Comparing Montessori Schools and Reggio Emilio Schools

When I went to these two schools in Fort Wayne I had a fun time deciding on what was different from the other. It opened up my eyes to some of the different school and ways of teaching that were out there. I had no clue that there was that many ways that students could be taught and I didn’t think that there where these kind of schools so close to use. It was exciting to be able to go and observe and even get ideas of ways to teach. I enjoyed my time at these schools very much.

There are many differences between the Montessori schools and the Reggio Emilia schools. The main two differences that I am going to talk about are the differences between their curriculum and the role of the teacher in the classroom. The Montessori schools have their own systematic curriculum and materials, while Reggio does not. Instead the Reggio philosophy relies on the teacher to ask questions of the child and then develop activities and lessons based on the child's interests and needs.

The teacher in a Montessori school or directress as she is often called, gives individual and group lessons, providing guidance where needed. The teacher I observed spent much of her time observing each child, preparing the environment according to their needs and protecting their self-development. The teacher’s method I observed was indirect in that it neither imposes upon the child as in direct teaching, nor abandons the child as in non-
directive, permissive approaches. The teacher is always aware of the child’s goals and she assist and helps him to reach the goals that he has set for himself.

The curriculum in the Montessori school is based on what the children’s goals are. The children need to be able to develop themselves physically, intellectually, and spiritually. They believe the best way to do this is freedom for the students. It is not a crazy freedom but a freedom achieved through order and self-discipline. The primary goal of a Montessori program is to help each child reach the fullest potential in all areas of life and to create a loving and joyful place in which the child can learn, grow, and become independent.

The teacher in a Reggio Emilia school offers their self to the process of co-construction of knowledge, they releases the traditional roles of a teacher and opens doors to new possibilities. She starts with the use of the child’s own theories, and helps child to think about learning in new ways. The teacher lets students ask their own questions and to generate their own hypotheses then test them. Lets children communicate their own ideas with other children, and also are a keen observer, documenter, and partner in the learning process.

The curriculum in a Reggio Emilia school is the emergent approach. The educators make up general goals and predict children's responses to activities and projects so that they can prepare the environment for children to be able to succeed and achieve their goals. After this the children take over and the curriculum emerges between the teacher’s goals and the child’s goals. In the Reggio Emilia curriculum there are a lot of projects these projects may come from ideas from students or from the teacher. Projects are actually intensive
constructions of knowledge—studies conducted by children guided by adults or with adult resources. Projects can vary in length from a few days to several months.

When I went to these schools to observe them I was trying to decide which school fit my teaching style and credo the most. I decide that the one school that fit me most was the Reggio Emilia School called Whitney Young Early Childhood Center. The reason that I believe this is because I like to have my class room as a child centered class room. I want the children to have their own theories of learning, and to help them to develop new ways of learning. I want children to be able to ask their own questions that are on their minds and to be able to give their input on other student’s questions or the input could help the students with their material.

In my credo I generally fit with the curriculum of the Reggio Emilia School as well. I want to be able to set the generals goals that I want my kids to meet and predict children's responses to activities and projects so that they can prepare the environment for children to be able to succeed and achieve their goals, but I also like how when the child takes over and can kind of adjust the curriculum how they want to learn so therefore it can better interest them. I like doing a lot of projects that the Reggio Emilia believes in and I like how they go on a lot of field trips to experience what is out there. That is why I believe that if I had to pick from one of these schools to teach at it would be Bunche Elementary School.