

A Never Ending Journey

By: Heather Hale

All my life I have had goals for myself. Graduate high school, graduate from MSU with a degree in elementary education, find a teaching job in Michigan, get married, and finally get my master's degree. Well now that I am weeks away from achieving the last goal of completing my [Master's Degree in Educational Technology](#) it is now time to think about my future as a lifelong learner.

As I reflect on my MAET experience, I realize that throughout my journey I have already set goals into place for myself. The first one being continuing my formal education. After taking [CEP 820](#), I knew I wanted to further my education in online K-12 education. I truly enjoyed creating my first online class and plan to incorporate that style of teaching into my classroom next year. To expand on that knowledge even further, I plan to complete a [Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching and Learning](#). I believe this certification will allow me to become a better educator both in the classroom and online and it will also be a great opportunity for a new career path in the future.

After looking back at my experience in MAET program, I have come to realize the wealth of technology resources that I have been exposed to. In order to keep myself up to date with new educational technologies and rapid changing technologies I need to start finding informal education experiences, which is the second goal I have for myself. For the last three years, I have taught third grade at Sandusky Community Schools. I love my job and find it hard leaving my students with a substitute teacher, but I now see the importance of leaving my students for a few days out of the year. Going to different conferences such as [MACUL](#) and [MRA](#) and attending professional development opportunities will allow me to grow as an educator and educational technology leader, which in turn will enhance the learning experience my students will have, in the classroom.

The third goal I have myself is to become a technology leader in my school district. Taking [CEP 815](#) opened my eyes to educational technology leadership. I have always been willing to help colleagues with technology but have never considered myself a leader. After taking CEP 815, I now feel that I can take on a leadership role, in our school district. Recently, my administrator asked me to attend a presentation on a new data program called Illuminate. This program is going to help our school district document and track student achievement, throughout their career at [Sandusky Community Schools](#). My administrator has asked me to get trained in this new technology so I can lead our elementary staff with this new program. I have greatly accepted the opportunity and cannot wait to lead my colleagues into this new adventure!

My last goal brings all of my goals above together! It is to focus on finding, exploring, and using new technologies with my students to enhance their learning, in the classroom. I want my students to be exposed to many different types of technologies that will help them become

motivated, lifelong learners themselves. Technology is what drives our youth right now and so as teachers we need to find as many ways to incorporate these motivating technologies into the classroom. Students need to be shown that they can use the same technology in many different ways. This can be accomplished by allowing students to 'play' and 'explore' with technologies and in the end 'create' a final product that they can 'share' with their peers and family. The future for our students is becoming innovators and experimenters that are willing to take risks and learn from their mistakes. For students to transform into the innovators of tomorrow, they need to be exposed to this new way of thinking and need to be given the opportunity to work with many different technologies. As a teacher, I have the power to give students these opportunities and plan to do that with every child that enters my classroom.

From a very young age I have always been interested in learning about the world around me and that this has not changed. As you can see from the goals that I have put into place above, my journey as a lifelong learner continues as my the end of master's degree approaches. The experiences and opportunities that I have participated in at MSU have given me the tools that I need to become a educational technology educator and leader. It is a part of my life I will never forget because I will always be able to use the wealth of knowledge that I have aquired from each course at MSU. As I continue the journey of being a lifelong learner I know it is one that will never end!