Initial Dispositions Reflection

When you begin teaching, you ask yourself many questions. You want to know everything that there is to know about teaching. You want to know what it means to be a teacher. You ask yourself what your greatest satisfaction in teaching will be. You will need to know the ideal relationship between students and teacher. You will also want to know what kind of students you can teach and what techniques or methods work effectively. As a teacher, you must also consider the strategies from the “Strategies for Schools for the 21st Century.” I will ask myself which ones will be important. These are questions that I must ask and answer by myself as I begin to elementary education.

The first question that I must answer is: “What it means to be a teacher?” To me, a teacher is someone who allows a child’s mind to expand and grow. They show guidance by teaching essential life lessons even beyond the math, history and science. They teach values and morals. When I become a teacher at the end of my four years at Manchester College, I will be able to teach valuable lessons to my students including not only math and science, but life lessons as well. To be a good teacher takes more than training however, it takes personal drive, motivation, and determination. I feel that a teacher should be a role model and a leader. A teacher should be a person that you can trust. There are always the teachers that you remember because they changed your life, and I want to be one of those teachers someday. What it means to be a teacher are all of these things and more.

When I begin to teach my elementary students, I will need to refer to the K-12 Academic Standards for Students. The state of Indiana has established education standards to make clear to
teachers, students, and parents what knowledge, understanding, and skills students should acquire through their experience in an elementary program. I will use these standards to help create lesson plans and activities for my students which will prepare them for further. By referring to the academic standards, I can teach my students the required materials in the subject areas which are important while incorporating other lessons as well. As I begin teaching, these guidelines will allow me to become a good teacher, role model, and leader.

The second question that you may ask yourself is: “What is my greatest satisfaction in teaching?” My greatest satisfaction will be when I feel that my class has learned more than their age group. I want my classes to test high on standardize tests that they must take. I want their scores to exceed that of their age group. My satisfaction will come in the form of accomplishment. Even though I may not reach complete satisfaction, I will try my best to educate the students and continue to strive for that one hundred percent satisfaction. “The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students” (INTASC 14). This is a good statement, concept, and idea that teachers should follow. I don’t want to be a teacher that is remembered for failing in teaching my students. I want to accomplish many important things in my experience of being a teacher, and my accomplishments in teaching will be my greatest satisfaction.

I will need to have a good knowledge base of children and subject materials so that I can teach my students the basics and foundations for their future. If I teach my students all of the standards, they will be able to excel in their education. By making the lessons and material appealing to the elementary child, they will gain a better understanding and be more engaged in
If they learn as much as they possibly can and have a full understanding of the materials, I will feel a sense of accomplishment. By giving my students the opportunity to excel, I will have gained satisfaction with my teaching. If I reach this sense of accomplishment, I will strive for perfection.

The next question that a future teacher might ask would be: “What is the ideal relationship between teachers and students?” This is one of the hardest questions to answer when you are a teacher. You must be careful and avoid getting too close with a student. You want the student to trust you and feel like they can talk to you. The teacher should be friendly and polite towards the students. There must be an understanding level of respect between the students and their teacher, and there are boundaries that the teacher must follow. The teacher must not infringe on the rights of students and should remain on a professional level with the student. The communication between the student and teacher should be professional and not inappropriate. The teacher should not try to force beliefs on a student. The teacher must know where the boundaries of communication are in their relationship with their students.

The fourth question that you may ask might be: “What type of students do you feel that you can teach most effectively?” I feel that I can teach the lower elementary levels, that are around the ages of five and six most effectively. They are young, willing to learn, and to also try new things. I believe that I can easily teach the basics. Once they know the basics, I can help to improve on what they have already learned. I believe that this age group will be the group that I connect with more. These younger students will have better personalities and better attitudes. I will be able to teach the students who grasp onto the lessons quickly. I will learn to adjust with each year to the students learning levels. “The teacher understands how children learn and
develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and personal development” (INTASC 16). “The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom”(INTASC 25). These two quotes are examples of how a teacher should change and communicate to a level in which their students can understand. I hope to do this when I begin teaching my class so that I will be an effective teacher.

The last question that you may ask is: “What techniques and teaching methods can I use that will work efficiently?” I will try to make learning fun. I will create games with the sole purpose of teaching the lessons. I will create awards after a certain amount of work is done correctly. For my awards, they will be little things that the students will work towards because they want them. An example of these awards would be: after getting three A’s on their tests, the students gets one free homework pass. This give the child an incentive to work hard in their studies. I will try to encourage all of the students. I will try to get all of the students involved and help them to understand every lesson that I teach. This way, none of the students get left behind or excluded from lessons. I will attempt to work individually with each student so that they understand a complex lesson that takes some more explanation. If these methods do not work effectively, I will adjust to create a better learning environment. “The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners” (INTASC 18). This statement helps me to understand that I may have to change lesson plans to adjust to my students’ needs.

There are many different teaching methods that I can use with any aspect of education. There are many different resources that I can refer to in order to demonstrate the lessons. I can
use posters, technology, everyday objects, and nature. As I teach the students, I will try to explain the lessons with simple explanations that a child might understand. The students will be able to try different methods that I teach until they understand how to solve the problem and grasp the concepts.

When I begin my teaching career, I will review the strategies that a teacher must use. I must answer the question: “How will I as a teacher address the strategies issue in my classroom?” As I review the list, the first two that caught my attention were “challenge each student to their fullest potential” and “making connections with the students” (Strategies for Schools for the 21st Century). These two strategies will be very important to the development of my classroom.

I agree with the first strategy completely. As I begin teaching, I want my students to excel. I will have to use their test scores and other resources in order to assess the student’s level. After I have determined the proper level, I will have to work to adapt the lesson plans. I will do preparation in order to create lessons that reach all levels. For example, I might create three different spelling lists. The lowest level will work on the easiest vocabulary, while the advanced students will work on the most challenging. This way, each student will be challenged. It will allow their minds to expand, and it will challenge them. That is what I will do to work on the first strategy “challenging students to their fullest potential” (Strategies for Schools for the 21st Century).

The second strategy that I noticed was that of “making connections with the students.” I will have to make connections with all of my students. Once I am able to connect with my students, I will be able to help them. I will be able to help them with their weaknesses and their strengths. They will feel as though they can trust me so they can contact me with a problem. If I
am able to learn about the child, I can make necessary adaptations in my classroom. If I am connected with me students, I will be able to notice when one of my students is struggling by their body language. Then, I will be able to explain something that I had not already. I feel that making connection is very important when teaching young students.

Now that I have answered these common questions, I hope that you have a better understanding of what kind of teacher that I will be. I will try to be effective and motivated. I will adapt lesson plans to allow my students to understand the lessons fully. I want to be the best teacher that I can be so I will try and learn as much as I can while I’m in school and when I begin teaching. Since I will be teaching the youngest level of elementary, I will be able to give my students the learning foundation that they will need to excel for the rest of their life. I will try to use the strategies in my classroom to make it a good learning environment. I believe that I have a better understanding of what I will be doing now that I have answered these important first year questions.