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As a prospective teacher in the public school system I have often struggled with finding my niche in the field. I was born and raised in the Bronx and attended public schools my entire academic career. As a result, I feel I had developed a disinclination for working in privileged schools. However, after I worked in the South Bronx in a private preschool where the director felt she did not need to “worry about the children’s needs” because “their parents don’t even care” the sphere of ignorance I had encased myself in and built my philosophy off of was shattered. I learned that just because you work in a high need area does not necessarily mean you are automatically impacting the community in a positive manner. It was then that I understood how important a healthy administrative system and educators with similar philosophies, ambitions and passion for the community were and that ultimately those factors would have the largest positive impact.

Since then I have made it a point to seek out supportive administrative communities that service the demographic I like to work with. Truthfully, without these factors it is almost as if educators are spinning their wheels in mud. You have to surround yourself with people who are equally as passionate and positive about their trade and want to better the communities and youth they teach. While I find myself more inclined to work in high need areas where families are of very low socioeconomic status I am not opposed to teaching in more privileged schools. As an educator my goal is to spread knowledge to youth and children of every community are entitled to an education.

I believe the way I was raised has impacted my philosophy as an educator significantly. My parents were together and worked as a team to raise my brother and me. They pushed us to constantly challenge ourselves and take our abilities and knowledge to the next level. Similarly I have developed these expectations for my students. I expect constant effort (on whatever level of capability exists) and I am always encouraging and facilitating their learning so that they too can go above and beyond in all that they do.

I am consistently positive with my students and believe that school should be equally fun and structured. I am still learning when it comes to parent communication and collaboration. I do not believe in telling parents what they want to hear because that is a disservice to their students. I do however understand how difficult it is to be a parent, particularly a parent of a child with special needs and I am sensitive to these factors. I believe parents should be my co-teacher because if we can get as close as possible to working on the same page at home and in school, the student will gain the most.

Compromise is a prominent element and by working together when possible to establish a clearly outlined “game plan” the student will gain the most from the experience. If a parent does not agree with a particular approach in my classroom I would make an effort to communicate with them and respect their wishes to the best of my ability. By discussing a variation of the approach or even just explaining my mindset when I developed and instituted it as well as validating their opposition to it confrontation and unnecessary disagreement can be avoided and I could learn an even better approach from the insight and better my practice as a teacher. I also feel like speaking to other teachers about classroom issues or approaches can be very helpful. Exchanging ideas and stepping back and examining with as little bias as possible is always beneficial habit. Ultimately, all efforts should be made with the goal of educating children and creating the finest environment to do so in mind and as educators we are lifelong learners so learning from colleagues, parents and our students is something we should be open to.