

My Journey to Becoming a Teacher

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While growing up I constantly saw how much joy the teachers in my life got from their careers. Both of my grandmothers were teachers and my mother has been both an elementary teacher and a vice principal. Through these people and my own experiences in school, I decided to pursue a career in elementary education. Out of all the bad and the good, every experience has made me want to become a teacher even more. Looking back on my childhood I have realized just how big of an impact the “little” things made for me. It wasn’t until grade eleven though that I realized my passion for teaching. There are many things that have led me to this point such as my family, my school experiences, and the families I babysat for. I am very proud of how these influences have shaped me and my teaching beliefs and values.

Even before I was enrolled in school I saw how much my mother loved her teaching job at the Standing Buffalo First Nations Reserve school. The odd time my father would take my sisters and I to visit my mother at work and I remember having so much fun. Those experiences and the way my parents raised me created my very different beliefs and values from the rest of the people in my small town. I went to a school of about 100 students from kindergarten to grade twelve, the students were primarily white, and the people of the town were raised with very old fashioned views. As part of the white majority of my school my classmates just assumed I believed in the same things as them, when in fact I was always very confused when they would make racist jokes or be stereotypical. I didn’t understand why they thought our First Nations classmates were so bad or weird. My mother and father raised me to believe that just because they looked different or had different home lives it didn’t mean they were worth any less or that they were weird. This made me realize that as a teacher I want to make sure all of my students understand that just because someone doesn't look like you or live like you it doesn't mean they

are weird or deserve to be bullied. My teachers did not do a whole lot to prevent the racism within our classrooms, I want to change that.

I remember always being confused why our class would be split up into smaller groups for ELA or math. Looking back, I realize that my teachers were just trying to give each and every one of us students equitable opportunities to succeed and learn. As we got into the higher grades our teachers stopped doing this and some of my fellow students started to fail. It wasn't until about grade ten or eleven that I realized just how important those small groups were in our learning. The students who found learning harder were not ignored and the students who found learning easier were still being challenged. No matter what grade I end up teaching, whether I stick with elementary or move onto high school, I want to strive to make sure every student is getting the support and given the opportunities to succeed. This may mean I do not spend an equal amount of time with each student, but I will still give each student sufficient opportunities and attention to help them to become their best selves.

When I was younger I always loved school, not necessarily the social aspect of it but all the learning I would do everyday. For a long time the social aspect of school made me hate going. I'd fake being sick to stay home or get angry because I had to go. I don't want this to be the case for any other children. I want them to be able to do the things they love without being made fun of or bullied. I loved school but began to hate it because I didn't feel comfortable or loved by students and other teachers than my mother. I want to give children a classroom where they feel like they belong and feel loved so that they want to come to school and they want to learn. So that they can begin to enjoy learning.

My favourite physical education teacher always inspired me. She was always so passionate about her job and cared about each and every student so much. All throughout my life

I've played many different sports and have been involved in helping coach and referee many as well. My physical education teacher always believed in me, she would sign me up for conferences with amazing women in sports, show me scholarships, help me better my skills, and she always wanted to know how I was doing in dance competitions too. She genuinely wanted every student to succeed to the best of their abilities and she really cared. I want to inspire my students like she inspired me. I think physical activity is a huge part of our lives and it is an important aspect of education. I want to help my students feel comfortable in the gym and feel like they can express themselves through sports, like the physical education instructors before my favourite one never did.

One thing that really made me want to become a teacher was babysitting for my neighbors two children. The oldest was a girl, around five years old, and the other was a boy, around one year old. The girl was always asking questions, wanting to learn, and wanting to try new things. I loved introducing her to new ways to make art and teaching her new games and helping her learn new things. Although all kids are nowhere near the same, they all have curiosity. I wanted to find a job that would satisfy my love for introducing new things to people. Teaching fits that description. All children have different interests so I am excited to introduce something new to students in every subject. I am excited to encourage their imagination and creativity in art and english, to encourage their curiosity in science, and to introduce new math skills. Most of all I am excited to watch their faces and reactions when they get the hang of something new for the first time, or get a math question right, or get a good grade on a spelling test.

For a long time I didn't know I wanted to be a teacher. Around grade eleven when I found my passion for teaching I had recently been thinking and reflecting on my past a lot. I

remember the exact moment I realized I should be an elementary teacher. I was standing in the hallways of my school when I saw one of the elementary teachers doing an activity with a group of students. They were all laughing and having fun while learning at the same time. They all looked so happy. This is when I realized I want to help every student to be happy and successful and the best versions of themselves that they can be, academically and personally. I am so excited to begin my journey to becoming a teacher and I can't wait for the day that I have my own classroom.