

Gabriela Montes for MiT; Prompt A Response

The area that I intend to teach upon completion of my MiT training will be in the Elementary: K-8 grades. When considering teaching I have always been drawn to the younger grades, even more specifically K-5, because internally I just know how to connect and see young students not just as kids, but as little humans and lifelong learners just starting out their life! I see a lot of hope, potential, and eagerness to learn in these younger ages that is unlike any other ages. With the schooling I have already completed I feel I have a good base knowledge to stand upon when moving forward to learn more specific techniques and strategies in real world classroom situations.

My strengths in preparation are my undergraduate coursework in Early Childhood Development, subsequent practicum and other field experiences needed to complete the degree, as well as the time I have spent as an active employee in school districts and in other jobs with young learners. In my coursework I have learned a foundational framework about how the psyche of young learners can progress. I have learned about theorists and theories about how young children stagger their learning. I believe a connection in Montessori, Waldorf, and Reggio Emilia are not not entirely disconnected. Learning about how these theorists and theories each see the emergent learner has allowed me to be even more open minded and hearted when it comes to real life scenarios. I have also had previous real life experiences- I have helped to teach english as a second language abroad in China, I have taught in preschools and daycares, I have babysat for multiple families, I have been a full time nanny, and I have been a paraeducator in multiple elementary schools. Apart from that, I am a mother. As a mom to a 4.5 and 2.5 year old, they have helped to establish my current knowledge as well as highlight areas where I am lacking.

In order to be a successful teacher candidate there is no doubt that I have areas needing growth in my education. In fact, I know I do- I would expect anyone with my education to continue learning in order to step foot into a lead teacher position. I need to learn how to manage a classroom, not just connect with students individually. I need to learn specific strategies and techniques to teach essential technical foundation skills, not just understand they are necessary and know that each child learns at a different pace. I need to gain a better understanding of the framework and benchmarks for each grade. I need to then learn how to perform curriculum mapping in order to meet those standards, as well as meet my students where they are *actually* at. I need to build upon where my heart and desire to teach young students and former education in the foundation of early childhood development skills collide- I need to learn all the elements involved in real world teaching.

My plans for the next steps are pretty simple- I plan to complete this application process, I plan to get admitted, and I plan to immerse myself in the coursework in order to become not just a heart driven teacher, but a heart driven *and* highly educated teacher. I want to be a teacher who is

always passionate about continuing my learning in how to become a better educator. I want to to always keep my mindset clear about why I wanted to become a teacher in the first place- because like I mentioned previously, children are not just “kids,” they are little humans learning not only how to just circumvent emotions and life, but how to begin to be learners and develop their whole futures.

With that being said, I am excited and eager to begin this process. I wish to meld together my previous coursework with new experiences and training in order to become a highly qualified educator.