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Philosophy of Education

I strive to create a safe, positive atmosphere in my classroom in which students are comfortable asking questions and making mistakes. I value relationships and believe that all students can learn mathematics. I am dedicated to my students and sharing the joy that mathematics can bring into their lives.

Mathematics education is increasingly important in today's global community. Students must not only become efficient problem solvers but must also become expert communicators within the realm of mathematics. As an educator, I feel it necessary to not only develop conceptual understanding of mathematics in my classroom but also to focus on applications of concepts and the reasoning behind the methods. I work diligently to encourage student voice in my classroom to ensure that I can provide feedback on thinking and deepen understanding. My students are constantly being asked to explain why concepts work, and I encourage students to question everything until they truly understand.

Mathematics is a unique subject in secondary education in that many students have decided that they are not "good" at math or simply that learning math is not important to them personally. It is my personal mission in life to ensure that every student I teach learns to value and enjoy math whilst under my instruction. My aim is to make mathematics a personal experience for each student and to develop their interests through math.

To reach my students, I truly feel that it is necessary to develop positive relationships with students as well as their parents. More than once a student has come to me at the end of a course to tell me that while they still are still not terribly fond of math, they loved my class and learned why math is important. If the data shows that my students are learning and they tell me that they are having fun, then I am a happy teacher.

I strive to create a safe, positive atmosphere in my classroom in which students are not afraid to ask questions and be risk-takers. I believe that the learning process is messy and that making mistakes is beneficial to a student's learning process. I view myself more as a mentor rather than an instructor. I actively encourage collaboration of ideas and do my best to get students talking about math each and every day. I challenge my students to discover new methods of solving problems they already understand to get them to think outside the box. I want students to be collaborating, discovering, and deeply engaging with mathematics.

I believe that a student's ability to explain his or her thinking about mathematics is equally as important as their computational ability because being good problem-solvers is simply not good enough anymore. In order to compete in today's global economy, a student has to be able to do more than a computer can do. They need to be able to explain to others why they have chosen their methods, and they need to be able to convince others that their solution is a good one. They must become effective mathematics communicators.

In my experience, when students feel safe, valued, and respected within a classroom, they are more likely to benefit from the educational process. Thus, in addition to being able to teach math concepts, problem solving, and math communication, I believe that creating a caring, positive environment is crucial for students to realize their full potential.