This was an excellent analysis of an interview with a teacher. You thoroughly answered the question and provided a clear picture of Mrs. Anderson’s perspective on teacher, family, and the community. I would like permission to use this as an example of excellence on this assignment for future Manor students!

Cherie

I chose to interview Mrs. Debra Anderson, whom I have known for about a year. She is a teacher in NAME OF SCHOOL AND WHERE IT IS LOCATED; where my mother is the school nurse (how I met Mrs. Anderson). I felt that she would be a great person to interview because she switches on and off teaching third and fourth graders; and has been in the field for 35 years. Mrs. Anderson has a lot of experience and really believes what she teaches. She does things in her own unique kind of way, and admires what she does; which is inspiring for me! I asked her the questions as follows:

1. **What is the teacher/administrator’s role in understanding children and family values? What does the teacher/administrator do to support their belief?**

Family values differ from family to family and person to person which really makes this an individual response (and an opinion). I do my best each day to incorporate respect and
gentle (neutral) guidance to my students in an effort to make everyone feel accepted, safe, and valued which makes my classroom conducive to learning. It is important to remember that a student’s information is confidential and should never be discussed with anyone except administrators, no matter what our opinions or convictions may be. Sadly, sometimes, we are the only person/people that the student feels cares about them which makes it difficult (at times) to separate our personal beliefs from “business.” Remember to always conduct yourself in a professional manner!

1. **Who is involved in the classroom—families, volunteers, community groups? What is the philosophy behind this type of involvement? Has this level of involvement changed over the teacher/administrator’s career?**

   Overall, I have noticed more parent volunteers since our new principal has been at our school. In the Special Education classroom, I feel more parental involvement at home and more communication with teachers is needed. The philosophy behind this type of involvement is to basically send a message to the students that school is important because it is important enough for their family members and community to be involved with their schools and support them on their academic endeavors hopefully making them try to become better learners.

2. **Are there any social interest groups who influence decisions regarding curricula? If so, is this influence positive or negative?**

   I do not know of any social interest groups who may influence decisions regarding curricula. 

   **Comment [T1]:** Here is an area of need. You could research social interest groups for teachers and families that are either in the community or on the web.
3. What could be done to better support the teacher/administrator’s efforts with families and communities?

Sometimes, I feel as though parents and members of communities do not realize the amount of time and effort that great teachers expend to make their students successful and their learning enjoyable. Most people think teachers and administrators have cushy jobs where we are off all summer, weekends, and other holidays. They DO NOT realize the tremendous amount of work we take home each night and every weekend in order to correctly and successfully complete our jobs. Then, we actually have to teach, too! The prep is only a fraction of the work (prep—delivery—reflection). A great teacher’s job is NEVER finished. You should always be looking for ways to improve yourself and your classroom. In my opinion, the more families and communities join our schools and classrooms, the clearer the picture of our jobs and what we really do will become (hopefully!). Teaching is an art and a science!

Reflection:

When reflecting upon what I have learned from this interview and knowing Mrs. Debra Anderson personally, I wasn’t surprised by any of her answers. The one thing that I could say is that I know most teachers feel the same when it comes down to parents/guardians not understanding. As she listed in one of the questions above, they don’t know what teachers have to deal with every day, the amount of effort teachers put into educating and caring for their students; and on top of it having work to take home at night. Some of the parents think it’s an easy job…and she is correct by stating that this isn’t the case because “a teacher’s work is never done”. But nothing really surprised me as I was conducting this interview; it is just interesting to know that most teachers think alike! Something else that I wouldn’t say is surprising, but I think
is cool is that schools are now getting parents/guardians more involved in the classrooms! I think this is a spectacular idea! This will show the parents/guardians, what their children do throughout the day, it will help them to be involved and learn with their child; and work on the relationship with the teacher!

