



MARQUETTE  
UNIVERSITY

College of Education  
Office of the Dean

Hello Again, Education Majors –

In my role as an Education dean, it's very natural that I'd be encouraging you to aspire to greatness as a teacher. My social justice calling demands that I hold you to the belief that "*all children have the right to the highest quality education.*" Consequently, I look to our Education faculty to prepare you, through thoughtful and rigorous guidance in the art of teaching, to become skilled in pedagogy, gifted in interpersonal relations, and professionally driven.

But I have a confession to make. I have an ulterior motive for encouraging you to become a world class teacher, and I think it's time to come clean. My reason can be summed up in one word, "Audrey." It turns out that my 3 ½ year old daughter, one of the two loves of my earthly life, is a major reason why I'm determined to persuade, entice, or inspire you. After all, **you might be Audrey's teacher one day!** And, as a parent, I will expect nothing short of teaching excellence from you.

So, if that were to happen, what criteria would I use to size you up? I'd be looking for a teacher who is expertly trained, always prepared, thoroughly organized, and both resourceful and creative. Audrey's teacher will need to communicate clearly, think well on her/his feet, manage the classroom environment, and be able both to differentiate instruction and multi-task. I'll expect someone who is naturally engaging and can make learning meaningful and fun. This same teacher should be adept at assessment and know how to adjust instruction accordingly. High standards for learning had better exist in that classroom, but at the same time, my daughter should feel safe to fail now and then. I want Audrey's teacher not only to help shape my daughter's mind, but to lovingly nurture her heart and soul.

Did I mention that my wife and I are also looking for an exemplary role model? I won't be happy unless positive values are purposely and consistently being imparted in school, and my daughter receives high quality character education. I'll also be looking for evidence of a teacher who is a lifelong learner, one who is committed to becoming a master educator through ongoing professional development. Most of all, this teacher must be patient and kind, love and respect students, and take enormous care and pride in helping them to succeed. How would you like someone with those demanding expectations showing up for parent/teacher conferences?



Well, guess what? Thankfully, most parents love their kids so much that they will hold you to a very high standard. They may not bring the same exacting and exhaustive criteria for teaching excellence as me, but they'll demand that you operate in the best interest of their beloved child. Even those parents who aren't loving enough to take their children's teachers to task -- or don't bother showing up at all -- are entitled to having those same set of expectations being met. But, for that matter, take parents and guardians out of the equation altogether, and you're still confronted with where we began, namely, that every child is entitled to an outstanding education.

Will you be up to this daunting challenge? As a "Marquette teacher," your chances are very good, but much of your preparedness will depend entirely on you. So let me leave with you with this thought, something that has been underscored for me as a parent -- **all kids must matter to you in the same way that your own child would**. Anything less would be unforgivable.



Besides, you wouldn't want to disappoint a family like this one, would you? We'll be depending on you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bill Henk, Dean  
College of Education