

“Why I Teach”

by Karen Drosinos

Region II Teacher of the Year

I remember myself as a first grader engaged in a lesson on making a mosaic butterfly. I was focused on cutting out perfectly colored squares to glue into my outlined shape, but before I knew it, it was time to stop and clean up. As we transitioned back to instruction, my teacher walked over to me with my mosaic butterfly and asked me if I wanted to continue working on my masterpiece, explaining to me that she was proud of my effort and creativity and was excited to see the completed product. My teacher continued with the lessons for that day, but I continued to work on my butterfly.

It is not the butterfly that I created that I remember most. Rather, what impacted me most was the way my teacher understood and valued how I learned. This is both the science and the art of teaching. I look forward with anticipation to the moment when a student makes a connection, to when a connection leads to higher-order thinking, and most importantly to the moment when I see that they *love* learning. My purpose as a teacher is to embed in each of my students the moment where they, too, believe that they can accomplish anything. Because, like my teacher believed in me, I, too, believe in each of them. My philosophy of teaching is simple: teaching is both a science and an art. The science of teaching is in understanding how children learn; the art of teaching lies in how you teach them. And it is an outstanding teacher who can do just that.



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