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October 23, 2014

Introductions to Learners with Disabilities

Personal Philosophy

I feel that the most important thing for any teacher of special needs children to internalize is the idea of human dignity. All children, of course, have an inherent dignity, but I think that it is vitally important to be constantly aware of this when working with those with unique educational needs, as it can be easily lost sight of in the frustrations and challenges that come with the job. One can quickly get caught up in the logistics of teaching and educating, not giving the focus needed to each and every individual student. So much of a teacher’s time is spent in the classroom that it may be hard to give the attention needed to students and to getting them the education that they need.

The way that I am able to relate to students with special needs is another very important aspect of my teaching abilities and passion. I have always felt that I can meet children “on their level”; that is, I have the ability to see things in the way that a student might see them. I feel that this helps me immensely in working with and communicating with a variety of students. Too often, the life of a teacher can be overwhelmed with concerns about curriculum, state assessments, school policies, frustrating parents, bureaucracy, and any number of other distractions that take away from the joy and purpose of the actual process of teaching. I feel that an educator should always remember that students are children; children who love to laugh and explore new ideas. Regardless of whether a student has a disability or not, the attention that is given to them should be equal. Whenever I step into a classroom, I take the time to remember that each and every student has different personalities and quirks, and that it will take more than just a well-executed lesson plan to engage their minds. Any instructional strategy that is implemented and practiced must be reviewed and changed to best reach each and every student, and to provide them with the confidence and skills needed to progress in life.