

I Am Going Back to the Classroom. Here Is Why I Opted to Work at a Private School



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It happened. After about five months of absence from the classroom, I finally signed a new contract with a private school. My tutoring activities were keeping me fed. That was good. But I also made it clear, that I am missing to get back into the classroom.

I love my profession. There is nothing else I'd rather do. I love that I have the unique opportunity to assist children and youngsters in carving out a path for their future.

There is a but to this story. I opted for a private school. Some people around me asked, why that is the case. I got plenty of requests to work for

public schools. I still get requests from the school authorities in my inbox almost every day.

In fact, the salary in the school I ended up going to is no better than in the public system.

So if it is not the salary, what drove me to this decision? Am I not betraying society, by choosing to work in the private sector?

Shouldn't a passionate teacher like I consider myself to be, put himself at the service of the common good?

I Want to Stay in the Profession for Many Years to Come

It is no secret, that the last two years have been hard for me. I went through multiple rounds of therapy. I was close to suffering from burnout. And a very cherished romantic relationship went up in flames. These were not isolated incidents. They were related.

One thing I have learned from this experience is that I need to set stronger boundaries for myself. Both personally and professionally. It is a necessity for my mental well-being. And it is also a necessity if I want to last in this profession until I retire someday. Which is about 30 years in the future.

Public Schools in Germany Are in Terrible Condition

I already made clear, what I think the status of our public education system is. It is underfunded and is basically collapsed already. I visited multiple public schools in the process of finding a new job. Several of them were in dire conditions. Some didn't even have working internet connections. In others, the buildings were at serious risk of collapse.

This is not unique to Germany. This is the case in most industrialized countries.

I do not think that schools like the example in the video below have a right to exist in a highly industrialized country like Germany.

Yes, it is worse in many other countries in South America, Asia, or other parts of the world. But for one of the richest countries in the world, that is a very low bar to muster.

Those are not conditions I want to support by giving my work efforts. By providing my workforce, I feel I am artificially part of keeping a dead

system alive.

Yes, we could need more dedicated and passionate teachers in the public school system. But it is not our job to cover up the less-than-stellar efforts our politicians have done in the past decades.

Teaching in a Private School Offers Me Benefits Beyond Salary

The private school offers me a better environment to do my teaching. It provides me and the students with modern infrastructure, that is fit for the 21st century. And it at least to some degree offers some pedagogical visions more fitting to what is actually needed.

I am no longer willing to invest a lot of unpaid overtime for a system that has no prospects of improving.

Nor am I willing to invest my private money in basic teaching supplies, that the authorities are not willing to provide.

A school system, that does not even want to provide something as basic as internet connections and safe, clean buildings is not something I am willing to commit my efforts to. This is why I chose to work with a private school instead. Even if it means that I am not entitled to the usual public servant's pension. I have retirement savings, so that is not an issue.

I am financially in a good position now. A healthy environment, where both I and my students can thrive is worth much more than a few Euros.

I am not saying that all teachers should do the same. Each of us has to set our boundaries. And each of us needs to find out, where our limitations lie. That is both our privilege and our responsibility as educators.