



Chris R. Carpenter

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When I was young, I thought for sure my calling was to become a pro football player, but then I discovered my true passion – teaching. Just like football, this career requires hard work and intense training. I now am a highly qualified special education teacher. All of my football training taught me to be persistent and patient, and it continues to help me in chasing kids and making sure they are safe. Funny how things work out.

I began this grand journey in high school as an aide and friend to special education students. Following graduation, I found paid employment assisting a family with three special needs children. Later, I worked as a basketball coach for Utah Special Olympics and as a youth advisor for the Salt Lake County Division of Youth Services. Once I completed an associate of science degree, I was hired as a paraeducator at the Vista Education Center where I taught and supervised students with severe disabilities. I worked hard, studied hard, and then received a bachelor of science in elementary and special education and a master of education in integrated curriculum. I have been teaching for the past eight years in the Davis School District as a resource teacher in Title 1 elementary schools.

Perhaps my greatest talent is my deep compassion for and understanding of students who are different. I too am different. I come from a rich and mixed heritage – Polynesian, African American, Native American, Spanish, and Basque. How grateful I am for this heritage, for it gives me a depth of perspective that enriches my ability to serve a diverse population of students and faculty.

The love I have for the teaching profession and my students is profound. So, believing in every word my kindergarten teacher ever told me, may I quote her motto, “I love school and school loves me!”

Please visit my blog to discover more: [“Becoming Culturally Competent – A Journey”](https://empoweringeducation55.wordpress.com/)

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