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Cleveland Public Schools Reflection (Fifth Grade)

Jeremiah 29:11 states, “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” This field experience in Mrs. Wolf’s fifth grade classroom at the Cleveland Public School gave me the opportunity to realize what I want my future to look like as a teacher. Throughout my past experiences in the classroom, I have always been in K-2nd grade classrooms. When I found out that I was placed in a 5th grade classroom, I was a bit shocked and nervous. By this age, the students are aware of the expectations, however, the behaviors are more extreme. However, I knew that I could do it while remaining confident with a positive, optimistic attitude.

I have come to a conclusion that I would like to teach the older grades in the elementary school. I realized that I do not want to be teaching the alphabet each day. Instead, I would rather teach the students things that they strive to learn about such as persuasion, main ideas of a text, punctuation, etc. After the first day, I knew that this placement was for a reason. I was happy and excited to continue my journey with these fifth graders. Not only will I be teaching them, I will learn and grow from them, as well. I did know that there would be challenges that I would have to overcome and learn from within this experience, too.

Overall, I believe the teaching and lesson plans went very well. I am confident that I have the skill set to be successful in the subject of reading. I have a passion for teaching students new concepts and watching them succeed. The “lightbulb” moment is something that I fall asleep at

night remembering and thanking God for. However, I am developing in the sense of behavioral issues. There were many times throughout my lessons that I observed a student or two not paying attention. After reminding them countless times, what else can one do besides remove them from the learning environment. I felt as if I sometimes just “gave up” on the behavioral aspect of the classroom. One can only do so much.

There are some things; however, that many teachers hope they never have to deal with. Lucky enough (maybe not lucky), I was able to experience an “awkward” situation. You never know what to expect with fifth graders. Where are they at in their developmental stage? How much do they know about their changes in their bodies? During the third week of the clinical, on a Monday morning, something happened that I would have never imagined to happen. As I was teaching in the second period, I observed a girl (who is usually always paying attention and actively engaged) “zoning out” and not paying attention. As I looked closer, her face was bright red and she was sweating excessively. As I noticed she was not paying attention, I called on her randomly to answer a question. She then threw her hands in the air and responded, “I don't know!” in a strong, firm voice. At the time, I didn't think anything of it and continued my lesson. As the lesson wrapped up and we moved stations, Mrs. Wolf pulled me aside and said, “Morgan, did you see what “that student” was doing?” I replied, “No. What was she doing?” Mrs. Wolf exclaimed, “She was giving herself an orgasm and pleasuring herself!” Just then, I put it all together. It all made sense now. But what do we do about this? Mrs. Wolf was unsure what to do at the time so we let it go and continued throughout the reading period. Later on that day, Mrs. Wolf talked with the school counselor about the issue. The school counselor ensured Mrs. Wolf that this would be discussed as well as the need of wearing a bra. Moral of this story is that there

are some things that are unexpected and things that need to be dealt with “on the fly.” What would a male teacher think and do if this happened in his classroom?

All in all, I am happy with the experience that I had. I hope that someday I have the opportunity to return to Cleveland Public Schools as I felt the sense of family within the staff members, teachers, and students. I believe there is a strong sense of community and passion for learning within the school which is something that I have.