1. **Personal Teaching Statement:**
2. **A Rationale for Elementary Art Education**

I believe that Elementary Art Education should focus on a child’s exploration of the world through art. I feel that elementary students need to be able to learn and understand self-expression through art as well as different techniques and artists. Paul E. Bolin states “art-making is perceived as an opportunity to wrestle with the imponderable elements of our lives and an occasion to challenge the mysteries of ourselves and the world.”(Bolin, p.10). I believe this to be very true and very helpful in art education. Children even at a young age need to understand and be taught that creative thinking can help them no matter what their interests are in life. I want to teach art that is meaningful to their lives and can go beyond the art classroom and into all parts of their education.

1. **A Vision for the Elementary Art Classroom**

The environment in the Elementary art classroom should be about respecting others and a safe place to express your thoughts and feelings. Tomlinson and Imbeau say it best, “First, the teachers are clear and unequivocal about expectations for behavior and work. Said otherwise, they don’t put up with nonsense in the classroom. At the same time, however, they communicate to students their unconditional acceptance, unwavering belief in each student’s capacity to succeed,” (Tomlinson & Imbeau, p. 141). It is the teacher’s job to set the tone in their classroom on how to behave and what is expected. This is a great responsibility to make sure that we are a positive example to our students.

There should be a learning environment that allows us to share our opinions but that doesn’t keep us from listening to the teacher. The students should have boundaries on what is right and wrong but once they understand these principles they should that I have created a safe environment that gives them the confidence to learn.

Students should also feel that their teacher is flexible and isn’t so rigid she can’t roll with the days ups and downs. Life isn’t in a test tube and we can’t expect our students to always do everything a specific way. If we want our students to learn we need to understand what is working in the classroom and what isn’t working in the classroom. Students should feel it is okay to respectfully have a voice in their own education in the art classroom.

There should also be sensitivity to diversity and backgrounds of each of my students. Some of my students may come from very serious circumstances that include not enough to eat or a broken home that they are adjusting to. Students will also be from very different backgrounds than my own such as race, ethnicity or religion. I want to embrace all of our differences and allow those differences to make our classroom more interesting and even fun! If my students see that I am interested in them as individuals then my hope is that even if they have many struggles at home they will feel secure in my leadership in the classroom.

To sum it up I want my classroom to be a fun and exciting environment that even for students who may not be that interested in art can find something that speaks to them. As Dewey said that art should be part of our daily lives and can give our lives a purpose.

1. **A Teaching Philosophy**

Art education and learning should occur in many different ways. They need to understand technical knowledge, knowledge of other artists, expressive knowledge and conceptual knowledge. If all these components are taught successfully then students will be very well rounded artists. I don’t believe that art making needs to be involved in every class period or lesson to be successful at educating students about art.

Art education should incorporate parts of a student’s everyday lives, which might include T.V. characters, family members and culture. This will help make art more relevant to students and they will be able to identify with my teaching if it lines up with their everyday lives. Not only what they see in visual culture but also who they are and a multicultural classroom will be important to my teaching. I want each of my students to feel validated in who they are and where they come from.

I also feel it is important that “The more opportunities the teacher gives students to think about the same thing in different ways and different things in the same way, the more agile their minds will become.” (Morgan & Saxton, p.107). In other words, I do not want little robots in my classroom but students that think and understand what is being taught. I do not want them spouting off facts but really helping them to construct their own cognition in art education. As a teacher I “cannot control thinking, you job is to generate thinking.”(Morgan & Saxton, p. 109). I also want my students education to be organized by scaffolding what they already know to be able to learn what they did not know.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my teaching philosophy that learning should occur in many different way because children learn in many different ways. I will need to be flexible in my teaching to help with students learning because no two children are truly alike. Flexibility in teaching should include being able to slow down or pick up the pace of my lessons. I want to also see what lessons work and which ones don’t work because I don’t see a need in repeating lessons if they brought zero educational value to a child’s life. There will be many things I will have to learn about teaching and I will always want to be able to reflect on my teaching practices and myself. I want to make sure I never stop learning and growing that way I am a good example to my students.

**References:**

Bolin, P. E. (1996). We Are What We Ask. *Art Education*, 49(5), 7-10.

Morgan, N., & Saxton, J. (1991). *Asking Better Questions: Models, Techniques and Classroom Activities for Engaging Students in Learning* (pp. 106-110). Markham, Ontario: Pembroke Publishers Limited.

Tomlinson, C.A., & Imbeau, M.B. (2010). *Leading and Managing a Differentiated Classroom.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.