

**Philosophy of Education: Teaching with Care and Purpose**

**April Leak**

**Rochester Christian College**

**ECS 4943: Ethics for Early Childhood**

**Nancy Keller-MacKinnon**

**4/10/2026**

I will share my personal philosophy of education and what guides me as a teacher and caregiver. My beliefs come from my experiences as a single mother of four, a teacher, and a student, which have taught me the importance of patience, understanding, and creating a safe, supportive environment where children feel valued. I will explain my beliefs and values, my goals for the future, and how my past experiences have shaped the way I teach. I will also describe how I follow the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct in my daily work and maintain strong moral standards while caring for children. Lastly, I will share how my faith influences the way I teach and interact with others, and how I hope to help children grow, learn, and feel respected and cared for.

### **Summary of Personal Philosophy**

My thoughts on teaching come from wanting children to feel safe, cared for, and excited to learn. In a preschool classroom, learning should feel natural and joyful. Children learn best when they are playing, exploring, and using their hands. I would plan activities that let them move, build, create, and talk with each other. I see my role as someone who guides and supports, not someone who just gives directions.

Classroom management, to me, is about building trust and keeping things calm and consistent. Young children are still learning how to handle their feelings, so they need patience and understanding. I want to model kindness, speak gently, and help children learn how to make good choices. I want my classroom to feel like a place where they belong and know they are cared for.

I see standards as something that helps guide what we teach, but I do not think they should take away from how children naturally learn. Every child grows at their own pace, so I would adjust

lessons to fit their needs. Assessment can happen in simple ways, like watching children play, listening to what they say, and noticing how they grow over time. These everyday moments show what they are learning. Meeting the needs of all students is very important to me. Every child should feel included, capable, and proud of themselves. Clark (2023) explains that teachers should use different approaches based on what students need, and I believe that is so important in early childhood. What matters most to me is that children feel loved, confident, and happy when they come to school.

### **Style of Teaching I Will Practice in the Classroom**

The style of teaching I will practice is caring, patient, and centered around the child. I want to build strong relationships, so children feel safe and comfortable. My classroom will include play, music, stories, and hands-on activities that keep children interested and involved. I will give children time to explore and follow their interests while still guiding them in their learning.

I also want my classroom to feel calm and positive. I will encourage children often and help them feel proud of what they can do. I will support them as they learn to share, take turns, and solve problems. My goal is for each child to feel important and excited to come to school each day.

### **My Reasons for Wanting to be an Educator**

One reason I want to be a teacher comes from my own life as a parent. There was a time when one of my children was struggling and started to feel like they were not good enough. Watching that was very hard. With time, support, and encouragement, I saw them begin to believe in

themselves again. That moment meant a lot to me and showed me how much children need someone who believes in them.

As a single mother of four, I know how important it is for children to feel supported both at home and at school. I want to be a teacher who helps children feel safe, loved, and capable. I want to encourage them, listen to them, and celebrate their growth. Teaching is not just a job to me. It is something I care deeply about, and I want to make a difference in the lives of children and their families.

### **Belief Statement Reflections**

#### **I believe that the goal of education is...**

I believe that the goal of education is to help children grow, not just in what they know, but in who they are. It should help them build confidence, learn how to solve problems, and feel proud of their efforts. Education should also encourage curiosity and a love for learning that lasts a lifetime.

#### **I believe the role of the teacher is...**

I believe the role of the teacher is to guide and care for children as they learn and grow. A teacher should create a safe and welcoming environment where children feel respected and supported. They should also encourage each child's strengths and help them overcome challenges.

#### **I believe that students should...**

I believe that students should feel free to ask questions and explore their interests. They should

be encouraged to try new things and understand that making mistakes is part of learning.

Students should feel comfortable being themselves and learning at their own pace.

**I believe that knowledge is...**

I believe that knowledge grows over time through everyday experiences. Children learn best by playing, exploring, and interacting with the world around them. Knowledge is built step by step

as children connect new ideas to what they already know.

## **Short- and Long-Range Educational Goals**

My short-term goal as an educator is to continue improving as a teacher while balancing my life as a single mother of four and a student. I want to create a classroom where every child feels safe, respected, and encouraged to learn. I also want to strengthen my skills in lesson planning, classroom management, and communication with families so I can support each child in the best way possible.

My long-term goal is to become a social worker while continuing to work with children and families. I want to be able to help families who are struggling, advocate for children in need, and provide support to parents who want to give their children the best opportunities. I hope to combine my experience as a mother, teacher, and student to make a positive difference in the lives of children and families.

## **Past Experiences**

My past experiences have shaped the way I teach and care for children. Being a single mother of four has taught me patience, understanding, and how to manage multiple responsibilities at once. Raising my children has also shown me the importance of listening, showing compassion, and providing consistent guidance. These lessons carry over into my classroom, where I try to meet each child's individual needs and help them feel supported.

Working as a teacher has given me hands-on experience in helping children grow academically, socially, and emotionally. I have learned how to create lessons that engage children, encourage curiosity, and celebrate each child's unique abilities. I have also gained experience in working with families to ensure that children receive consistent care both at home and at school.

## **Applying the NAEYC Code**

The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct guides how I treat children, families, and coworkers in my classroom. It reminds me that teaching is not just about academics, but also about showing respect, fairness, and care every day. I try to be patient with children, listen to them, and make sure they feel safe and valued. I also communicate with families, so they know their child is supported, and I work with coworkers to give the best care possible. For me, following the code is about building trust and showing that every child and family truly matters. It also reminds me that I have a responsibility to act in ways that support children's well-being and development at all times (NAEYC, 2020).

## **Analysis of Biblical Role in Secular and/or Christian Educational Institutions**

My faith is a big part of how I teach and care for children. I believe each child is special and deserves to feel loved, respected, and encouraged. I try to show kindness, patience, and fairness every day, so my students feel safe and important. Even in a regular classroom, I can still live this out by how I treat the children and their families and by creating a positive environment. In a Christian setting, my faith also guides me to teach good character along with academics, like being honest, kind, and respectful. To me, living out my faith in teaching means showing love through my actions, helping families when they need it, and remembering that what I do can make a difference in a child's life.

## **Closing Thoughts**

Teaching is more than just a career for me; it is something I feel called to do and a way I can make a difference in the lives of children and their families. Being a single mom of four, a teacher, and a student has taught me a lot about patience, understanding, and how important it is for kids to feel safe and supported. I believe every child should feel valued, respected, and encouraged to do their best. In the future, I hope to keep growing in education and eventually become a social worker so I can help families who are going through hard times. I want to support children in school, help parents feel more confident, and be someone my community can count on. My beliefs, values, and faith all play a role in how I do this. I try to treat everyone with respect, follow the right guidelines, and show kindness every day. I also believe that building strong relationships with students really matters. Research shows that when teachers have positive and caring relationships with children, it helps them do better in school and with their behavior (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). I want to keep learning and improving so I can continue to support children and families in the best way I can.

Clark, C. (2023). *Pedagogical approaches: Which approach best fits your philosophy of education?*

[PowerPoint slides]. Canvas@RU.

Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2001). Early teacher–child relationships and the

trajectory of children’s school outcomes through eighth grade. *Child Development*,

Feeny, S., & Freeman, N.K. (2018). Ethics and the Early Childhood Educator,

Using the NAEYC Code. (3rd ed.). Washington DC: National Association

for the Education of Young Children,

