

Adrianna Irvine

To My Fellow Student Studying to Be a Teacher

The author writes to reassure her fellow student studying to become a teacher not just in these unsure times, but in everyday campus life.

To my fellow student studying to be a teacher, I know the ever-twisting nature of academic advancement seems to push your limits at every bend, and at this point in the semester you are tired, overworked, and probably at wits' end. My words of advice: put your head down and get to work. You'll make it through. But, you already know that; you're smart, hard-working, and more than determined. If you weren't, you wouldn't have made it past the first field experience without changing your major.

To my fellow student studying to be a teacher, I know that our future profession gets demeaned and our college work often gets discredited by other students studying to be engineers, nurses, or physicists. But we will be teaching the next great engineers, nurses, and physicists and helping them succeed in their learning, and hopefully they will be kinder. Cutting out worksheets in the library grants us side glances and smirks, an occasional "you are just a glorified babysitter making the kids color," but we know that that couldn't be further from the truth. We are helping our students develop fine motor skills, something most others don't have to even think about.

To my fellow student studying to be a teacher, days in the classroom can be exhausting and you're probably doubting yourself, while asking yourself if this is the right career path for you. Sometimes activities don't go as planned and lessons collapse in on themselves. You are learning. I suppose it is better to have all of those things happen now while you are a preservice teacher than the real deal, right? Granted, you can be certain those things will still happen, but you are always going to be learning. And that is just fine.

To my fellow student studying to be a teacher, at this point in your college career, you may be doubting yourself. You have heard from countless people that you will not know if teaching is for you until you are in the classroom. I will empathize with you here, that is terrifying. Growing up (or maybe not), this has been your answer to "What do you want to be when you grow up?" and the thought of it potentially not working out is harrowing. However, from one education student to another, I believe in you. If you are feeling these things, it probably means you care about your future kiddos that will be in your classroom.

Between the countless assignments and final projects that you are working on, stop and take a breath. Though the work is hard, the hours logged are long, and the amount of effort and heart put into everything is enormous, you will persevere and succeed. I have no doubts about it. So, to my fellow student studying to be a teacher, stop giving yourself such a hard time. Take an hour and cook yourself a good meal. You will be surprised with how much it can make a difference. You would tell your students to take care of themselves, so take care of yourself.

With all the best intentions,

Adrianna Irvine, a fellow student studying to be a teacher.

Copyright © 2021 by the Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts.