

Kelly Plank  
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Professor Schilling  
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### Teaching Credo Revised

When I hear the question, what does it mean to be a teacher; many things come to my mind. I first think about my own teachers that I've had, and my own personal beliefs that I have gained through my own experiences. To me, a teacher is someone who imparts knowledge upon someone else. They are helping others understand a concept or idea and mastering it. Teachers are qualified people who know how to help all students learn. They have experience presenting material in a variety of ways, so that all people with different learning styles can understand it. They believe in all of their students, and they are passionate about their subject area. Teachers create lasting relationships that go beyond the classroom, and they can relate to all students.

I once felt that a teacher does not need a license to be considered as a "teacher". As long as that person was trying to help a student learn then it would be fine with me. New rumors going around about how that might be allowed and my education classes have made me re-think this naive idea. Teachers do need a license because there is more than just the content knowledge that a teacher needs to know. Teachers need to understand students have different learning styles, motivations to work, and there are different methodologies of how to teach material. Howard Gardner created his multiple intelligences theory off of learning styles. He showed that students learn best through a variety of ways. Students in my math classes are not always mathematically inclined, so I have to include visuals, vocabulary, and movement. Those are ideas that will never be taught in a math content class. If I wasn't looking for different motivators, I would have never known that I could have everyone finish an assignment in my pre-algebra class. I just had to create a math coloring sheet for the assignment. They still did

math, but they got to color too. When it is just an assignment out of the book only about half of the class will finish it. I was never taught in a math class to give homework like that. When they finish the work successfully I can physically see their growth.

I love to teach because I love seeing the progress that students make. When that light bulb comes on in their head because they now understand a concept is one of the biggest rewards I could ever ask for. Seeing students' intellectual growth outweighs the bad days by far. I am pleased and proud of my students who come down during my prep for homework help. It didn't matter that the class period before I was yelled at by a student. I was just elated that they were trying to better themselves. Their personal success is also my success. I take pride in their work and successes, and the students are seeing that and starting to take pride in it too.

I strongly believe that all students can learn. I learned that from my high school math teacher, who did inspire me to become a math teacher. He was one of the most helpful teachers I ever had. He was always positive and encouraging his students to at least try all problems. More students worked hard for him because of his attitude towards everyone. He believed that his students could learn, and it rubbed off on the students. I hope for that to happen in my classroom. I know that all students can learn, and I just want them to believe that they can too. I try to make tiny successes happen in the classroom, so that I can build on them. More students are willing to try, and more students are learning. One of the main reasons why this worked so well for my high school teacher is because he created a positive atmosphere and relationships with everyone.

The relationships created from teaching are quite strong. During school teachers are the ones with the students all day. Teachers are the ones that students are constantly looking towards. I love to be able to relate to students outside of class first. It sets the basis of a

relationship, and I can start to incorporate their interests into the lessons. Students tend to perk up some, and they start to pay attention more in class. A respect starts to build and a classroom community forms. A good positive class community creates a more productive classroom. In my 6<sup>th</sup> grade placement I was able to relate to some girls because I have read *Twilight*. Those girls started to speak up more in class to volunteer answers. I saw first hand how they became better students because they shared a common interest with me.

Teaching is one of the most satisfying careers ever. It takes more than just knowledge of the subject matter to be able to teach. Students need adaptations and material presented in a variety of ways. They all can learn, but not the same way. Teachers create lasting relationships with their students that stick with the students long after they are out of the classroom. That also makes a strong teacher because they care about their students.