

Philosophy of Education

According to author, William Butler Yeats, “education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” This metaphor could not be more fitting. Education is not about filling up a child with another person’s ideas, but rather giving each student what he or she needs to be motivated, passionate, and productive beyond the classroom. Interaction with teachers and time spent in school are the most obvious and central aspects of education, but I believe that schooling should be the catalyst to lifelong learning, a means rather than an end. As I go into teaching, I will embrace the opportunity to prepare students for “real” life by providing them with the education based in developing twenty-first century skills and adaptability, while fostering curiosity, creativity and critical thinking.

Up until age 18, children’s lives are oriented around school. Despite its taking such a significant portion of people’s time and attention, schooling is not the pinnacle of life, but rather holistic preparation for a productive and successful future. I believe that the goal of education is to help students to understand how to think, not what to think. The goal is that when individuals are no longer being supervised by a teacher or parent, they will be able to make decisions logically and ethically, while demonstrating unfailing integrity with the intention of having a positive impact on society. This belief will characterize my teaching in that I will focus on application, rather than theory and originality over repetition.

In my classroom, I plan to utilize literature and classic writings as a primary means of teaching my students. Literature is one of the longest lasting teachers and also one of the most practical, in that it teaches the conventions of language while commenting on the meaning of life. My end goal for each class will not only be having a class of students who

could pass a test on assigned readings and comprehension, but also having a class of motivated individuals who will apply the themes and lessons learned within the covers of a book to life outside the walls of the classroom. I will teach using a variety of methods and with multiple styles of learning in mind. My classroom will be very discussion based, fostering self-confidence in the students and encouraging a cooperative process between the students and myself as their teacher. I believe that it is important to accurately assess and report students' academic ability levels, but also to encourage professionalism, dependability and resilience and foster strong moral character, work ethic and curiosity.

Just as I hope to foster a love of lifelong learning in my students, as a teacher I plan to take advantage of every opportunity to continue learning about my field and gain a deeper understanding of the world around me, so that my teaching will better help every student to be successful and lead a fulfilling life.