

BELIEFS drive ACTIONS

What beliefs do you hold about students?

What beliefs do you hold about teacher roles and teaching?

Mindset matters. What a teacher believes about both students and teaching can have a major impact on the way they structure learning and their classroom environment. Teachers tend to implement classroom practices that reflect their philosophical beliefs. A well-reasoned personal philosophy or set of belief statements can be a driving force for your own professional development, growth, and teaching practices.

Consider the following examples of belief statements about students and teaching. Which represent beliefs you hold? What are some of the ways holding any of these beliefs would impact a teacher's practice? What statement would you add to represent a core belief you hold about students or the role of a teacher?

Sample Beliefs about Students

- Students invest in school because of the presence of trusting and caring relationships with adults.
- Each and every adolescent is capable of changing their behavior with guidance, instruction, support, and coaching.
- All students can achieve at high levels and different groups of students need different kinds and amounts of time, attention, tasks, and supports to behave responsibly and succeed academically.
- Meaningful learning occurs when students are allowed to confront real problems, make choices, and find solutions.

Sample Beliefs about Teacher Roles & Teaching

- The main purpose of education is to develop students' ability to think critically and integrate ideas, rather than to accumulate facts. Teaching is not about dispensing knowledge, it is about supporting students through the process of constructing meaning and developing deep understandings.
- It is a teacher's job to create order in the classroom by thoughtfully implementing rituals, routines, procedures, and clear expectation. We know students will make mistakes and will learn from their mistakes, and it's part of a teacher's role to help them self-correct, re-engage and remain in the classroom.
- In effective classrooms, teachers need to consistently attend to at least five elements: whom they teach (students), where they teach (physical and social learning environment), what they teach (content), how they teach (instruction), and what students are actually learning (formative assessment).
- Part of teaching is supporting students with developing academic behaviors, mindsets, and social emotional competences that will provide them with the "soft skills" necessary to be successful in school and life.