

Teaching Philosophy Statement

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“Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world.” – Malala Yousafzai

As a child, I spent hours browsing through the shelves of the children’s library in search of books with characters that looked like me and for stories that mirrored my life experiences. The children’s librarian understood and taught me the value of the reader’s choice and the power of seeing oneself on the page. These lessons helped to shape who I am as an educator and published author of multicultural children’s books.

In our classroom community, I learn alongside my students as a guide to co-create knowledge in a safe and comfortable environment where all voices are valued, welcomed, and respected. I believe in incorporating culturally relevant materials that support a curriculum designed around students’ interests, and their career and learning goals. In addition to incorporating culturally relevant texts and student-focused curricula, I believe learning should include the use of new technologies, student choice, educators as guides, and access for all students.

I believe in the power of enabling texts. In my advanced English composition course, we investigate *The Civically Engaged Reader*. I ask students to add their diverse personal experiences onto the page and to focus on civic engagement, to teach lifelong learning and the impact we each have in our world. Together, we read and discuss the meaning of service, learn about literary analysis, and students create service projects to support their home communities.

Because of my own experience as an author of children’s books, I aim to mentor students not only in the craft of writing but also in the profession, by drawing on real-life experiences. My involvement with both enabling texts and diverse learners over the years has shaped my ideas about literacy, learning, and teaching, and my goal is to continue on this journey. I believe in meeting learners where they are, by creating inclusive learning environments that affirm students’ true identities and inspire growth, creativity, and freedom of expression.