Reflections of an Aspiring Teacher

My dream has always been to become a teacher, so when our Education 111 course was told we would have the opportunity to observe various classrooms throughout the semester I was pleased. Our job was to go visit these classrooms and simply observe the environment, teacher to student interactions and anything that was interesting to us. Observing the various classrooms gave me a good idea of how to create an atmosphere when I am a teacher, and taught me some great ways to interact with the children. By studying an assortment of classrooms I have become aware of some strengths and weaknesses I may encounter when teaching.

Arriving at my first destination, I remember being a bit nervous, but excited at the same time. The first thing I noticed when arriving at each of the classrooms was the environment. Posters were everywhere with witty riddles on them, or better yet, the poster in Mrs. Markstahler’s high school math room. The poster was large in size, and it listed all the jobs that you will need to know math for to be employed in that position. Even I asked the question as a high school student, “What am I going to use this math for?” My teachers never had an answer for that. I would have to say that my favorite classroom environment was in the younger aged classes. The rooms were full of color and walking in I remember feeling welcomed and ready to learn something interesting. I remember thinking other aspects must go into the classroom environment than just posters on the walls. Students in the younger grades, as in Mrs. Curless’s class, made the environment fun and exciting by bringing up personal ideas that they had for a math assignment. Mrs. Beery’s 6th grade class was a pleasant environment, but the children were not as enthusiastic about learning as the younger students seemed to be. I assume this comes with the age difference; children usually seem to take more interest in school when they are younger. Every classroom I visited had a reward system. I believe that added good behavior to
the classroom surroundings, but who wouldn’t want a game and no homework over the weekend if you showed fine behavior?!

For the most part I saw teachers that loved their jobs and freely interacted with the children on a different kind of level. Thinking back I recall artwork a student had created for her teacher explaining how wonderful she was; I remember feeling happy about that. I can see why the children felt this way because all of the teachers were entertaining people. Don’t get me wrong, I feel a teacher should be a guide and correct misbehavior when necessary, but these teachers included the students in the lesson plans with no sign of behavioral problems. For example, Mr. Daily’s special education students were asked to come up to the overhead and together they would work out the troubling math problem. Chyna, a little girl in Mr. Daily’s class was praised highly for the great work she did on her math assignment. Not only were the students recognized for exceptional work, they were also commended for doing their personal best. In all of the classes that I visited, except for Manchester Junior High, the students were respectful to the teachers. I believe the disrespect towards the teacher at the Junior High was noticeable because a substitute teacher was filling in that day. Overall, the teacher student interactions were how I imagine I will act towards my students.

This whole experience made me realize how important it is to get a great education in my anticipated field. Struggles I would expect to have if I was just thrown into a teaching position at this point would be difficult for me. I’m not sure if I would be able to handle classroom management and making sure all students were included in the lesson plans. That is why I am glad that I have three more years to learn and grow so I can be the best teacher I can. On the other hand, I did notice some strong points that I possessed while observing. The children seemed to enjoy my company and I was comfortable around them. I chatted easily about a
speech topic proposal with a boy in Mr. Walter’s classroom. Among the younger children I assisted them with virtually no thought at all! When I finish my schooling I feel that I will have an excellent way of communicating with children, and not only that, but a better grasp on how to handle classroom management.

My ambitions are now stronger than they were before. I feel that this experience, however short it was, has helped me to honestly know, “This is what I want to do for the rest of my working career.” My educational career has always been important to me, but after this experience I feel that it is even more valuable than I realized. I am eager to continue my college vocation now that I know teaching is truly what I want to do. In the future, I hope to improve some of the skills I struggled with while observing. I want to be able to feel as if I can manage a classroom full of rambunctious students. My goal is to become one of those teachers who gets pictures of a student and teacher holding hands that reads, “You are the best teacher in the world!” To go along with that goal I want to live up to student perceptions and be the best teacher I can be.

Teaching can be a thrilling and sometimes moving career. From this opportunity I have taken away many strategies for teaching such as how to create a classroom environment, teacher-student interactions and have become aware of the struggles I will have in the classroom. My encounter with the Manchester Community Schools has been a noteworthy experience making me realize how important it is to get a first-class education. My goal is to become a wonderful, respected, interesting teacher, and this experience has helped me to aspire to do just that.