

Refining and Redefining Goals for the Future

Educators are individuals who continually teach to learn and learn to teach. It's a cycle we are able to see within our students, and in ourselves. I find myself constantly asking, "How can I do this in a different way?" or "What else do I need to know to get better at this?" We ask these same questions for our learners, but also recognize that we ourselves are life-long learners beside them. I have had the pleasure of playing the learner and teacher roles for a handful of years, and it has only fueled my passion to continue setting goals for myself to become a more informed citizen, learner, and educator. On this page I have focused my attention on three areas of growth that I will look forward to after my time in the Master of Arts in Education Technology (MAET) program at Michigan State University. My first goal is utilizing meaningful technology integration in the classroom. My second goal is to take an active leadership role in collaborating with other educators in my school, and transferring my knowledge from my graduate program into my professional learning network. My third goal is to build a community of equitable technology that fosters an accessible learning environment for all students.

Technology in the classroom

Technology integration has been a main objective in my program, and has greatly evolved in my personal and professional life. One of the most helpful resources that pushed my understanding of technology integration was learning about the multitude of technology applications and platforms that can be integrated with content and pedagogical practices in the classroom. This technology pushes past just the function of using tools to reproduce an artifact (ex. Using Google Docs to write an essay), but to get students to learn how to use a computer science tool. I would also specifically like to bring in computational thinking skills such as problem solving, collaboration, and exploration/play. For example, [micro:bit](#), [Trinket](#), [Scratch](#), etc. In these applications, students are engaging with peers, developing creative projects, finding passion in what they are learning, and finding joy in the act of "play" in the overall experience.

Leadership in educational technology

I have had incredible opportunities to participate in learning and professional developments that focus on technology platforms, implementation, and overall importance of ed tech. In my future I envision myself as a technology leader in my classroom, school, and beyond. One of my goals is to continue to expand my knowledge of new technology applications and how integration of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) practices are going to shape our new 21st century classrooms. This past year I have greatly enjoyed attending the [Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning \(MACUL\)](#) conference. MACUL is Michigan's largest educational "tech showcase", and features technology programs, educators, and resources. My hope is to take these learning opportunities to then transfer my knowledge in a leadership role in my school.

Building communities of equity

One of the biggest challenges and obstacles we face in education is providing technology learning opportunities that push past merely “copy/paste” formalities. Because of this, there has been a gap of equity when it comes to learning in an engaging and meaningful way. Students are entering our classrooms with a wide variety of identities, prior knowledge, and socio-emotional needs. I would like to continue my education in [Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning](#) practices. This will push my understanding of learning and unlearning of how we can truly cultivate an inclusive learning space. Another resource that will help me with this goal particularly in computer science (CS) is to showcase CS leaders that look like my students from [Code.org](#). This is incredibly important to allowing students to see themselves as capable learners, thriving in computer science!

The role of an educator is a complex one. I am continually amazed and humbled by my learners, and the professionals that have shaped my knowledge and outlook on education. My hope is to continue to advocate and learn alongside the new and evolving technology, pedagogy, and content that is introduced in the 21st century classroom. Being an educator can be a difficult role, as this profession is never at a “stand still”. There are always new ways to think, teach, and evolve within our learning communities. I will end this essay with a quote that stood out to me at the MACUL conference, “The technology that our students are using today, will be the worst technology they will ever experience.”