

Chapter 2

Theme:

The issue is the quality of the teacher verse the district program or educational theory.

Single Best Quote:

"We must make sure any 'mandates' fit everyone appropriately."

Points:

1. Whitaker listed these things as secondary to a school when compared to the primary issue:
The Teacher
 - a. Whole-language and/or Phonics
 - b. Basal readers open Classrooms
 - c. Assertive Discipline
 - d. Praise and Rewards
 - e. Lecturing
2. All of the above work when applied by a great teacher, but all can fail when done poorly. The key is not the name of the program, but the quality of the implementation.
3. Whitaker says on page 11 that we are all aware of students individual learning styles, but we also need to be aware that teachers vary in their abilities and approaches.
 - a. I suffered through lame PD's between 1990-2016 while this was being taught concerning students, but was neglected to the point of abusive/negligence when applied to the teachers.
 - b. Great schools must first recognize individual teaching styles and Great teachers must recognize individual learning styles.

Self-evaluation and application as a:

- **Shop teacher** – There is such a wide range of industrial and technological skills (auto mechanics to woodworking to robotics to computer programs, and etc., etc.) that falls under this umbrella of technology education. The field of the shop teacher (industrial technology, etc.) can become broader and deeper than math or language arts. But, the classroom teacher in the shop is likely going to be limited in their field of expertise. This presents a challenging situation since we want to introduce and explore the available options without crushing the teacher who must appear "proficient" to some level in an area that is impossible to become a master of all. This is where the Great Teacher must rise to the level of a classroom manager or program facilitator and let the burden of learning fall naturally between the students' encounter with the technology of the subject matter. It can be humbling and frustrating as a teacher trying to teach without really being an expert, but trusting the natural learning process that occurs between the student and the project will make this burden bearable.
- **Bible teacher** – This is a battle I have been engaged in with the church since 1987. Recently I have written two books on this subject. The first identifying the importance and necessity for the teacher in front of the people at church instead of the program leader or the pastor/CEO or the motivational speaker. The second book identifies the result of failing to teach the church. Interesting correlation here between the public school and the church who are both in need of great teachers, not merely certified professionals who fail to be great teachers.
- **Parent** – Focus on the goal and your personal strengths. Use your style to be a great parent.
- **Person** – Personalities differ, but most have a very productive edge when discovered and used properly. Don't try to be someone else. Find out who you are and develop yourself!

Questions/Criticisms/Evaluations/Comments of Whitaker's presentation or perspective:

Hire and develop teachers, not professionals with certification. Hire gifted teachers. The gift of teaching can be developed by the individual and the district, but the certified professional can merely sit through more training, gain more terminology and learn more techniques without developing as a teacher. You cannot develop a professional who is merely certified into a great teacher any more than you can polish a hardened piece of clay into gold.