

Jennifer Mathieson

Philosophy of Education

I believe in fostering a classroom that promotes analytical questioning, imaginative and collaborative work. My ideal classroom is a place where students' personalities and minds are working together, and a true and meaningful education is generated. My pedagogical methods establish a hands-on classroom environment, which allows open communication. I believe to run a successful classroom relationships and trust must be established early. I facilitate a classroom where students recognize that their thoughts and interests are of value. I encourage students to be an active member of our classroom and to lead by example in such a diverse community. Having a warm classroom environment that allows students to be themselves and achieve greatness, as well as promotes strong communication for all, is something that I believe is vital for student growth and success.

It is my goal for all students to feel safe, secure, and successful while challenging themselves academically. I believe that in order for a student to be motivated to work, to feel safe, and to put forth their best effort, they need to be surrounded by an environment where they are able to take risks and learn and grow. In order to create such an environment I take time to get to know each student on a personal and academic level and strive to work collaboratively with their parents and community. Clear communication with parents, guardians, staff members, members of the community, and the students will make for a stronger connection and learning environment. Not only do I work to ensure that students feel comfortable, but my classroom management style is based on student self-control and discipline rather than strict and rigid repercussions for misbehavior, very much giving the student the reigns and accountability to be a positive part of our community. I give direct feedback to students so they are able to control and evaluate their actions to plan for appropriate behavior.

In order to be prepared for success, I believe that students should be inspired, challenged and valued. I am an educator who provides hands-on lessons where students are engaged and learn in a way that is meaningful to their own lives. Through interaction and teaching students of many ages and learning profiles, I have realized that differentiating based on content, process and product is important to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to learn and grow. Students have different interests and learning styles, and because of that, I am a strong believer that it is vital to differentiate curriculum to meet my students' needs, rather than the students meeting the curriculum's needs. It is my belief that students will grow and learn in settings where they are in control of their learning, where they are able to show mastery of objectives using multiple outlets (writing, project based, drawing, reading, etc.), and where students track their own growth after setting personal goals.

I believe that all students have the capacity to do well and to challenge themselves, and that learning occurs when we grow from mistakes and bumps along the road. In my classroom we work toward fostering a Growth Mindset, understanding that learning takes time and is challenging, but that we will all grow in the long run when we reflect on our struggles. I work hard to ensure that my students know that I assess them based on their individual growth, and that their grades can improve as they put forth their best effort. I use the "Met, Not Yet" method

when assessing and grading students. This allows students to revise, re-work, and revisit their work and make corrections to show growth in the subject matter or standard. This aligns well with the idea of a Growth Mindset, that our learning and intelligence continuously grow and that if the student doesn't understand something right away, they still have the opportunity to learn. I encourage the students to use saying such as "I don't know the answer, YET" rather than shutting down after a challenge.

I believe in the ability within each child, and that it is my job to support all students to be successful. It is my philosophy that incorporating self-control, encouraging a Growth Mindset, and differentiating my instruction will set my students and future students up for success.