

## Alexa Kumbier's Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy centers around the idea of creating a comfortable environment in the classroom that encourages intellectual risk-taking. There are four ways in which I create a comfortable classroom and encourage risks: 1) establish positive relationships with students and their families, 2) set high expectations for both my students and myself, 3) manage the classroom effectively, 4) embrace individual differences.

To begin, I maintain rapport with my students. I believe that students like school and learning more when they have positive relationships with their teachers. I make a point to get to know my students by taking interest in their lives and spending time with them at lunch and recess. Additionally, I make sure to meet with parents when necessary, and I communicate with them frequently. I believe that communicating with parents helps me understand my students even more. Furthermore, I am a nurturer who believes in my students. I write my students personalized notes to let them know this, and I tell them that I believe in them. When they know that their teacher believes in them, they will believe in themselves too.

My teaching motto is "Rise to the Occasion". My motto means that I hold my students to high expectations, both academically and behaviorally. I believe that when given the tools to succeed, my students can and will rise to challenges. By setting high goals, my classroom atmosphere is one in which students take their learning and behavior seriously. I help my students hone their strengths, and I work with them on improvement by promoting the growth mindset and helping them set goals. I also think that social-emotional learning is essential to creating a safe classroom. My students to show compassion and respect toward each other while working in a collaborative setting. In my class, students are not only learning how to read, write, and think; they are becoming global citizens who know how to use communication skills effectively through speaking and listening. In addition to holding my students to high expectations, I set high goals for myself. I look for ways to develop professionally by collaborating with others, attending professional development trainings, reading articles and books, seeking feedback and advice, taking online classes, and self-reflecting.

Good classroom management is essential in order for students to learn effectively. I believe that students need routines, procedures, and common agreements. When students know what to expect with these systems set in place, they feel more at ease. My strong classroom management skills help students understand the importance of learning.

Lastly, I encourage students to embrace each other's differences and use these differences as an opportunity to learn about each other's cultures and backgrounds. They learn that it is okay to be different and that being fair is not the same as being equal. My classroom environment gives students the opportunity to freely express themselves without judgment. I am an empathetic individual who understands that each student is unique and has particular needs. I believe that to reach every individual, it is important to help students make connections between new concepts and their own lives.

Meaningful learning and intellectual growth will simply not occur if students do not feel comfortable in the classroom. The components of my teaching philosophy help students take risks, make mistakes, and express their true selves.