A Philosophy of Teaching
By David E. Walker, Ed.D.

The purpose of educating the populous of a nation is to instill in each of its members a continual desire to seek knowledge and to utilize its components for personal and societal growth. The challenge to those who choose to facilitate such information is selection of methodologies that effectively address the diversity of learners who are encountered during one's career. The intrinsic reward is realization that every student has attained his or her potential through synergism between pupil and instructor.

At the core of every accomplished teacher who is able to elicit intellectual enthusiasm from his or her students is a subject-area base that allows for diversification of instructional techniques. Awareness of multiple intelligences that have been researched and identified is a significant factor in an educator's ability to serve each student's cognitive uniqueness. However, also paramount is the need to view students as human beings who require the affective domains incorporated into pedagogy and andragogy. The learning environment must become student-centric, as the curriculum assumes many facets in its dissemination. A sense of academic excitement is palpable as pupils eagerly anticipate lessons experienced in varied structures, i.e. the incorporation of student interests, play, and active hands-on and minds-on learning. Constructivist theory involves all in scaffolding that can result in utilization of a myriad of edifying processes.

The possibilities for instructional methods are infinite. Education is a concept that promotes discovery, and students are its premier investigators as they work in teams to produce projects that solve problems, originate discussions, and develop cooperative creativity. After learners have been introduced to assimilative information, they think, pair, and share their observations and realizations. In discussion groups, they ponder the contributions of all, sometimes reaching consensus and sometimes not. As the academic year concludes, the students, in conjunction with their professors, review their accomplishments through portfolio assessment and reflective thinking.

Because of the fluidity of education, a teacher must also possess dedication to life-long learning and research if he or she is to facilitate effectively for those who fill classrooms. Change forces in society and in education undeniably impact academic information and instructional methodologies; the Common Core State Standards serve as one recent example of these forces. Acceptance of the responsibility for competent presentation of all subject matter must always be a tenet of one's teaching philosophy. Hence, the most effective educators know when and how to use technology tools to support the teaching and learning partnership without excessive utilization of them in the guise of state-of-the-art instruction.

Teaching, however, is not peculiar to the classroom. Its parameters encompass a collaborative group comprised of colleagues, administrative contemporaries, and community members. As they unite to provide access to education's best practices and experiences, these individuals are joined in dedicated service to the students whose future they impact.