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Teaching Philosophy

“Give a man a fish, and he’ll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he’ll eat for the rest of his life” (Maimonides). My goal as a teacher is to cultivate a love of learning that impacts students in every classroom they walk into and drives them to desire goodwill for all people and success for bettering their future. Due to rigorous standards and constant assessments, students and teachers can be overwhelmed with information, caught up in specifics, and, as a result, lose the ability to dive deeper into the content. It is difficult for teachers to do little more than provide the information for the student to learn and hope they understand the material. Furthermore, the teacher loses the chance to help the students grow as people, which is just as important if not more important than the academic progression.

In teaching music, it is my hope that I can give students an opportunity to grow as musicians, to grow in community with one another and work as a team, to appreciate the aesthetic beauty music possesses, and to recognize in the act of making music their contribution to something greater than themselves. Whether I am directing a choir, teaching a music theory class or offering individual voice lessons, I will differentiate my instruction to reach the wide range of my students’ interests. I will include music history and music theory for the students in a way that makes a lasting impression on the way they see and experience life. My ultimate goal is to build a culture of students who can experience forms of art or high-level thinking in philosophy, history, English, and mathematics, and be able to appreciate each area for its own sake and the benefits each brings to society.

My goals in teaching math are similar to my goals in teaching music. I believe that mathematics has a natural aesthetic beauty in the high-level proofs and discoveries across various fields. I hope to be able to demonstrate that to my students while still meeting standard requirements. However, if my students leave my classroom with an appreciation for mathematics, even if they do not completely

master all of the content, my mission as a teacher will be fulfilled. Balance is critical between the disciplinary aspects of learning and the fun involved in learning.

Students should enjoy the process of education but learn and apply what they learn in realistic ways. My classroom will implement modern technology into student learning and address topics in modern culture. I want my students to be well-versed in the applications and uses for modern technology, to be able to think objectively about what they see and what they hear, and to know how to recognize the truth when they see it. I will differentiate my instruction to address the needs of various types of learners and all levels of learning. For students who are visual and auditory learners, I will provide videos in which I explain the concepts being addressed in class, provide example problems, have the student try a problem, and then model the process to help the student check comprehension. For students who are tactile learners, I will engage the student in learning special music or provide avenues for a student to shadow in a professional environment to see the applications of the material.

At the end of the day, if the classroom is not enough for a student to learn everything I'm teaching and if the student is willing to learn, I am willing to work with them. The human person is more important than my class, so I want to be understanding and helpful in any way I can. Each human being is capable of incredible things. The role of the teacher is to bring out the best in each student by inviting them beyond what they believe to be their capabilities. It is my intention that my students do not simply skate through my classes if they are capable of more. If I'm doing my job correctly, they can fulfill their potential and become people who can help the world become a better place. I expect nothing less than each student's best.