

Statement of Purpose

I believe that a good teacher can make education fun and purposeful, but a great teacher will also be a motivational tool in a student's success. When I was 12, I wasn't getting very good grades in school because I didn't have any motivation to succeed, and I didn't like school. My only hobby at the time was music; I had little confidence in my dreams of become a professional musician, and wasn't sure if I wanted to continue pursuing the art. When I was ready to quit, my 6th grade homeroom teacher told me that I could achieve any goal I set for myself, and not to quit because I was afraid of failing. His words and constant support gave me an incredible confidence boost, and I didn't feel like my dreams were unrealistic anymore. A few years later, my freshman high school orchestra teacher took an interest in my love for music. He encouraged me to compose, study, and practice music every day. He helped me accept my love for music, and gave me the confidence to say I wanted to continue studying music in college in hopes of becoming a professional musician. Once I had a goal I was determined to achieve, my motivation carried me from getting C's to getting two years ahead in school and passing my classes with A's and B's. As I was finishing high school, I realized that if I hadn't received the immense encouragement and support from my teachers, I would not have been determined or motivated to put so much effort into my education or plan my career. I started to understand how important of a role teachers have in our society and how big of an impact they can have on individuals. Not long after that realization, I decided that I wanted to become a teacher so that I could support and encourage young minds the way my teachers had done for me.

I started gaining experience teaching as a student leader in my church band from when I was about 14 to 18 years old. The band consisted of elementary and middle school aged stu-

dents, and when the music minister was unable to attend practice or mass, I led the band in making sure everyone had their parts, and that we rehearsed the difficult sections of songs. After a couple years, I got pretty efficient at leading rehearsals and performances, and this knowledge and experience landed me my first job teaching at a summer camp for the City of San Jose. The camp was a BMX camp, which was located at a local skatepark. My first year at the camp I was the main instructor and worked with campers of all ethnical backgrounds. I taught a variety of skill levels: from campers who were just learning how to ride a bike, to campers who were starting to jump and do tricks. I learned how to motivate campers to overcome their fears when they were ready to move on to the next level, as well as how to teach in a large group setting. I taught groups of 15-20 campers at once, coming up with activities they could all learn and participate in, while also working with them individually. By the end of the first summer, I was able to explain how to perform certain maneuvers by braking down the process into simple steps in addition to giving demonstrations. I discovered including visual aids with scaffolding is really important to being a good teacher. My first summer went really well, and it earned me a promotion to the title of Camp Lead for my second summer at camp. The Camp Lead position gave me experience in leading my coworkers, organizing the camp's activities, and communicating with parents while still being the campers' main instructor. That summer we had a serious accident with a camper who took a bad fall, and I was able to guide my staff in making sure the situation was handled professionally. After evaluating the injuries, I instructed my coworkers to contact the camper's parents and the paramedics. I spoke to the injured camper calmly, and asked him if he knew where he was, what day it was, or if he remembered his name. He had lacerations in his mouth so I asked him not to move and remain lying down on his side until help arrived. While

this was going on, my coworkers brought the rest of the campers to the playground to prevent them from crowding around the scene of the accident. My staff and I received gratitude from the parent's and the city's upper management. My boss and her upper management complimented my leadership skills and said they wouldn't have had us do anything different if they were there. Their confirmation of my leadership skills pushed me to accept a volunteer position I currently hold at Montgomery High School's music department. Their band director asks me to conduct small group studies (sectionals) that include students from their jazz and wind ensembles. In these sectionals, the band director will tell me which pieces and he thinks a certain group needs work, and if there is anything specific I need to touch on. Usually, I work on making sure students can play the correct notes and rhythms, and also acquire any historical or background information pertaining to the piece that will help them play the piece more lyrically. I also make sure all the students agree on tempo, phrasing and dynamics, and articulation to achieve a more unison and professional sound. The band director has been more than satisfied with my work so far, and trusts my current ability to break down material into steps students can digest and work through at steady pace.

It is so important to be equally inclusive in the classroom because it teaches and shapes the mindsets and perceptions students create of their surroundings. Teaching students that anyone has the power to achieve greatness no matter their ethnicity, religion, personality, or financial state will help motivate on a personal level, and bring a sense of comfort and security in the classroom. I also want to see every student be given the same opportunities in school, and help encourage them to participate in those opportunities. Further, I hope through setting an understanding that we accept all persons in the classroom, students will be encouraged to step out of

their comfort zone, try new things, and develop a sense of identity knowing none of their peers or teachers are going to judge them. I believe respecting human differences is important to make sure students feel safe and wanted in the classroom. I also believe that community work and collaborations are essential to furthering education and social skills. Our world is changing, and as an educator, constant speculation and reflection is a must in making sure all of our students have the material and knowledge they need to succeed. Lastly, I hope to be able to learn to teach using effective pedagogy, as well as learning many different styles of teaching so that I am more helpful, versatile, and relatable to my future students.