

Education Philosophy – Nikolette McAndrew

As many say, teaching is not just a profession that one decides to go into, it is much more. Teaching is a calling that demands patience, love, kindness, and responsibility. I believe the purpose of education is to empower and prepare our students to be successful individuals within the world. While academics are vital, education should not just provide our students with academic skills. We as teachers have to teach life skills and social emotional skills as well. We have to empower our students with tools and teach them how to control their bodies along with emotions in all situations. The purpose of a teacher is to create a safe and inclusive environment for all students. My goal is to foster an environment that is a home for my students. I want my students to feel comfortable to explore their feelings in a safe and productive manner. I believe when students feel safe and comfortable they will be best set up to reach their fullest potential within their education.

During my clinical experiences my instructional methodologies have continued to grow. Through student teaching I have been able to see the importance of data driven instruction. My mentor teacher has been teaching me how to use data from standardized testing to form students small groups for reading and math. I will continue this strategy within my own classroom to help sort my small groups and help my students reach their fullest potential! I also believe in student led learning as it allows our students to get creative and problem solve within their educational experiences. Allowing students to take a role in their own learning gives them the opportunity to be independent and take ownership of their own success within the classroom.

My classroom management will be centered around various strategies. First, I believe that relationships and respect between the students and teachers is vital for classroom management. The most important thing to me within my classroom is my relationships with my students. Relationships will help foster a mutual respect between students and the teacher. Maintaining relationships and respect will assist me to set clear expectations for students while also allowing me to hold them accountable. I will always implement positive reinforcement to assist with my behavior management as it is a way to praise students while also showing what my expectation is. My students will also be taught and experience natural consequences to manage behavior. This helps students begin to connect their behavior with the outcome within school. Finally, my students will own and fix their mistakes. Mistakes are okay and normal, but we have to learn

from them and make right where we did wrong. I will always ensure that my students have a safe environment to own and fix their mistakes.

I believe that using multiple forms of assessment is the best way to get a full picture of your students. Assessment throughout instruction is one of the most valuable ways to assess students. A formative assessment, like fist to five or thumbs up/down, is a very easy way to quickly check students' understanding. Along with formative assessments, worksheets completed by all students can be used as an assessment to check for any misunderstandings and strengths across all students. I have found this to be a great way to check students' understanding without them feeling overwhelmed by a test or exam. In addition, standardized testing is always a great evaluation tool to be able to visualize student growth and also pinpoint their weaknesses.

Teaching requires many pieces to complete the puzzle, however it is possible. With the drive of passion and love for my students, I will give my all every single day. I will better myself for them and because of them. Overall, what I hope for as a teacher is that I can impact my students to the extent that they impact me.