

Teaching Philosophy

I never liked school or never thought I would become a teacher. After graduating high school, I worked in the real estate industry for six years and thought that was the career I belonged in. I became frustrated with the real estate industry and found myself dreading going to work. Since I had a lot of information about business and the skills needed to work in the business field, I thought it might be beneficial if I passed my knowledge on to the next generation. This led me back to the classroom, as a student, where I began my journey to becoming a business educator. However, in January of 2024, I took a long-term substitute teaching position in a special education classroom. I quickly discovered that the special education curriculum was what I was meant to teach. I'm now pursuing a degree in special education to become a fully licensed special education teacher. I am excited to become an educator because I believe education is essential for the improvement of society. The classroom is where students gain the background knowledge and skills they need to be independent thinkers, so they are ready to handle the challenges of the future.

As a general special education teacher, I will need to be knowledgeable about a wide variety of topics. One of the most important things I will need to know about is different learning disabilities, and the different methods to help students with learning disabilities. I will need to know how to write individualized education plans and read individualized education plans, and 504 plans. Taking each student's accommodations into consideration as well as their learning goals is something I will need to become familiar with. I will need to monitor and make sure that students are making progress toward their goals written in their individualized education plans. Students with learning disabilities are not able to access the curriculum in the same way a

traditional student might. As a special education teacher, I will need to have an in-depth understanding of the core subjects. With an in-depth understanding of core subjects, I will be able to provide my students with the resources and support they need to be able to better understand what is going on in their general classrooms. Having knowledge of all contents will also allow me to help the general education teacher differentiate the material so it is more accessible to my students with learning disabilities.

As a special education teacher, one of my roles will be making sure my students have a plan for after high school. This is where education becomes important. One of my duties will be ensuring that my students leave high school with the tools and skills they need to be successful in their future careers. If I'm successful in educating my students then they should leave high school and become productive members of society. My other hope is that I can educate my students to be respectful, responsible, accepting of all cultures, receptive to knowledge, and good people in general. As an educator, I want to be someone that these students can look up to and know they can trust. I can provide them with an example of how an adult should treat children as well as how they should act around adults in society. This is important to me because I know that some of my students will not have good relationships with adults in their homes.

As a teacher, it's my responsibility to show up to class every day prepared. Preparation for a teacher includes writing a well-thought-out lesson plan. My lesson plan should include the objective for the lesson, and list out the learning activities that we will do in class to ensure that all students master the objective. As a teacher, I will also be responsible for reflecting on my lessons. I need to take time after I teach to look back and consider what went well during the lesson as well as what could have been improved about the lesson. One of the ways I will monitor student's progress toward mastering learning objectives is through formal and informal

assessments. Finally, as a teacher, it is important that I stay up to date on the current research about learning and education. I will want to use research-based strategies when determining what I should do in the classroom.

As an educator, I will focus on visual or auditory learning as special education students will benefit and understand the material better. These students have a harder time taking notes and retaining the information through them. I will try and provide visuals along the way and do read-aloud so they can hear what I am asking of them. I want to be sure and make sure that my classroom is welcoming to all students with a learning disability. As their teacher, I want to help students understand the material in simpler terms that their general teacher may need more time to explain or demonstrate. I will need to look at their classwork and modify it according to their Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504. Students will and can also benefit from having one-on-one opportunities and letting them be able to express themselves in my classroom.

In my short time of substitute teaching, I have had a few students ask me if I will be returning next year because they believe they understand better when I am there and they know that I won't give up on them. They feel they have a connection with me and that I understand them better than other adults in the school. I am excited to be a licensed educator and get a full-time position at a school so that I can continue making an impact on the lives of my students. As an educator, I need to understand that I am also a life-long learner. I will need to continually update my knowledge of the curriculum as it changes. I will need to continually learn about the needs of society and how I can ensure my students are prepared for those needs. I will need to continually educate myself on the duties and responsibilities of an educator. I will need to continually research the different ways students learn and develop lessons that best suit my student's learning styles. Although I will be the one labeled an educator, I will need to have the

mindset of a student because in order to be the best educator, I will need to be continually learning.