**Katherine Hicks**

**Teaching Philosophy**

**Hands on Minds on- sparking curiosity and a love of learning through hands on activities.**

I am a firm believer that children need to have **experiences** with educational concepts in order to fully internalize their meaning. Therefore, in my class we are always testing our existing knowledge and challenging these beliefs with experiments and hands on activities. This, in turn, sparks curiosity among children and develops a love of learning. In our class, we embrace this interest and make everyday a new adventure!

**Global Education- Fostering acceptance and understanding of other cultures**

The concept behind global education is to not only to educate our students of different histories and cultures, but also show them how everyone is **interconnected**. If we emphasize the **similarities** rather then the **differences** of people around the world, then we can create a more unified community in the future. In my classroom, we embrace this global view and celebrate our differences.

**Everyone can Learn- Providing an individualized educational experience for every child through differentiated instruction**

During my time as both a student and an educator, there is one idea that is undeniable; people learn in different ways. I believe that children have the right to an education that supports their needs. I accomplish this in my class through MTSS (multi-tiered system of support) and differentiated instruction. For example, I use the workshop model during literacy and math time. Thus, circulating the children around to different stations, allows me to meet each child at the academic level that is right for them. I also use data from the testing system in our district (AIMSweb) to help identify the students that need more support. Once recognized, I provide additional instruction to those children and closely monitor their progress. I am determined to find what each student needs and provide instruction that allows the student to reach their full potential!

**Positive and safe learning environment- A classroom where children know that they are loved and supported.**

From the first day of school to the last, my students walk in the classroom and are greeted with a hug, high five or “good morning.” As an educator, I understand how important it is to foster an environment where children feel safe and supported. In my class, I use almost exclusively positive reinforcement to correct unwanted behavior and praise hard work. My students know that I am here to challenge them and push them to be the best that they can be. However, at the end of the day, my student’s walk away understanding that we are a “classroom family” and we are here for one another.