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EDUC 210

A Vision of Multicultural Education

Making a vision a reality takes time, money, and a community that is eager and willing to put forth effort to better the education options for their children. My dream has always been to start a school in the middle of a low-income area and to be able to get most if not all my students to graduate high school. Now is my chance to put this dream and make it become something that can actually be done, digging deeper than just thinking about the graduation rate but also assessment, state standards, what it would actually take to get my vision on the streets of New York City and to diminish the assumption that in a poor area there are poor test scores.

My underlying philosophy of education is that a school will provide high-quality, standards-based academics for students from Pre Kindergarten to 12th grade from under resourced communities and underperforming school districts. Also to provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to become a successful working member of society by using innovative strategies and hands-on learning, all based around multicultural education (Promise Academy and New Visions). Multicultural education aim as defined by Banks & Banks “is to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups. One of its important goals is to help all students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate, and communicate with peoples from diverse groups in order to create a civic and moral community that works for the common good” (Banks 1995).

This in-depth philosophy is designed for many people to be a working part of. Big

parts of this philosophy are teachers. Teachers will be provided with an extensive training program that will consist of learning the basics of multicultural education and working with the other teachers to help create the same expectations for all classes. If students see that in every classroom the expectations are the same they will start to respond to that and be able to figure out how they can achieve (EdWeek). Teachers should modify their classroom technique to fit the basics of multicultural education. In Banks and Banks' book *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives* the knowledge construction process is discussed. They explain the knowledge construction process by stating, "teachers help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it"(Banks, 2010). However, teachers cannot take this vision and implement it into their pedagogy by themselves. Robert Moses writes in his book *Radical Equations*, that teachers need, "to develop and hone skills that enable them to work effectively with their co-teachers"(Moses, 2001). Armstrong also agrees by saying, "professional curriculum tasks require you and others in your group to look for help from sources lying well beyond membership of the curriculum development-team" because it is necessary to consider multiple points of view especially in multicultural education. However, the key to good teachers is that they are passionate; if the teachers are passionate and excited about what they teach the students will be excited to learn.

Students are eager to learn and when they walk through the classroom door they bring their experiences, culture, and own way of thinking that needs to be expressed and shared with the rest of the class (Dewey, 1910). Through multi-cultural education the

students experiences can be shared by letting them become involved in their education and have their education impact the surrounding community. Teachers must convey the students' culture and the surrounding communities culture to bring a sense of familiarity and connection into the classroom.

For students to rise to their greatest they need to feel supported, which can happen through the development of strong relationships amongst parents, families, the larger community, and the school (New Visions). The school needs to engage their community members to be able to keep the vision of the school alive. As seen in the movie *Small Steps* the parents and surrounding community members were the ones that pushed to keep the school on track with the vision they had created and the resources they had promised.

While the teachers, students, and community play a role in the existence of a school the main power lies in the hands of the test scores. If the standardized test results do not meet standards then the school can be closed. Assessment is key to keeping standardized test scores up. There should be a mix of summative and formative assessments weekly and daily respectively. Summative assessments as defined by Kubiszyn and Borich in their book *Educational Testing and Measurement: Classroom Application and Practice*, “are intended to provide a measure or gauge of student learning following the completion of a unity of instruction,” while formative assessment is more of a short day to day check-up to help the teacher gauge how the students understood the previous classes goal (Kubiszyn, 2010). These two assessments would be followed up with performance and portfolio assessments, which include observations, checklists and rating scales (Kubiszyn, 2010). This assessment model will help prepare the students for the Regents Exams and this model will also help teachers follow the Common Core State

Standards. The CCSS are laid out to help provide high-quality education and to clearly communicate what is expected of the student (corestandards.org). The mission of the CCSS is on the basis of my philosophy of education, “with students, parents and teachers all on the same page and working together for shared goals, we can ensure that students make progress each year and graduate from school prepared to succeed in college and in a modern workforce”(corestandards.org).

To develop a vision is an evolutionary process that takes students, teachers, and the surrounding community to help make someone’s vision possible. By taking exceptional points of others missions and visions I created my own philosophy of education. By having multicultural education as the school’s basis, students from under resourced areas of New York will be able to work closely with passionate teachers to create an atmosphere where all ideas, perspectives and cultures are welcomed. Through the assessment process and sticking with the vision of the Core State Standards, students will be able to succeed on standardized testing. With the success on standardized testing and the involvement of students, teachers and community members this vision can succeed.

Annotated Bibliography:

Armstrong, David G. (2003). *Curriculum Today*. Columbus, OH: Merrill Prentice Hall.
I used this to show how important it is that teachers work together in curriculum – decision making. Also, in Chapter One he describes the effectiveness of different views and perspectives and how students will be able to use critical thinking to come to their own conclusions.

Banks, C.A.M. & Banks J.A. (1995). *Equity pedagogy: An essential component of multicultural education*.

I used this for the definition of Multicultural Education.

Banks, James A., & Banks, Cherry A, McGee. (2010). *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

In the first three chapters of this book it defines multicultural education and the steps we need to take to get to our goal. It also converses about culture, micro- and macro- cultures and how to treat race, class, gender and disability in the classroom.

Educators Step Up Academics at Ky. Turnaround School. (2010, October). *Education Week*. Retrieved from:

http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/10/27/09kyturnaround_ep.h30.html?tkn=PLSFPLxTiBX7ufj%2BISDnkPurKP8bcbioe1k5&cmp=clp-edweek

This article was about a school that was one of the worst in the nation but they brought a turnaround team into help and create a better working environment. It talked about their goal and what they changed such as literacy across all subjects.

Kubiszyn, Tom & Borich Gary D. (2010). *Educational Testing and Measurement: Classroom Application and Practice, 9th Edition*.

In the first chapter of this book the different types of assessment are discussed. These types of assessment help lead to standardized testing and shows how all different types of assessment work and keep the class on track.

Mission Statement. (n.d.) *Common Core State Standards*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.corestandards.org/>

The mission statement and the basics of core state standards were interesting. It talked about how the core state standards' goal was to have students have a high-quality education and acquire the knowledge and skills to succeed in the real world.

Mission Statement. (2010, August). *Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy Charter School*. Retrieved from:

http://www.hczpromiseacademy.org/site_res_view_template.aspx?id=b20d5a52-91aa-43e0-8b69-87dbf000f84d

I used their mission statement to inspire me for my philosophy. I adapted some of the language and key ideas that they put forth in their mission statement.

Moses, Robert P. (2001). *Radical Equations*. Boston, MA. Beacon Press.

In his pedagogy chapter he discusses how teachers had to have support groups and work together to see how they could put this new type of educating into effect in their classrooms.

Overview. (n.d.). *New Visions for Public Schools*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.newvisions.org/our-goal/overview>

New Visions has created 76 public schools in New York City. I used some of their words in helping describe what I wanted to capture in my philosophy of public school education.