

## Philosophy of Education

A man named Herbert Spencer once said that “the great aim of education is not knowledge but action” and my teaching philosophy is based greatly on the idea that education is more than an increase in knowledge. Education changes the way students view the world around them and has the potential to influence the way they choose to live the rest of their lives. Teachers that positively influence their students lead to the creation of strong, brave students who go on to change the world. Education impacts the lives of children and determines whether the next generation carries on current trends and information, or whether they are able to make changes.

As students bring these unique gifts to the classroom, the teaching strategies and methods that are used within the school must be adaptable. Students will have various learning styles, as well as accommodations, and students deserve the chance to be provided with equal learning opportunities no matter their race, disability, ethnicity, or gender. Students also deserve to be assessed in many different environments using a variety of assessments because students will perform better on different days and depending on the skill being assessed. Every student deserves an equal opportunity to succeed in learning and obtain an education. For example, *emergent bilingual* students often face challenges in the classroom when their teachers place the blame for the students’ academic disparity on the students. This disparity allows the oppression of marginalized students to continue. In the academic world, scholars refer to the concept in which the victims are blamed for the deficiencies of the education system as the *Deficit Ideology*.

Students construct their knowledge and understanding of the world around them rather than just passively absorbing information. With the understanding that students construct their knowledge, known as *constructivism*, teachers must create an environment that stimulates inquiry and supports learning. I believe that along with constructivism is that “a translanguaging literacies approach... foster[s] not only students’ metalinguistic awareness of named languages but also a critical awareness of how translanguaging holds a meaning-making potential for them, even when schools do not acknowledge it.” (Garcia et al. 2019, p. 565). A combination of constructivism and the translanguaging pedagogy will provide a supportive environment for all students.

All of my students will feel represented within my classroom. I will provide diverse literature in which all students are represented (racially, socially, their gender, culture, etc.). I will openly communicate with each student's family/guardians to ensure that they have any suggestions or feedback on how to work best with their student and how I can make the classroom more inclusive for them. For example, this could look like having all reminders on the walls in both English and Spanish, if I have an

ELL student. I also hope to have an open-door policy with my students, meaning that no matter what or when the student can come to talk to me about personal or academic affairs.

Respect is central to my classroom in order to create a safe environment for each student. This goes two ways; teacher-to-student respect and student-to-student respect. Together, the students and I will make a class contract at the beginning of the year. Students will have input into what they want our classroom to look like, and this will be posted throughout the classroom so that students can be reminded throughout the year how respect looks in our classroom.

I want to ensure that students feel physically and psychologically safe in the classroom. I would do this by providing a space for students who need a few moments to settle and making accommodations for students who might have a wheelchair, for example.. This could be a quiet book nook, safe room, etc. This also means providing some softness to the environment whether that be through softer furniture in the safe and quiet spaces of the classroom, or softer lighting so that students are not overstimulated by the environment. When there is conflict, I want to respond using the Love and Logic pedagogy. I hope to respond by always starting with empathy, not making assumptions, asking students to explain the situation, asking students what should happen next, always providing choices, describing to students what is going to happen, focusing on only what I can control, letting consequences do the teaching, using empathetic responses, and by never rubbing unwanted behavior or consequences in the student's face.

There are consistent and effective ways to assess all students to the same expectation. The key to an effective assessment is to implement numerous types of assessments into instruction, and consistency in implementing the assessments. I hope to use formative assessments *for* and *as* learning, or informal assessments throughout instruction, daily in order to gauge the understanding that each student has after a content area. I want to use formative assessments that will easily provide me with direct feedback about both my students' understanding of the content, as well as direct feedback on my instruction. I also want to incorporate summative, final evaluation after a unit, into my instruction. Educators refer to this concept as an *assessment of learning*. All of the assessments need to be *authentic assessments*. Authentic assessments are meaningful and applicable assignments or activities that teachers use to check student understanding.

One thing I stand by is that every student comes to the classroom with unique gifts to share and no student is exactly like another. Students not only grow academically in school, but crucial aspects of their social and mental development occur while they are in school, and teachers can greatly impact the outcome of a student's development.