

PART 1B - TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

I believe in the value of providing a positive, respectful, safe, and inclusive environment for students that supports positive academic engagement, social-emotional learning, and mental well-being. As a teacher, I will strive to create an environment where students can set and achieve learning goals for themselves, feel and show empathy for others, develop and maintain relationships, and make responsible decisions. Additionally, I will foster a growth mindset that motivates students to apply effective learning strategies in their studies, monitor their own progress, and feel a sense of ownership for their own education.

I believe in having a democratic purpose in education in order to create a place for everyone to feel included, heard, and accepted. I will be the kind of teacher that not only promotes but advocates for a democratic education. I will create a classroom climate where all students feel safe from ridicule and bullying, and where their families, communities, identities, and cultures are respected. Students have the right to learn in an environment where they feel safe in expressing their thoughts, opinions, and beliefs without the fear of being silenced.

I believe that the classroom ought to be a place to practice empathy and respect, build relationships, and to understand that our strength lies in our diversity. I will be a teacher who celebrates difference, sees the benefits of intersectionality, and encourages my students to do the same by not shying away from difficult conversations surrounding sexual orientation, gender identity, race, oppression, and marginalization. I will support students through their gender development, and I will confront false conceptions of identity and work towards having an open and understanding consciousness in the classroom.

I believe that all students wish to learn and succeed. Therefore, I believe in personalized, trauma-informed teaching and learning that lessens students' fear of failure. Education instruction needs to be differentiated and paced to the needs of students and geared towards their

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individual learning preferences and interests. Additionally, I will incorporate trauma-informed practices into my teaching by establishing a routine, maintaining clear communication, and creating a sense of safety and connectedness. I aim to understand the various risk factors my students may be facing in hopes of exposing them to protective factors that will foster resilience.

I believe in lifelong learning. As a lifelong learner myself, I see the value in constantly reflecting upon my own learning and teaching inside and outside of the classroom, and I wish the same of my students. There is so much we can learn from one another, and teachers are not omniscient dictators at the front of the class. Teachers are reference points, guides, encouragers, and facilitators of learning who have just as much to learn from their students as students do from their teachers. In addition, I will incorporate restorative justice practices into my teaching, as a means to hold students accountable for their actions and help them achieve their own measure of success through autonomy, self-direction, and self-empowerment.

Furthermore, I will be a teacher who values all knowledge and experience. I see the importance for interdisciplinary learning. I want to combine curricular objectives and methods from various disciplines in order to encourage students to think critically, be analytical, and embrace new ideas. I will be the kind of teacher that insists on interdisciplinary learning, because I do not believe there is a “one size fits all” methodology to teaching and learning.

With all of this being said, I believe in preparing students to be democratic, justice-oriented citizens of society. Being a teacher allows you to not only help students shape themselves, but also the community of which they are part of. I want them to question the social and political contexts of our society. I want them to feel inspired and energized in their education, because this is ultimately what will become part of their day-to-day lives and spread far beyond the classroom.