

A Living Message...

I am a teacher. This is my passion. I have chosen to represent my philosophy of teaching with the image of a bridge. Bridges are links in a passageway from the known and familiar to the unknown and possible. My role is to spark enthusiasm for the joy of learning and discovery in young and pliable minds. As students continue on their journey across the bridge, I lead and guide to inspire access to new visions and opportunities that lie ahead. As a teacher, I am the architect of this bridge that is built with the structural support of parents, administrators, community leaders and fellow teachers.

My greatest reward as a teacher is observing the accomplishments of my students. Some gratification is immediate while other gratification is delayed. I cherish the immediate spark of understanding in a student's eye, but I also savor the opportunity to share the moment when a student reaches the summit of a challenging quest. One of the greatest advantages of the teaching profession is the daily inclusion of play. Albert Einstein described teaching in this way; "The point is to develop the childlike inclination for play and the childlike desire for recognition, and to guide the child over to important fields for society. Such a school demands from the teacher that he be a kind of artist in his province." I completely embrace a philosophy of play as an essential component of life-long learning, and I model my personal commitment to play and learning in my classroom.

I believe that students must make authentic connections to the "real world" as they apply and transfer learning. The Internet and technological applications are my best tools to inspire and lead students in making these connections. To stimulate creative and active learning potentials for my students, I foster a "hands on" interactive and integrated learning environment. I encourage cooperative learning, role play, and peer teaching to engage students in active learning and feedback.

Students bring a cargo of previous learning experiences with them to the bridge, and I help to organize the existing load and add new information as they journey forward. As leader and coach in the classroom, I am aware of individual strengths and weaknesses of each student, and I use this knowledge to set the pace for learning, encouraging student choice and alternative pathways for individualized learning. I model curiosity and enthusiasm in a supportive environment of discovery. Students learn not only content but also life skills in their small group and whole class interactions.

I serve as the builder of the bridge that my students will cross. I believe that the destiny of humanity depends on investment in the current generation of learners. There is nothing more important in the whole world than the future of a child. As a teacher, I am fulfilled by sharing in a vibrant and dynamic profession where I may contribute and grow with my learners in an environment of creativity and discipline. As I cross the bridge with my students, I may never know their final destinations, but as I have shared the crossing of the bridge with them, I will be sending a living message to a time that I may never see.