

My Education Philosophy: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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EDUC 620

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October 7th, 2024

Inclusive Education

As educators, we have an essential role in shaping students' minds. It is our job to mold their minds for the next generation. While reflecting on my time at Eastern University, I have found that every student deserves the opportunity to have a good quality education. No matter the student's ability, race, or socio-economic background, ensuring they all receive the same education as every other student is essential. In this paper, I will provide examples as to why my educational philosophy is to have an inclusive classroom environment.

Learning

According to Florida International University (FIU), learning involves changes in knowledge, beliefs, or attitudes (Florida International University, 2024). This statement made me realize that every student has a different learning style, and it is not fair if we only incorporate one specific teaching style for every student. If we provided the same old-school way and only focused on teacher-centered learning, there would be students who would not understand the lesson because they need to be hands-on, involve movement, visuals, etc. Teachers must incorporate various learning styles that best suit their students' educational needs.

It is important for me to ensure that every student becomes a lifelong learner. Students who may be ELL or IEP kids could feel discouraged from learning because they may need additional support. I want my students to feel comfortable asking questions, be curious, and adapt to thinking of learning as fun.

Addressing Diverse Needs and the Obstacles That Come With It

Districts must provide teachers with research-based professional development training to help them improve themselves. However, schools that need more funding could make this more difficult. When schools lack funding, they tend to have poor teacher training, which could cause an education gap (Bradley, 2024). Students from a lower-income inner-city background do not get the same resources needed as kids from middle- to upper-class suburban schools. Not only does poverty cause a child to receive a poor education, but it also impacts their development (Bradley, 2024). In this situation, not only does the school not provide the proper resources, but the families may also need more resources, such as the Internet. In all, families who live in poverty have to deal with the stress and burden of financial costs, and so do the schools in that area. If teachers work together, they could gather some necessary resources to help improve family life at home. The staff could also work together to create a safe, welcoming student environment.

As teachers, we need to allow every student to embrace their culture and not just focus on one culture that would be considered the "norm" for us. As a teacher, it is essential to make sure that I incorporate every student's culture and not just reflect on mine. If educators do not celebrate every student's culture and heritage, it could lead them to think they are not being respected. Something as simple as a language barrier could be an obstacle while I try to meet every student's diverse needs. I think it is imperative to make students feel comfortable enough to share their cultural experiences and educate me and their peers about activities they do in their culture.

When I reflected on parent involvement, I realized that it could be problematic for parents to attend meetings and events for their children. I noticed how the English Language Learners I have in my classroom's family do not attend meetings, buy school supplies, or connect

to our communication system of Class Dojo. We learned that Class Dojo prints messages in different languages, and that was how the parents knew how to connect. When it comes to school supplies, everything is online. I learned that not every family has access to the Internet, so printing a copy of the school supply list was how the families could communicate. If a struggling student needs additional support, I must contact the parents to discuss the next steps. An issue that could arise is that parents need to work more than one job, so finding the time to meet could be difficult. Teachers should be flexible at certain times to ensure every family is involved in their child's education, even if it is just creating phone or Zoom meetings. Something as simple as calling home with positive and negative events can keep families updated and aware of their child's education (Powerschool.com, 2024).

When it comes to students with emotional, behavioral, and learning challenges, they must get the same quality of education as everyone else. No matter what I teach, those students are still entitled to the same education as their peers. We often see defiance in these types of students. It could be because they feel embarrassed about not knowing the answer, are bored with the topic, or have many home issues that cause them to shut down. It could be challenging to randomly call on these students to read or answer a question because they will not answer it. To keep them comfortable, I must incorporate small groups to assess the students in more of an intimate one-on-one setting where they feel comfortable asking questions. The students showing boredom, which can cause behavioral issues, should do things that interest them. Having the class be more student-centered can be highly beneficial for providing an inclusive educational learning environment in my classroom.

Integrating Spiritual, Personal, and Ethical Values into My Teaching Philosophy

Being an IEP student, I always felt uncomfortable in the more extensive general education classroom. I always found that being in a small class with two teachers and only a handful of kids helped me be successful in school. Today, times have changed, and special education teachers typically pull into the general education classroom to support everyone. This could be super challenging for students because there is a wide variety of learners in one classroom. Eastern University's Christian perspective influences my understanding of social justice because I will always advocate for the students, no matter the barriers I face. I must provide the proper resources and support for all students, especially those needing additional support. For student potential, every student has the ability to grow and be capable of succeeding, no matter their family history. Allowing every student to think, share, and be active learners in the classroom is essential. Lastly, this leads to equity. Every student has the opportunity to flourish academically, socially, and emotionally.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my philosophy of education is rooted in the belief that an inclusive classroom is vital for fostering a learning environment where every student, regardless of their background or abilities, can thrive. By embracing diverse learning styles, addressing the unique needs of each student, and incorporating both spiritual and ethical values, I am committed to advocating for equity in education. Every student deserves a fair chance to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. I aim to create a safe, respectful, and engaging space where all students feel valued and empowered to succeed.

References

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