

# My core beliefs and theory of practice education essay



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Nationally, there is an expectation that all students, by the end of high school, will be college and career ready, and diverse learners to include English Language Learners and students with disabilities, as well as those who are educated in urban settings are no exception. As schools prepare students to meet this expectation, they must provide them with not only the social consciousness, attitudes, and beliefs needed to be successful in post-secondary education and employment, but also the character and integrity required to be productive citizens in our global, technological, and multidimensional society. Among other 21st century skills, this includes the ability to think critically, solve problems, and communicate effectively.

It is my belief that all students, regardless of circumstance or difference, should and must be held to the same high academic standards. Because teaching and learning never really ends, the educational process is a “living, organic” one. All students are capable of acquiring knowledge and developing skills, and must therefore accept ownership in the process of becoming life-long learners. As educators, it is our responsibility to teach, challenge, and support students in realizing and achieving their maximum learning potential as we move them towards proficiency. This is accomplished by providing for activities and experiences inside and outside of the classroom that are intentional, timely, and timeless, based on student needs and interests, individually and in groups.

## **CORE BELIEFS**

### **Each student can and wants to learn.**

Therefore, as a teacher, it is my responsibility to motivate the students in my classroom to learn by helping them to understand how what they are

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learning is relevant to them as individuals and as members of the community. When this responsibility is carried out as intended, students will bring meaning to newly learned information, making connections across disciplines and to their everyday lives.

**All students, when given the appropriate support, are capable of performing at or above the proficient level as defined by the Pennsylvania Academic Standards.**

Therefore, as a teacher, it is my responsibility to provide the students in my classroom with curriculum that is rigorous, which both challenges and supports them in meeting high academic standards. Instruction and assessment must and will be aligned with the curriculum. When this responsibility is carried out as intended, students will develop a repertoire of skills and strategies that enable them to access the content-specific, grade level information contained in the state standards.

**Every student counts and needs, wants, and deserves a top-quality education, as well as the support of caring adults.**

Therefore, as a teacher, it is my responsibility to inspire the students in my classroom to work harder and achieve more by building meaningful, productive relationships with them based on trust, individual responsibility, and mutual respect. When this responsibility is carried out as intended, students will understand they are valued members of the learning community and they will demonstrate their commitment to the teaching and learning process.

## **THEORY OF PRACTICE**

As it relates to education, a theory of practice is, according to Argyris, Putnam, and McLain Smith (1985), the lens through which an educator views their practice. One's theory of practice is influenced by their personal values, as well as their knowledge and beliefs about the education profession and their opinions about what is considered "good enough" based on their past experiences and present context and situation. Not only does a theory of practice provide a framework for decision-making, but it also provides a framework for knowledge acquisition and information processing.

McAlpine and Weston (2000) highlight the value of reflection in the education profession, asserting that it is a catalyst for the improvement of teaching and learning. As I reflect - looking closely at and thinking carefully about, in particular, my beliefs about how children learn, grow, and develop best, and recognizing the diverse perspectives that are present in today's classrooms and schools - I am reminded of the famous quote from Transcendentalist American author Henry David Thoreau's (1854) critically acclaimed book, *Walden*, and this serves as the lynchpin for my theory of practice:

"If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music he hears, however measured or far away."

The classroom as a community of learners: I like to think of the classroom as a community of learners where students and the teacher are always learning from each other. To me, the students in my classroom are, in essence, a "

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band” of different drummers, each coming with different talents and abilities. As the leader of the “ section,” I believe I must be accountable and committed to quality at all times. Because of this, I use my knowledge and understanding of my students’ talents and abilities, as well as their individual needs and interests to create a productive teaching and learning environment for the group.

Committed to high achievement regardless of the cost, I remain dedicated to preparing every student for informed, responsible citizenship in our global, technological, and multidimensional society. I jealously guard the right of my students to a world-class education and keep them as the focus of each decision I make. I believe that teaching is my “ calling,” and in fulfilling this assignment destined to me by the Most High Power, I believe that I can help open doors to brighter futures for the students I serve. Relationships are the basis of all learning; accordingly, I pledge to work with students, families, colleagues, and the community in the nurturing of such in an effort to yield better outcomes for students.