Professional Ethics Statement

Concordia University-Portland

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**Ethical Foundations**

My personal ethics are based on a strong foundation of Integrity and Honesty. As a future elementary school educator, I have established an ethical framework, which considers religious convictions, family background, and global perspective to education. These considerations have helped provide guidance as I form an ethical framework that can serve in all aspects of life including my professional position. Josephson (2010) penned, “integrity was defined as “wholeness and consistency” which requires us to set our standards and convictions that we desire for us and then live by them” (p.6).

As I reviewed the theories and ethical frameworks of Borgmann (2014), Josephson (2010), Palmer (2014), and Hinman (2002) this week, it became evident in our complex and diverse culture, there is a need to have a base ethical foundation of virtues and defined character traits, which allow us to integrate all ethical theories into our framework. This will allow us to make the best decision for our staff and students, while providing them with the best possible educational choices and the ability to meet their cultural and religious needs. (Hinman, 2002)

If the Ethics of Duty is included in our personal ethical frameworks, then we are stating that we will choose to do the right thing, for the right reasons and not for personal gain or for our egos. (Hinman, 2002) We will take into consideration education is not one size fits all and there is a need for professional services and accommodations to fit the needs of each student. This includes consideration of the student’s right to free and public education without discrimination and autonomy. The inclusion of Ethics of Rights into our framework ensures we will consider human decency in our educational options. Also, the Ethics of Respect includes decision-making considering the student’s culture and ethnic background along with religious preferences in that process while providing respect for the students and their rights to be involved in their educational goals.

The Ethics of Duty and Utilitarianism impact my ethical framework the most. In my efforts to do the right thing for my students I must consider the reason, my professional role, and the roles of student and their families and cultural background. The impact will be different for each individual student involved. However, my sense of duty will ensure I consider the appropriate options, while the Utilitarian theory will ensure I am making the choices needed to make their worlds better, even if it means self-sacrifice on my part! (Hinman, 2002).

The Ethics of Justice is the final checkpoint on my ethical framework. When all other duties have been met, the triple check system is Justice. Is this choice fair to all concerned? Does it provide equality to each party? Hinman (2002) offers, justice does not mean that everything is equally divided or that we are ensuring each side wins on three points. Equality for one person may require more services and care than for another. Equality and Equity are the two different needs that should be addressed in education by teachers. We believe we equal amounts of time with each student. However, not all students require the same amount of guidance or interventions in a lesson. They may require differentiated instruction that caters to their individual learning styles.

The hardest point for me personally in this area is the risk of rationalization. It is too easy to justify why you make a choice or choose to give more attention to one student over the others. Josephson (2010) offers, “rationalization makes it too easy for us to justify what we do, and why. He also insisted we should act the way we believe, “do what we say” or change our framework, because “character really does count,” (p. 4). Dealing with culturally diverse students can lead educators to use rationalization. If we do not understand a culture, it is easy to dismiss student’s needs without consideration for the students’ right to equity and equality, which meets his or her educational needs. Cultural diversity awareness and sensitivity training are needed in education throughout the United States to improve our outcomes and to ensure that rationalization is avoided in our decision-making processes.

References

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