Teaching Credo

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Introduction to Teaching 111

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Abstract

As I prepare myself to become an educator I examine my beliefs and philosophies about teaching and teachers as well as learning and learners. I have spent much time discovering how I feel about knowledge and the philosophies of psychological orientations I believe to be true about students and educational curriculum. I believe that teachers have the duty of preparing young minds to learn and grow into successful adults. As a teacher, my goal is to give my students the tools necessary make their own educated decisions that will help them succeed in life.
“If a child can’t learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn” (thinkexsist.com, 2006). The individual who said this was Ignacio Estrada. I believe this to be true one hundred percent when it comes to the art of teaching. Not all children learn the same way and it is up to the teacher to meet the needs of each student so that each one of them understands what is being taught. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica the definition of teaching is “the profession of those who give instruction…” (Teaching, 2007). I believe that teaching is more than just giving instruction. It is providing the tools to gain knowledge; that is teaching. Because teaching is not only instruction but also the passing on of knowledge I have found my calling to become a teacher.

I believe that teachers also prepare their students to learn and grow into successful adults. Horace Mann once said that "Teachers teach because they care. Teaching young people is what they do best. It requires long hours, patience, and care "(thinkexsist.com, 2006). Over the past nineteen years, I have observed through watching the many teachers I have had from elementary school through college, and I have found that teachers really do teach because they care, and they want their students to reach their full potential, academically as well to grow as a person. As a teacher I will be responsible for educating young minds; I will help them to learn and grow throughout the year.

When it comes to discussing learning and learners I believe that not only will I be helping my “learners” acquire some “learning” but I will also be learning from my students. I feel that I will learn more about myself and that I will benefit from each one of my students, and my goal is that my students will in turn feel that I have helped them learn more about themselves as well. Whether we are learning something completely
new altogether, or learning to improve something we have already gained knowledge about, as individuals we never stop learning. As an educator I also feel that learning should help a child to become an independent thinker, and that most of what children learn is actually learned from other children and interacting with others. I will integrate group work and learning centers into my classroom to allow my students to develop thinking independently as well as to learn to cooperate with others and work as a team. I believe that a student learns more through student-teacher interactions and I will use methods of teaching and classroom procedures that make best use of this communication. I strive to make my classroom a positive learning environment in order for my students to learn and achieve to their fullest potential.

A school building is not a day care or babysitter care; it is a place to gain knowledge. Parents are sending their children to school to become knowledgeable individuals so that one day the children will be able to take make educated decisions and take care of him/her self. The way to gain knowledge is through study and investigation. As a teacher I will give my students the tools that allow them to explore and study things that are of interest to them that align with state standards. If children can make critical connections across the curriculum and into their own personal experiences I feel it will help them retain the knowledge they receive.

In examining myself as an educator I have found that there are three teaching philosophies that I strongly identify with: Existentialism, Perennialism, and Progressivism. After examining what these philosophies stand for I have found a common ground in which they all meet. A student’s education and the curriculum from which they learn revolve around the individual as a whole. I feel that content of the
curriculum should come from students’ interests and that effective teaching takes into
account the whole child and his or her interest and needs in relation to cognitive and
affective areas. Learning is basically active rather than passive and that the ideal
curriculum provides students with individual freedom and permits them to ask their own
questions and draw their own conclusions. I believe that the curriculum depends on
whether or not it contributes to the individual’s quest for meaning and results in a level of
personal awareness. I also feel that students also should acquire knowledge about
unchanging principles and great ideas. The curriculum should also stress students’
intellectual growth in the arts and sciences. Students will become “culturally literate”
when they are introduced to the best and most significant works that humans have created
in the areas of the arts and sciences. In following with this philosophy I will most
definitely make sure that my students are being read or are reading classic literature for
elementary age children.

Of the philosophies and beliefs that teachers hold, the most important viewpoints
involve how the teacher perceives their students as learners; teachers must also realize
that they will never stop being learners themselves. The “psychological orientations” not
only affect one’s view of their students but as how to approach the teaching practice as
well. As for myself I believe substantially in the existentialist view; that is, students will
learn, grow, and define who they are through the choices that they make in their lives. As
an educator I plan on equipping my students with the tools that will allow them to make
their own decisions that will enable them to discover who they are and how they fit into
the world around them.
Bibliography


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