

## **Teaching Philosophy and Statement of Faith**

My personal statement alone cannot gather all of the passion, determination, work ethic, and deep desire to be an effective educator, but I can surely try. Growing up, I knew that I wanted to become a teacher for the reasons of having the ability to be a positive influence on another person's life. However, at the age I was, I don't think I really understood what that entailed, or how much one person really could affect the life of another. Currently, I have lived through the experience, and have found it to be both more rewarding and challenging at the same time.

From a very young age, I felt like I was meant to be something, to do something great, which was bigger than myself, but I wasn't exactly sure what it was then. However, during my college years in undergraduate studies, I came to find myself on a more spiritual and emotional level. I was sitting in one of my education classes in college and was listening to one of my amazing professors talk about his experience as an educator, but it was not only his words that carried meaning, but rather his actions. He was such an interactive and engaging teacher who made his students want to come to class, participate in discussions, and learn. At this moment, I knew what I wanted to do for the rest of my life, and that was to be a teacher. I knew where I wanted to go, who I wanted to be, and how I was going to get there: this sort of mentality has kept me pursuing my love of teaching beyond my own expectations.

Further, as I began advancing in my career, I will never forget my first job as a substitute teacher. I was called to a private school to substitute a second grade class. I can honestly say, I was nervous from my head to my toes. I can remember thinking, "my goal today is to make at least one light of knowledge go off in one of my student's heads," as they learn something new that I had the privilege to teach them. During one of my lessons

on spelling, one of my students was really struggling with the word outside. I immediately began a quick lesson on segmenting and blending two separate words to make one compound word. I will never forget her facial expression when she understood what I had just taught her; it was absolutely priceless. She had the biggest smile on her face and said, "I get it! Outside is spelled like this . . . and repeated to me the steps of segmenting and blending. It was that day that I remember thinking that teaching and making a difference in a child's life was where and what I was meant to be doing for the rest of my life. There is no greater feeling than helping a child overcome their most frustrating moments of doubt or fear with their academics.

As an educator, I do not strive for mediocrity because I know what that feels like. I was the child in the classroom who did not understand what the teacher was asking, or felt threatened to ask questions out of fear of what my peers may think of me, which is what I encounter on a daily basis in my current classroom. Regardless of the fact that my students are currently in 7th (with previous students in 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 8th), they know so much more about life and learning than I ever knew when I was their age.

However, I feel like I can relate to my students in a more comprehensible manner by being that positive influence in their life on a daily basis in the classroom. When I look at my students I see potential, innocence, purity, and strength and I teach directly to that. As an educator, my first instinct is to ensure in each and every one of my students that they are capable of achieving any task they set their mind to, for the phrase "I can't" should never be in their vocabulary. Everyday I try to make learning in the classroom as engaging, active, yet informative as I can to see those light bulbs go off in their heads, and that smile from ear to ear is all I ever hope to get in return. Learning can be fun, but sometimes children don't see it that way because they are predestined

to believe that school is boring and hard. However, this is quite the contrary to my teaching philosophy. The talk of technology is slowly creeping upon each and every educator in the present time, but in such an amazing way.

Continuously growing as an educator, I am furthering my learning on how to incorporate technology into the current curriculum standards. What technology is doing for the betterment of student learning is such a sight to see. The way I look at technology in the classroom is its ability to reach every individual learner on multiple levels. For instance, Howard Gardner talked about how the study of multiple intelligence is so vital to understanding our students on a more comprehensible level, meaning the possibility of reaching our students on their level of understanding. The generational shift of technology tools and over-abounding resources is upon us, and our students are growing up within this exact era of change. Although we may not know much about technology advances, our students do. As a 36 year-old, I have a pretty good understanding of what these technology shifts are, how they operate, and what might help reach the students' in a collaborative way to the old standards. What I see now, and what I have experienced so far is so vast because I have the ability and desire to apply what I knew prior to this drastic shift in technology, with the known trends. I refuse to ignore, as an educator, the various ways that students can learn, which is what I regret not being exposed to when I was a student. Technology and the understanding of multiple intelligence in the classroom allows for the teacher to see all the students as individual learners. As for me, I strive to make sure that I know my students on an individual and personal level so I can learn how I can best instruct and discover their strengths and weaknesses to evoke a positive change.

What I try to achieve on a daily basis in the classroom is purposeful student learning. If my students are happy while learning, and I can positively and spiritually influence the life of just one student by my teaching per day, then I know I have done my job right. As an educator my current objective is to be a consistent positive

spiritual influence, remembrance, or inspiration in a child's life to where they can look back on that time spent and remember not only what they have learned, but who they have become. I know that I have the utmost potential to be THAT educator, who creates an atmosphere of lifelong learning, fosters leaders of honesty and loyalty upheld by their Christian principles, and inspires students to follow their passions.