

# Welcome to Mr. G's Class

2021 – 2022

## ABOUT ME



The 2021-2022 school year is my 26<sup>th</sup> in Yonkers Public Schools. Schools. Prior to that, I served for several years as a teaching assistant at Westchester School for Special Children. My brother Anthony was my initial inspiration for getting into this field. He continues to inspire me each and every day.

I currently live in Pawling, NY with my wife and three children, Dara, Brett, and Nikki.

I have coached football at various levels ranging from flag to high school varsity. My other interests include reading, history and science, music, and outdoor activities such as hiking, wildlife viewing, kayaking, snowmobiling, and snowshoeing. I love all animals and have two dogs, Motley and Dakota.

## PHILOSOPHY

I have always been an “out of the box” thinker and doer”. I believe in “dignity of risk” and that all individuals, regardless of disability or disorder have the right to attempt or engage in any experience or activity. Some may not understand why an individual who may not exhibit “normal physical and/or cognitive growth or ability would want to participate in a race, contest, program or activity. They hold a narrow view of what it means to achieve or succeed at a game or task. To them, there can only be one winner. He or she must score the most points, get the highest grade, build the best model, etc. They may not see the accomplishment demonstrated by each step, by each new task. For a professional athlete, such a viewpoint may be the impetus that rockets them toward another milestone or championship. For an educator and his/her students, it is a potential ticket to discouragement and perhaps, disenchantment.

I believe that learning is achieved through each of the senses. Although it may not be evident through one, it will eventually express itself through another. I am constantly looking for new challenges, be they cognitive, motor, social or a combination of each. Over the years, my students have been canoeing and ice skating. We have had them sawing, drilling, and painting. We have built an igloo and a tepee each large enough for the entire class to comfortably read inside. We have built a life size puppet stage out of PVC piping. We have constructed props for the annual school play. We may have been unsuccessful at incubating a dozen or so chicken embryos, but the following year, seven healthy Pekin ducks wandered our courtyard. These are the instances I treasure the most; seeing a student beam, not because he/she was necessarily the greatest or fastest, but because they were actively and effectively engaged in the learning process. In education, though goals may be met, and