

My philosophy of education has been built upon the educators I have had in my time as a student. I have been fortunate to study from some of the greatest educators while at the University of Mary. “Outstanding educators know that if a school has great educators, it is a great school” (Whitaker, 2013, p. 8). I believe being a fantastic educator builds the knowledge and citizenship skills of the students I have in my classroom but all the students in my school. I believe I can be a fantastic educator in terms of my content AND in terms of building 21st century skills. There will be students that will not reach the standards set before them by the state; it happens every year in every classroom. Students not reaching the academic standard set by the state does not mean I have failed as an educator. I believe that I have done my students a great service if I am able to help my students achieve the skills of: collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity.

The largest part of my educational philosophy is accountability of myself. I cannot help my students if I am not meaning what I say and following through on what I say. I come from an athletic background and I believe that educators and coaches are essentially one in the same. They each have their content, management styles, expectations, and teams. Todd Whitaker speaks on this when he says, “ when the very best teachers--like the the very best coaches-- say something, they mean it. They don’t depend on a booming voice to manage their classrooms. Rather, students respect their authority because they express clear expectations and then follow through” (Whitaker, 2013, p. 20). Being transparent with my students about expectations I have of them and they should have of me are my highest priority. My philosophy places the

accountability on myself first because if I am not accountable, how can I expect my students to be accountable.

I view students the same as I view teammates. I am the captain of the team, leading by example and from the front of the pack. I hold myself to a standard that I look my students to try and achieve and apply to their personal lives. If I do my job as a leader properly, we will succeed as a team. When the students come together and make the classroom a community, they will succeed together. It is a team because we will succeed together or we will continue to reach for that success together.

I believe that the talents I bring to the classroom are great. I have been in small classrooms as well as large classrooms. I have been in diverse classrooms all around the country. The greatest strength I have is the mentors I have made throughout my time in high school and in college. I have mentors with years of experience that have gone through the trial and error of being an educator. I have mentors to help guide me when I need help on becoming the best teacher I can possibly be. Being able to self reflect and seeing what I need to do better than trying to use the wealth of knowledge I have around me.

I went into education because I feel my main purpose is to help people grow and become who they want to be. I believe the role of an educator is helping students grow everyday and making those strides to becoming the adult they want to be. Being an educator is one of the few professions that a person has an opportunity to change not one, but multiple lives every single day. Being a model for the students of achieving goals, continuing to grow both personally and academically everyday. Whitaker summed up what the role of a teacher is perfectly when he said, "great teachers create a positive atmosphere in their classrooms and schools. They treat

every person with respect. In particular, they understand the power of praise” (Whitaker, 2013, p. 121).

## References

Whitaker, T. (2013). *What Great Teachers Do Differently: Seventeen Things that Matter Most*.

New York, NY: Routledge.