

While most are familiar with the education system from having attended school in their lifetime, it is difficult for those who are not educators to fully comprehend the teacher's role. Teachers have complex responsibilities that include the instruction and mentorship of students. Rosenthal contended that teachers are key members of society that are fundamental to the nurturing of adolescents. Therefore, he highlighted that educators deserve greater understanding and appreciation so that they could be encouraged to continue teaching. By illustrating that teachers are one of many parts in the elaborate school system, proving that they are obligated to instill moral values into their students, and by describing the societal pressures that make education challenging, Rosenthal (2003) made clear what being a teacher entails to those who are unaware.

Rosenthal showed that a teacher is only one aspect of the school that must communicate with students, school staff, and parents, to support learning. First, he outlined the importance of an instructor building relationships with those attending their classes. While some may believe teacher-student communication ends after a lesson, Rosenthal (2003) asserted that teachers must be "involved in the personal lives of [their] students . . . [and employ] personal communication," to support academic achievement (p. 45). He reasoned that a teacher's continual involvement and expression of compassion is essential for the support of students who face mental health challenges, like depression, that can distract them from learning. Moreover, Rosenthal (2003) stated that communication between staff further facilitates effective education, as "[the entire staff] are all on the same team," working for the benefit of those whom they teach (p. 108). He illustrated that school resources, rooms, computers, and books are often shared between teachers. Given that "It is the responsibility of the teacher to make [the classroom] environment conducive

to teaching and learning,” staff must cooperate to ensure that each class has the materials its students require to complete their work (Rosenthal, 2003, p. 8). Rosenthal continued by describing how a teacher’s connections with parents impact education. He stated “Parent-teacher meetings are . . . one of the most important avenues of communication,” because of the parents’ influence over their children and the time they help with their schoolwork each week (Rosenthal, 2003, p. 43). Rosenthal reported that children who have parents who spend more time with them on school-related activities allow educators to teach more efficiently. Thus, teachers interact with students, other faculty, and the outside community to enhance their class's learning experience.

Rosenthal further emphasized the reality of teaching by revealing that teaching is more than imparting information; teachers must prepare their students to conduct themselves with integrity, using discipline, if necessary. Rosenthal (2003) argued that “every teacher's goal is to help all students be the best they can be” (p. 120). However, he added that “how well one does involves much more than grade-point averages,” therefore, one must “tell kids [that] . . . integrity . . . [makes] for productive citizens” (Stanley, 2000, as cited in Rosenthal, 2003, pp. 126-127). Rosenthal explained that this accomplishes the purpose of education because developing a student’s character is the foundation of successful entrepreneurship. To instill integrity, the author reasoned that discipline must sometimes be applied to help a student understand its value. On several occasions, Rosenthal (2003) “had a discussion about honesty and trust,” with his misbehaving students and disciplined them accordingly (p. 24). He wrote that using discipline led students to genuine remorse and behaviour change. Altogether, Rosenthal suggested that teachers have the difficult responsibility of helping their students develop their character.

Lastly, Rosenthal strived to make his audience aware of the societal factors that make education difficult, including a lack of support and an increasingly diverse array of students that

a teacher must instruct. For example, he made known the challenges that arise from insufficient funding. Rosenthal noted that curricula are constantly being revised to fit new needs. However, a school's budget often struggles to keep textbooks current, forcing a teacher to account for the information missing from the material's past editions. Rosenthal (2003) "[guesses that America is] spending more on prisons than on education," which he believes would be better used to purchase school materials that help educate and equip students with skills necessary to succeed (p. 117). His argument continued by discussing the increased presence of students with special education needs in the classroom as a difficulty for many educators. Rosenthal (2003) declared that most "teachers with special education students in their classes feel ill prepared to teach them," due to a lack of past training (p. 118). To overcome this inadequacy, he observed that educators must spend much time attending training workshops to master a variety of teaching styles. In brief, the author spoke of the challenges that teachers face, namely inadequate resources and the needs of disadvantaged students, which require much effort to address.