify students’ strengths and promote student growth rather than to deny students access to learning opportunities. In order to promote student growth the teacher needs to be a thoughtful responsive listener. What that involves is talking with students and finding how they learn best and then using what the students give you and apply that to your enthusiasm for the subject material. The teacher needs to have the student’s well-being (cognitive, emotional, social, and physical) at heart, be alert to warnings signs, and respect the privacy of the students and confidentiality of information. Teachers cannot be afraid to give and receive help when working with both students and colleagues.

What I hope to do as a teacher is inspire my students to love history by showing enthusiasm for the material and make connections to everyday life for my students. The teacher that made me want to be a teacher was one that was excited for the material they were teaching and made learning fun. I want to be the best example for my students. In today’s world the media that students receive is not the example that they should be receiving, sometimes the students’ home life isn’t the place for good examples either. Since I am with my students for eight hours of the day I will strive to be that example that students so desperately need. I what my students to learn and appreciate history but along with that I want them to come out of my class with a set of life skills that will carry them far in this world. I will challenge my students to grow as critical thinkers, individuals that are curious and seek to understand all forms of information, and as individuals that respect the views of those who are different from them.

-Shawn Baker