

## **LAURA M. PIPER**

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State of Michigan Six Year Provisional Teaching Certificate  
Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, All subjects  
Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, Self Contained  
Mathematics, Highly Qualified in Grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>  
Geography, Highly Qualified in Grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

### **Teaching Philosophy**

As an educator, I am entrusted to support the growth and progress of our future leaders to the best of my ability. Therefore, I hold myself accountable to standards I have set not only for myself, but my students and classroom as well. These standards are (1) implementing a differentiated classroom in order to meet all students' needs; (2) evolving and improving my practices to ensure I am supporting students in maximizing their academic, emotional, and social growth; and (3) providing a classroom atmosphere which values community, allowing each student to feel safe, valued, and eager to participate.

Each student enters a classroom at various academic levels. Without differentiating instruction, it is near impossible to close gaps between students while still challenging higher achieving students. If you were to walk into my classroom, you would see evidence of differentiation in every aspect of my teaching. In Literacy I conduct guided reading groups divided by reading levels and later in the school year by reading comprehension skills that need development. All of my Literacy Centers are differentiated as well. Activities at Literacy Centers are color coded, and students know which color they are assigned to. I also value differentiating math as there is always a wide range of learners in this subject area. I do this by implementing guided math groups with three rotations consisting of a games/activity group, a math journals group, and a guided math group (meeting with me). I have conducted these groups with Pearson's Envision Math curriculum and also with Everyday Math. This is something that is transferable to both primary and upper grades. With a teaching minor in math, I strive to discover ways of engaging all learners and showing how math relates so often to the real-world. This was the reason I initially developed an interest in math.

John Cotton Dana, a school Librarian, said "Who dares to teach, must never cease to learn." I believe strongly in this statement. As an educator, my job is to ensure I am doing everything in my ability to help students reach their potential. If I discover a practice of mine is not supporting student growth as much as I would expect, I feel responsible for evolving and improving my practices to fit student need. I am responsible for revising lesson plans, using assessment data to guide my teaching, and continuously varying my approach until each of my students has met or exceeds expectations.

My goal for each student as a school year progresses is for me to become less necessary to them in guiding them through routines, instructional practices, and class-wide discussions. In order for this to happen, I need to create a strong learning community at the beginning of the school year. To do this, I stress the importance of each student's thoughts, opinions, and questions. We practice routines, do team building exercises, and discuss each others expectations. Eventually students feel confident enough to voice their ideas, and I am able to scaffold an inquiry-based classroom. An inquiry-based classroom will engage students as I work to connect the curriculum with student interest. This interest in content eliminates many behavioral problems.

I am a strong believer in every child being able to learn and that it is only a matter of discovering how each child learns. The standards I have set for myself guide in finding ways to educate each student as an individual and helping them reach their potential. I will not yield until each student has succeeded.