

Olympic Academy is a highly structured learning environment that supports students with challenging social, emotional, and behavioral issues achieve personal and educational goals. We believe kids don't have a lack of *will*, they have a lack of *skill*. Just like reading and math skills, social and emotional skills can be taught. My experience at Olympic Academy has solidified my resolve towards education beyond simply teaching. Although teaching is one my greatest passions, it is but one-third the journey on my 30-year-roadmap towards achieving my ultimate goal.

Proceeding my graduation from The Evergreen State College in 2019 to the present school year, I have had the pleasure of working for the Capital Region Educational Service District 113 as a para-educator of Olympic Academy. As an educator, I have successfully worked with every grade level of student from K-5 when I started as an elementary para, to middle school age students, and now high school which I primarily support and substitute teach with a limited teaching certification. While teaching, I focus on strong academic instruction and behavior management interventions, as they are our first line of defense in working effectively with students who are best served in a non-traditional educational setting. Embedded within the active inquiry-based curriculum, our students developed their social, emotional, and behavioral skills in tandem to the academics. I found significant joy in teaching not only my students' cognitive capacities, but them as a whole person, confirming my decision to become a teacher. Specifically, by embedding social and emotional learning into not only our academic curriculum and homebase instruction, but through every interaction we have with students, I am able to functionally model social skills and behavioral standard for our students.

After working at Olympic Academy my resolve towards education has never been firmer. At the end of my 30-year-roadmap, I will become a superintendent that will redefine our outmoded industrial education system to create a culture of learning in which empowers students to understand their internal experiences as much as the world around them, so that they become fulfilled individuals and active compassionate members of society. An education system of highly personalized, holistic approaches that nurtures curiosity, develops their love of learning, and enables students to face the real challenges of the twenty-first century.