

Kyle Ivanoff

11-29-11

ED 424

Professor Geidel

Throughout my years at Concordia University I have been granted the opportunity to work with kids of all backgrounds and ages. With every experience comes another piece of the puzzle that assembles my thoughts and ideas of how to educate diverse students. I am forever grateful for getting these opportunities and thus allowing myself to become the best teacher possible. Every single education class from ED 101 and on has taken a part in forming and shaping my ideas of how to teach diverse learners.

The first encounter of teaching diverse students came while I was in ED 201. We were given the chance to participate in a poverty simulation. This simulation didn't necessarily teach me how to teach these students of different backgrounds, but it did help me in many other ways. It gave me an opportunity to see what students may be going through outside of school; outside things that many may be oblivious to because it is not occurring in the classroom or within the school walls. It made me understand that students carry so much baggage entering your classroom each and every day. This experience taught me that there might be other issues that need to be addressed before you can even begin teaching.

Discussing Banks' Theory was the next big event that helped shape my overall view of teaching diverse students. I believe this theory ties in well with the poverty simulation completed in ED 201. Bank's believed that incorporating these diverse cultural backgrounds is very beneficial in teaching. That in combining these cultures the student is being nourished in school as well as life. After studying Banks' Theory I came to believe that it is very beneficial to teach in this way. Like I had earlier learned of students coming into the classroom with outside baggage, using this multicultural

approach can give the teacher an opportunity to connect with each and every student and open the avenue for learning to take place.

PSY 324 was another class that had an impact on creating my view of teaching diverse learners. This class addressed something that always seemed like a touchy subject, special education. Special education had always been one of those things that I had never fully understood how to deal with as a teacher, but through PSY 324 experience I now feel completely prepared and confident. Being able to work in a special education classroom at Seward High School gave me a whole different aspect of teaching. Working with these exceptional students made me realize that as a teacher, whether working in special education or not, we will have to use a variety of tools to truly teach our students. This opportunity taught me that you must be willing to spend a great amount of time to teach, that you cannot simply give up after one attempt to teach something. If that attempt does not work then you must try another method until the goal has been reached. The lessons learned through my exceptional learner experience can and will be applied to my everyday teaching philosophy even when dealing with the typical students.

Finally there was ED 424, teaching diverse learners. This class brought to a whole what I have been learning piece by piece throughout my years at Concordia. The experience I did for this class was completed in my hometown of Tucson, Arizona. Being able to sit in and work with students in my hometown had a great impact on shaping my view. This gave me the best look at what I will be dealing with in my future. Although yes, my time in Seward was great, it has no comparison to the diversity in Tucson. Through this experience I was able to witness how an experienced teacher deals with

diversity in their classroom. On many occasions I observed the teacher having to deal with certain students who were not quite on the same page, having to further explain in different methods. I also saw the teacher use an idea discussed in our text, anchor activities. This brought an example from text to life and showed its benefits. It was as though everything discussed in class seemed to be occurring in class, perhaps it is that now I am more observant of this occasions.

Every single experience and learning opportunity has helped shape my overall understanding of how to teach diverse students. After all of the experience I feel as though Concordia has done an excellent job in preparing me for the future. I have learned that when dealing with diverse students we must be patient as teachers; we must be willing to teach and explain in many different methods until our lesson has been learned. Persistence is key and we must never give up on our students, there is always another way, no student is or will be un-teachable.