

STILL LEARNING

The student becomes the master

Lakyn Davis, class of 2021

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It takes a certain type of person to be a teacher. To do this job, you have to have a genuine desire to help your students grow, to get involved with them, and truly care for them—you don't become a teacher for money. In fact, the way student teacher Mr. Naughton explained, you do it simply for the joy of seeing your students learn new things.

"I just love to learn, and I always have. I had a really hard foreign policy class in the tenth grade. I was doing well, but I had friends that were struggling. I worked with them and the teacher to help them, and it made me so happy to see things click in their minds," Mr. Naughton said. "That's the moment I knew I wanted to be a teacher."

For student teacher Mr. Rising, teaching is the best way to take what he loves and share it for the benefit of others.

"I've always had a love for math and science. Some teachers I had in high school were just so passionate about what they were teaching that it inspired me. I pursued it because I knew I could be that person," Mr. Rising described.

Even with subjects as different as math and social studies, every teacher and aspiring teacher has a common goal, and that is to help students learn. It's all an endless cycle: teacher helps student, student is inspired, student becomes teacher.

"One specific teacher I remember made me feel confident in my work no matter what. He took time to work with me individually, and that really influenced me," Mr. Naughton said.

However, teaching is a job that expands outside of the classroom, in school activities, clubs, and events, and the most important thing is to constantly remind yourself why you're teaching in the first place.

"It's easy to get overwhelmed in the chaos sometimes, and if I could leave him with one piece of advice, it would be to never lose focus on the kids and why we do what we do," Mr. Rising's cooperating teacher Mr. Patula said.



Student teacher Mr. Rising poses for a funny photo with his 4th period Geometry class.

Source: Lakyn Davis

Student teaching is an experience that is rewarding for everyone involved, whether it's watching progress being made or being the one making that progress.

"It has taught me a lot about what's needed to manage a classroom, just being organized with all the preparation for each lesson in order for the students to be totally comfortable with the material," Mr. Rising explained.

Not only has it taught them organization and patience, but student teaching has given them the experience they need to be certain this is the path they're meant to be on.

"If I wasn't sure before, I definitely am now. I enjoyed working with the kids here so much," Mr. Naughton said.

Moving forward, the only thing both of these future teachers have to do, according to their co-ops, is keep an open mind.

"Stay flexible. That's so important in this job," Mr. Naughton's co-op Mr. Moore said. "There's still so much for us as teachers to learn every day." ■

Westmont Hilltop School District

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