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Positionality Statement

I am a first generation, heterosexual, African American female from a low-class Christian household. We moved around a lot due to our financial instability, so I grew up in many different predominantly black neighborhoods within St. Louis County.

My position was created by many different factors in my life. My community and environment is one factor to start. Growing up without financial stability caused my family to move around a lot as a kid. Growing up in these areas helped shape my sense of community, but not in a good way. I was never in a good community that was genuine, comforting, open-minded, etc. I did not have any support networks so any challenges I faced throughout my childhood, I faced alone which was not healthy. Being in a low-class household significantly impacted my upbringing, opportunities, and access to resources. It influenced my views on education, career aspirations and financial stability. I value higher education and see it as a blessing to be able to be in college and work toward earning my degree. I also strive to have financial stability in the future since I never had it growing up. Initially, when I came I wanted to be a speech language pathologist because they make a lot of money. But I made a decision to instead pursue early childhood education because I felt more passionate toward that field which is where my faith comes in. I feel more passionate pursuing early childhood education because I feel that I can serve God more in that career field. My faith has greatly shaped who I am and the decisions I make for my life.

As a future educator, there are many ways my position can influence my future classroom. My background allows me to bring cultural relevance into the classroom. Understanding the diverse experiences of students, especially those from similar backgrounds, helps me choose literature, historical examples, and discussions that resonate with their lives. This makes learning more engaging and meaningful. Having faced financial instability and moved around frequently, I can empathize with students who may be going through similar challenges. This understanding creates a more compassionate and supportive classroom environment, where students feel understood and valued. Being a first-generation, African American female from a low-class background, I represent a role model for many students who may share similar backgrounds. My presence can inspire them to see education as a path to success, despite the challenges they may face. My background influences the curriculum I choose, ensuring it reflects diverse perspectives and voices. This helps all students, not just those from similar backgrounds, develop a broader understanding of the world.

My position serves as the foundation for my teaching philosophy, shaping how I approach my role as an educator. By using my background to bring cultural relevance into the classroom, fostering empathy and understanding, and advocating for all students, I aim to create an inclusive and supportive environment. As a first-generation, African American female from a low-class background, I understand the importance of representation and strive to be a role model for my students. Through a diverse curriculum and effective practices, I work to ensure that every student feels valued, seen, and empowered to succeed. This statement is not just a reflection of who I am, but a commitment to the future of my scholars, where they can thrive and reach their fullest potential.