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Writing Sample

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     “Please take a seat and get started on your class work while I take attendance.” I carefully scanned the room looking for any absent students. The black beady eyes of six stuffed animals stared right back at me; I had a full class that day.

From a very young age, I learned to appreciate education and had a genuine thirst for knowledge. As I grew older I began to admire my teachers and I would emulate them as I played school in my own bedroom. It was not uncommon for my mother to find graded papers, attendance sheets and report cards lying around the house, addressed to the parents of my teddy bears and dolls. I wanted to practice the kindness and patience that my teachers had shown towards me as I attended school.

             Just as I strove to have a positive influence in the lives of my stuffed animals as a child, I am eager to plan and manipulate instruction to meet the needs of my students this coming year. My experiences through the completion of both my Bachelors and Masters degrees at Pace University, as well as my vast student teaching experience at various school districts has prepared me for the challenges and joys of a special education teaching position.

I spent this past year working as a student teacher at Mamaroneck Avenue School with two very knowledgeable and experienced teachers in both the inclusion and self-contained settings. My time spent in Fern Satin’s self-contained classroom has given me the unique experience of working with a diverse population of students with vastly different needs, all within the same setting. Teaching in a classroom such as this can pose many challenges, as it requires a teacher to stretch themself in many different directions. It is imperative that a teacher in a self-contained classroom is organized and prepared. One role of a special education teacher is to work collaboratively with other service providers to help the child meet their IEP goals. Without proper preparation and organization of data, this cannot be done effectively. These are both skills that I possess.

Additionally, I have had the unique opportunity to work collaboratively with several service providers within the Mamaroneck Avenue School this year. During my time in both the self-contained and inclusion classrooms, I worked closely with the behavior specialist from the Holistic Learning Center to practice positive behavior support for students within the class. Additionally, students were pulled out frequently for speech and language therapy as well as occupational and physical therapy. As their teacher, it was important for me to hear feedback on how the student was progressing. Many of these professionals offered this information willingly and gave me suggestions of how I could continue to work on these skills within the classroom. I appreciated this openness and look forward to further building these relationships this coming year.

Lastly, my experiences this past year as a Residence Director at Pace University has greatly influenced my ability as a leader, team-player and collaborator. As the sole director of a residence hall housing 175 students, I lead a team of four Resident Assistants in effectively managing a building. This position required me to run weekly staff meetings, support and guide my staff and collaborate with various university departments to meet similar goals. I am excited to translate these skills and experiences to work effectively on a team within a school setting.

As a teacher, I want for my students to experience a thirst for knowledge and eagerness to explore, play, learn and grow in my classroom.