

The Journey Ahead

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As I look forward, I do not know how I will manage without being a MSU student, or knowing that I will be again in the near future. With the exception of the 2010-2011 school year, I have been a student at MSU since 2005. It is a bit unsettling to realize that my time here is coming to a close. Although it would be wonderful to obtain another degree, I do not have the money at this time to pursue one. Also, one of my goals was to finish my Masters before starting a family. With getting married last September and finishing my Masters this May, it may just be my time to create my own little future Spartan.

Even though I do not plan to take any more courses at MSU, it does not mean that I will stop learning. With the additional time that I gain from not spending time doing coursework, I plan to dedicate time, especially in the summers, to continue to learn about new technologies and those that I have not had time to explore yet. Every time I come across a new technology that seems interesting, I save it to my Bookmarks menu. Now I will finally have the time to go back and explore many of those Web 2.0 resources, like [21 Things for 21st Century Educators](#), which was introduced in the Certificate courses. This excites me. Even though the coursework is complete, the technology exposure does not need to be over. In fact, I refuse for it to be over. One of my former and current goals is to reach my students by differentiating instruction by using different technologies when appropriate. By continuing my own research and experiments with different technologies, I will continue to make this happen.

This program has set me up with a vast array of resources to use for my own professional development. Furthermore, not only the websites that have accumulated in my Bookmarks menu will be beneficial, but also the Personal Learning Network that I have created through these two years in the MAET program. I have learned about different technologies that have influenced my lesson ideas, like [Tagxedo](#), [Glogster](#), and [xtranormal](#), from my peers throughout this program. I have saved email addresses and professional websites from my peers

that will add to my ongoing learning. The capstone portfolios that my peers create this semester will be an exceptional resource because not everyone has experience with the same technologies.

In addition to those that I have worked with throughout the program and the different resources that I was exposed to, my most commonly visited website, [Pinterest](#), is also a part of my PLN. Other than the great recipes and household ideas that I collect, I also gain an incredible amount of ideas in relation to teaching and the use of technology in the classroom. This summer I hope to find time to dive into the pins that I have saved on my technology board in order to try some of the resources out there to see if they will be appropriate for my students and curriculum.

The MAET program has truly taught me that I can gain insight and ideas from anywhere! It has broadened my creativity and enabled me to envision immaculate lessons from the simplest technologies, like [Blabberize](#). Not to mention, the program has set me up with a firm technological foundation with experience in blogs, webpage creation, podcasts, interactive power points, web quests, digital stories, and many more advantageous resources.

Of course, I will also continue my learning through professional development set up through my district and other workshops that I find online that pertain to my teaching. One of my goals is to attend the [MACUL](#) conference in the future so I can keep up to date with the newest technologies. I have never attended as it had never worked out due to timing, but I see it as a great way to learn about current technologies and expand my PLN after I have completed the MAET Program. If this works out, it would be beneficial to attend the MACUL conference every year or at least every other year in order to stay updated on the latest technologies to try out in my classroom.

As time goes on, I believe that my students will become more and more technology savvy. Therefore, I must keep up with the current technologies. Throughout this program I have realized that I work best when others suggest technologies, and I get an opportunity to get my feet wet and experiment with my students and curriculum in mind. Then, I can assess as to whether or not the technology fits into my

teaching and meets my students' needs. In fact, some of these innovative technologies may even be suggested by my students, who I am not afraid to learn from. Even though it will be a challenge, with all of these resources at my fingertips, I have no doubt that I will continue to add to my technology "toolbox." Throughout the rest of my teaching journey, this ever-growing "toolbox" will be utilized in the classroom in order to meet my ultimate goal of meeting my students' learning needs.