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### **Philosophy of Teaching**

Classrooms are a microcosm of our world. Every seat will be filled with an individual who is wholly and beautifully unique. Ethnicity, religion, family background, experiences, learning styles, temperament, cognitive abilities and even vernacular will vary. In response to such diversity, it is the foremost duty of teachers to create a safe environment, one of kindness, acceptance and understanding. Without a safe environment, students will not learn to the best of their abilities.

My greatest goal as a teacher is to create a safe space where learning can be seen as a fun and exhilarating journey. I want to foster a love of learning and ignite a thirst for knowledge. I owe much of my perspective to the many years I spent living abroad. From a very young age, I was enveloped in a beautiful patchwork of various languages, cultures and religions. It has taught me to be mindful and appreciative of all the differences around me. As every student is unique, I have to be flexible and constantly think on my toes, ready to make accommodations and alterations to my lesson plans and activities.

I believe that diversity is the key to successful teaching. Understanding the differences in my students and determining what they individually need allows for a better chance of learning and retaining the information. Students learn and retain information differently. I must pay attention to the different learning styles present in my classroom, and implement teaching methods and activities that cater to each. I can draw from my past teaching experience; when teaching geography, my class took a tour of the streets of Sydney using Google Earth and the smart board. We walked through the streets and visited major landmarks talking about their history and geography. This was a great experience for the visual learner. A song and dance pointing out the different parts of the skeletal system helped my students who were kinesthetic and musical learners. I see myself whimsically chasing my students' interests, catering to their passions and strengths. Allowing students a degree of self-direction in their learning is also something I support.

Providing appropriate learning situations for each student with appropriate scaffolding and differentiated instruction is imperative. Many student-centered, inquiry based techniques should be used. Not only should I be effective in transmitting knowledge, but I should also have a positive impact on each child's emotional well-being. I always try to remember that each child comes to school with more baggage than just a backpack. I hope that my students gain a love of learning, begin understanding some of their interests and passions, and find their strengths while in my class. If I can create a safe environment where every child feels valued, where tolerance and appreciation is taught, the future leaders of our society can not only have a love of learning, but also compassion and a will to peacefully coexist.