

Chase Estepp

Prof. Schilling

Diversity Workshop

23 November 2009

Celebrating Diversity Workshop

Going into the workshop I did not really know what to expect or think about the experience because diversity is usually a topic most people do not like to speak about. I know there are a lot of issues about stereotyping, prejudice, and mistreatment of groups that I have yet to learn about. A lot of people do not realize that every single person could fit into hundreds of groups and they may not even know they are in these groups. Through group interaction and activities I was able to see how the other side felt during the discrimination that people face on a daily basis. Diversity is something that occurs in schools, businesses, communities, and any setting where there are people of different characteristics.

As an aspiring teacher, I know there are many situations that will arise in the classroom and I will be faced with the daunting challenge of working out the problems. Whether the issue is gender, race, heritage, family role, religion, age, sexual orientation, nationality or economic class I have to take the right steps to make sure that diversity does not become a problem and my students cherish their identities. Through the different activities we participated in I was able to grasp a better understanding of all the different ways people are diverse and belong to many groups. The one activity had us name off a long list of groups people could be a part of. Then when the two presenters named off each group, people who fit into that group would stand and

we all clapped for them to acknowledge each group is special. This really made me feel good about myself because there are plenty of groups I am a part of that I see as a negative because how people view them. This allowed me to stand tall and recognize that even though everybody may not like that group, there are people out there that are in the group like me and I can be proud to say that is one of my groups.

We also talked about different recordings, opinions one has acquired over time, people have about groups. This was able to show the group that even though you may not realize it, you have been told these different feelings about certain groups and they stay with you when you get older. So when you are older and talking about a group you may make a comment and offend someone but you did not even realize it because you have had those thoughts in your mind all throughout your life. The presenters also explained how important it was to stop prejudicial comments and jokes. This was an important part for me because I know that I have been guilty of making jokes about people that should have never been made. This was a great opportunity for me to listen and learn new ideas on how to eliminate these jokes, especially since I will be in the classroom trying to manage these jokes someday.

Going to the Celebrating Diversity Workshop was a great experience for me because it allowed to me sit and listen to the two presents that had different characteristics and identities than I do. Hearing their experiences while growing up and dealing with the different comments and problems they had made me realize the impact people have on each other. In order for me to grow in my professional development I need to continue to learn about diversity in the classroom. That way I can eliminate these problems in my classroom and allow the students to concentrate on their school work and having fun instead of the negative comments surrounding them. The thing I feel is most important is to teach the students about diversity and how great it

can be. The more the students realize how important and special they each are then that will allow them to be more confident with their identities and groups they are a part of. I think it is vital that teachers show their students the importance of diversity by displaying different races, gender, heritage and nationality through their display boards and the materials they put up in their classrooms. By the students seeing that their teachers care about each and every one of them then they will see the importance in their selves.