

Over the tenure of my professional career as a special education paraeducator, coach, and instructor, I have honed my skills and have curated a personal mission statement regarding my approach to education. I believe that every student should have the opportunity to succeed. I believe that the best learning occurs when support is present. I have worked with students who come from a diverse background and therefore recognize that there will be unique challenges for each and every student. I have been able to manage classrooms where behavioral issues have arisen and I have, I think, handled them fairly and effectively. I am quick on my feet, flexible, open to feedback, and adaptable. As an educator with a passion for learning, I know I would be a great fit for the Master in Teaching program at The Evergreen State College.

When considering the English Language Arts pathway, my coursework includes everything from Shakespeare, dramatic literature, and theatre history to English 101 and 102 during my undergraduate work at Centralia College and the University of Idaho. Not surprisingly, my passion for storytelling has been a major influence in my academic career. The same components that one would find in the analysis of a poem or a short story coincide with my understanding of how to make sense of a piece of dramatic literature. I have a deep love for language, reading, writing, and speech. Without these, advocacy can't happen. When I reflect on the best teachers and administrators with whom I've worked, their influence reminds me that every story and every voice matters. They have crafted their skills as active listeners, and made safe spaces for students, educators, and community members alike. They were, for me, catalysts for change.

The breadth and depth of options that are possible in teaching English Language Arts is nothing short of astonishing to me. My areas for growth, I think, are very clear. The technology that currently exists in the classroom is a far cry from my K-12 experience. Learning how to adapt to a world where Siri lives in each student's pocket will be a challenge. What I'm confident of is the belief that I have much to learn and that there is no definitive pedagogical method. I'm excited by the fact that I will never "arrive." I will never stop trying, asking new questions, giving myself grace, and working towards creating a classroom wherein students are emboldened to be deep, critical thinkers. My brother, who is the Director of Secondary Education for the Steilacoom School District, once told me "The biggest disease that afflicts teachers is when they stop trying new stuff. We never finish the craft. We never beat the game. The world changes. Kids change. We (educators) have to change too."