

Philosophy of Teaching by Molly M. Willing

“WHATEVER IT TAKES!”

I have been employed as a teacher, in the public school system, for nine years. I have taught in schools at both ends of the socioeconomic spectrum. Either way, I love going to work everyday. Each day brings new challenges and opportunities, which help me to become a better teacher and a better person. My students are constantly teaching me lessons about life.

I firmly believe that a connection with a student is the key to success. The issue can be finding that connection. I have spent countless hours doing lunch duty, attending sporting events, band concerts, and plays. For many of my students, showing interest in life outside of my classroom has been the key to that connection. For others, simply sitting and talking with them has made the difference. Simple conversations have allowed me important insight into the outside lives of students. For many of my students, I have been able to connect on a musical level. We have connected over our love of music. “Whatever It Takes” to reach each one is the basis of my philosophy on teaching.

I know that every child has a different style of learning. Every child can and will learn if given the opportunity. I have always used the “see it, say it, do it” approach to teaching new material. Over the years, it has become apparent that I must have at least three different ways prepared to teach every concept. Each way must be different, in approach, in an attempt to reach another group of students. If one fails, I reflect on its failure and prepare a new route for success. In a standards based curriculum, failure for my students is not an option.

I would label my teaching style as eclectic. There is nothing that I will not try, and I am not above taking advice from the professionals around me. Meaningful advice can come from anywhere if you are willing to listen and learn from it. Everyone has given me ideas, from lunch ladies to PE teachers. If it works, use it!

My students will leave my classroom understanding the fundamentals of music. They will leave with a respect for music and the skills required for performance. They

may not leave loving music. I do not require a love of music but I do expect a respect and understanding for the art.

Pieces of my philosophy have changed over the years as I continue teaching. However, I have never abandoned the “Whatever It Takes” mentality. I continue to add ideas as I grow in my journey as an educator. I will do ‘Whatever It Takes’ to be successful for my kids.