I feel that Mrs. Anderson’s philosophy of building family and community partnerships compares with my own in a few ways. I believe as well as she does that values are different with each individual person. When I become a teacher I believe it will be important as she listed to be as gentle as I can to my students, to help them learn, I would also want them to trust me; and feel safe. I also believe in which she mentioned that it is EXTREMELY important to not reveal or share any information with anyone besides the parent/guardian unless hearing from them that it is ok. With this rule being in concept, it is to keep the child safe; people could be targeting certain children. **EXAMPLE:** the little girl that was taken from an Upper Darby School in Philadelphia. That teacher obviously wasn’t thorough enough, she just let her go instead of looking into it; the job as a teacher is to be trustworthy; and keep the children safe as if they are your own. Lastly, our beliefs are the same as we both believe parents/guardians of the children should be involved in one way or another. I think it is important to get the parents/guardians involved either through activities when the parents/guardians have free time or during the school day for the stay at home parents/guardians to come help out. By getting the parent/guardian involved, the relationship between the guardian and the teacher will strengthen, it will build trust on many levels; and help to bring the students/guardians closer to each other. Mrs. Anderson picked some great ideas that I too agree with. These ideas will help the children and the parents to learn, trust, feel safe; and get to know the environment/concepts better.
The demographics of NAME OF SCHOOL Elementary School, where Mrs. Anderson works... I am not sure what the population is, but I know the children get bussed there from other towns. NAME OF SCHOOL Elementary is a very busy, well known; trustworthy school. I feel that it is in a safe neighborhood, dependable people work there; and it is a positive atmosphere! I feel the people in the community are caring, they watch out for the children; and respect everything the school does. The community around the school are houses, cute little rancher like homes; and it isn’t an over populated area, which also helps the children to stay safe (because the children know mostly all of the neighbors). The people who are involved in the classroom are the teachers, the students; and sometimes the principal walks around to observe what is going on. I feel that it is the norm for the teacher to be teaching their own class, but I do find it interesting that the principal walks around the classes during the day. I feel that by the principal doing this, it creates a sense of security for the children, they won’t be afraid to go to him if they are troubled; but it also shows how dedicated he is to his students and his career.

The school and involvement has changed over the years, in many ways. NAME OF SCHOOL has just gotten a new principal; and they also implemented a new policy where parents are allowed to be involved in what goes on in the classroom! Parents/guardians are encouraged to come up to the school for either an in class session or for the after school program that they now have. Parents are encouraged to get involved and help the teacher teach. I feel this is an amazing involvement technique, it gives the parents/guardians a chance to bond with the teacher, it helps the parents to have a better understanding as to what is going on with their child’s academics; and it creates trust and security.

Mrs. Anderson and I both believe that a teachers work is never done, even when you go home you still have to grade papers; and always think of new ideas to bring to the classroom.
Something that was mentioned partly by Mrs. Anderson, which I agree with, is the fact that you always have to be on your toes as a teacher. I feel this is extremely important when you are a teacher, because you are put in place as the child’s guardian when they come to school. As a teacher, you are in charge of your students safety, health, noticing their attitude changes; and if they are acting strange to talk to them and report it if it is something serious; which is a lot of responsibility. As a teacher, you should be dedicated and love what you do; as Mrs. Anderson stated, because it is rewarding seeing the child grow; and succeed. I feel that it is only right to treat everyone equally, the children will notice if you treat one child different than the other. By treating all of your students equally, it helps them to build trust in you. When a teacher shows eagerness to learn about different races, or how they go about things in different cultures, it helps to build the relationship stronger between you, the guardian; and the child because they will know that you care. As a teacher you should want to be remembered; it will feel good to have a student that you once had in class look back, and have nice things to say about you.

The philosophy of being a teacher (in my opinion) is give it away like you got it! This philosophy simply means it is important to put all your effort into teaching, just like whoever inspired you put all of their energy and effort into you. Mrs. Anderson also mentioned part of her belief includes having the parent involved with the student’s success. I feel this is very important, and it is neat that she invites the guardians in the classroom to learn with the children; or she will hold activities for the guardians that can’t make it during the day, so that they could be involved; this to me is an extraordinary idea. Little acts of kindness will go a long way; parents/guardians pay close attention to those things, especially to whoever is going to be teaching their child.
I feel it is important to create a safe and welcoming environment for students, families, and the community surrounding the school. There are many different ideas you could do to strengthen the ties between the community and the school, such as a car wash, bake sales; and holiday bazaars; by creating these activities and including the community, it says a lot about the school. When the members of the community get involved in these types of activities, they will see how hard the children work; they will appreciate the children and the faculty of the school more. Building a stronger relationship between the parents, school; and the children is also extremely important. The idea that pops into my head is what Mrs. Anderson mentioned, which is to have the guardians come in for a few lessons, and if they are unable to make it; you could hold an activity to get those parents involved that weren’t able to make it. As a teacher, you could also suggest having guardians working around the school as lunch aides or at a welcome desk in the front voluntarily. As a teacher, you could arrange to have children from different cultures make food with their family for the class to try; this will help bring the children, guardians, and the teacher closer; it would also be a fun way to teach and celebrate different cultures! As a teacher, you always want to show that you want the guardians to be involved in the student’s school life; and to show that you’re open and fair to every culture.

When I become a teacher, I could hold student/guardian conferences to evaluate and look at the student’s progress in school. It is important to have something of refreshment when the guardian’s come in to meet; and to always work around the guardian’s schedule, this will show your interest; and will also help to build trust.

The job of a teacher never ends, it is important to always put the child and guardians needs before your own. I believe being a teacher is a tough, but rewarding career, as you see the
children grow and advance to different grades; it will feel good to look back and know that you were a part of their success.