

Volunteer Experience

My time volunteering and observing has informed my decision to be a teacher because I have been able to witness first hand the lack of support students and teachers alike are receiving which leads to students falling behind, and feeling a lack of community and leads to not being informed citizens as well as not be able to reach goals academically.

My most recent volunteering experience has been working with students one on one attending summer school. A majority of the kids who end up needing supplemental learning during the summer that I observed were primarily students of color and students who did not speak English as their first language and were majority Spanish speakers. When working with students whose first language was not English on reading, I noticed they were falling behind not because they didn't know how to read, but because they learned how to read in Spanish. Almost all of the kids in the summer school program were able to grasp concepts once we took time and patience in understanding exactly what they needed. There is a lack of cultural understanding between students and teachers that makes learning for the students extremely difficult. There needs to be more teachers who take their time to really know who their students are and bridge the gap that many of these students experience. Students are most likely not going to learn from someone who doesn't understand them or want to connect with them. I specifically think elementary school is the most important place to start building the foundation of this community and support so that the students don't get left behind later on in their education. I was really able to see first hand the inequities that exist and the result of those inequities, which just made my passion stronger for working with kids and one day being able to help pave the way to new ways of supporting students.