

Teaching Teachers to Teach Future Teachers

By Hallee Donley

Our teachers in today's society are greatly underappreciated and they deserve more credit for being the foundation of our education system. Considering that teaching is such a vital job for the success of future generations, you would think that recruiting teachers would be a priority for schools everywhere. However, because of less than adequate pay and underappreciation, more and more students are opting out of careers in education. This is a problem that needs to be addressed in order to correct the shortage of teachers in Missouri and the nation.

First and foremost, I believe that in order to get students excited about a career in teaching we need to get rid of the stigmas that surround it. In order to do this I think a good initiative for school districts to enact would be to have teachers set aside a portion of time where they talk to their students about careers in education. I believe that by doing this and having teachers share their own reasons for entering the field as well as their personal experience, students would have a better grasp on what it means to be a teacher and how important they are. Teaching isn't all about grading papers and being a stickler. Students might also be more inclined to consider a career in teaching if they were aware of all the benefits that can come out of it. Even though teachers have a reputation for not getting the best pay, they have excellent benefits in retirement and health care. The ability to have summers off and make your own lesson plans could be major draws for students who are interested in a career that allows them to be creative in how they work.

Creative lesson planning and engaging classes are what some of my favorite teachers utilize in their classrooms. There are a couple teachers that I have come across throughout my education that I believe are prime examples for everyone to follow. My favorite high school

English teacher, Mrs. McKinzie, had a class that revolved around creative thinking which was often a characteristic of her lessons. She helped me hone my writing skills in an effective way and taught me valuable skills. The best trademark a teacher can have in my opinion is the ability to help their students understand informational concepts as well as impact their lives in a positive way. My business teacher, Mrs. Gilmore, has had a large impact on my life and has helped me so much in high school; she has been in my corner since freshman year and I have really appreciated all her help and advice. I am also currently an A+ tutor for 5th grade science teacher Mrs. Gaulding, and I would gladly nominate her for one of the best examples of an elementary teacher I have ever seen. She is extremely hands-on with her students and does many experiments with them that demonstrate the concepts she teaches in real life. The common denominator between all the teachers I have mentioned is that they all genuinely care about their students and they take the time to make learning interesting.

Teaching can be a very difficult job and it requires several different skills. Some of these skills include patience, organization, communication skills, kindness, and knowledge about their subject. Teachers have the responsibility of their students' education and therefore they need to have a reliable and sturdy education of their own. They also need to have the communication skills to convey these lessons to their students in an effective manner. If students are not understanding the concept or need extra help teachers need to be understanding and patient, it is very important for them to create a safe learning environment for their students where they are not made to feel dumb. There have been several teachers throughout my life who have encouraged me to be a better student. My education has been fueled by teachers who help me learn the information I will need for my future schooling as well as helping encourage my

interest in my favorite subjects. Teachers are absolutely essential to our society and without them we would not be able to function as a country and students would lose the value of education.