

Reflecting Back on Graduate Goals

Background:

In 2016 I completed my Bachelor of Arts degree in Special Education, Learning Disabilities and started my teaching internship at Michigan State University (MSU). I knew that technology would be a pivotal part of education and that was exactly why I wanted to become a master in using technology effectively in the classroom and throughout my professional duties. In the spring of 2017 I was accepted into the Master of Arts in Educational Technology (MAET) program at MSU. This program gave me the opportunity to collaborate with educators, learn new technology skills, and develop a competency to use technology so that I am an asset to any school district I work for in the future.

Original Goals:

The goals I set for myself upon entering the MAET program are highlighted below.

1. To learn how to effectively and purposefully use technology in my instruction.
2. To incorporate technology into all aspects of my professional life.

Reflection on Goals:

#1: To learn how to effectively and purposefully use technology in my instruction.

I am continuously learning how to use technology in my classroom from my colleagues, professors, and even students. I have taken the tools and insights I've gained from this program and incorporated it into my instruction, but there's always more to learn. I observe and learn what others are doing and reflect on my own teaching. I am constantly reflecting on the reasons why I am incorporating technology on a daily basis. I ask myself questions like: *Why am I using this tool? Does it enhance the lesson or does it just fill time? Does it engage my students in the content area?* Reflection is a large part of my teaching style and shows that I am always trying to learn and grow from my mistakes. This goal is still a goal I work on to this day. As the technology world develops in the classroom I hope to follow suit and soak in all I can. I use assessments to show if students are learning and retaining the information. This will help determine the effectiveness of my technology use as it relates to my instruction.

#2: To incorporate technology into all aspects of my professional life.

Before starting this program I was teaching using a whiteboard and paper. That was also how I organized my other teaching responsibilities such as data collection, graphing, and progress monitoring. This way of organization became tedious and overbearing as I carried many pieces of paper around with me each day. The MAET program has taught me to work smarter not harder. It has given me the confidence to identify and research computer programs to help me collect and graph data effectively. I have learned to search for technology tools to teach students interactive lessons that are engaging and effective. I am able to show student growth effectively on graphs and charts that are impressive to my employers and parents. This goal is still one I have today because I am always learning and searching for new ways to be an effective teacher in all aspects of my professional life. I have developed a new outlook on

technology, it helps me do my job better. I now spend my time on more important things, my students' needs and wellbeing.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, these goals are motivating and ambitious, just like the goals I set for my own students. This program has taught me that technology can be used to enhance lessons and professional responsibilities.