Chapter 5 Assignment—My Philosophy of Education

There are four major educational philosophies, perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, and social reconstructionism. Based off of these four philosophies, teachers are able to gain their own personal philosophy of education.

Perennialism suggests “nature-including human nature-is constant and that schools should teach classic knowledge”. The teacher that teaches with perennialism in mind believe that curriculum should emphasize math and science and expose students to the “rigors of logical thought and develop intellect”. This philosophy also suggests that the curriculum should be explicit, will be the same for all students and remain intact over a period of time.

Essentialism suggests “specific knowledge and skill exist that all people should possess, such as basic skill in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies”. This philosophy believe that the purpose of going to school is to advance society by having the curriculum include skills needed to function in today’s world. Essentialism has influenced testing and accountability in the classrooms.

Progressivism suggests that curriculum should focus on “real-world problem solving and individual development”. Progressivism believes that the purpose of school is to develop students as complete as possible, physically, socially, and emotionally. Teachers who teach with the progressivism philosophy in mind, involve students in learning by relating it to their personal lives rather than lecturing.

Social Reconstructionism believes that “schools, teachers, and students should lead in alleviating social inequities in our society”. The primary teaching method in social reconstructionism would be discussions on social issues. Social reconstructionism also believes that “schools should be used to eliminate social inequalities by creating a new and more just society”.

After learning about the different philosophies, I have come to what, I believe, would be my educational philosophy. It would be as follows:

Knowledge comes from what we know and how we can apply it today’s world. My job is to help students get excited for school, by teaching them the subjects they need to know and how we can apply it to today’s life, having students think outside the box. The best way to get students to learn is by giving them assignments that relate to real-world topics that students can have a hands-on approach to solving a problem. I will guide them to a conclusion with encouragement and feedback. If my job is done correctly, the students will leave school with the understanding of the content and how they can apply it to life outside of school.

I believe that if we can get students excited for school by including them in discussions rather than just talking to them and making them take notes, students will most likely remember the content in real world situations. Having students “get their hands dirty” will teach kids how to research topics related to the content assignment. Testing to see if they have memorized the content, just doesn’t seem like the best solution for students to know and understand content.

Reference: