

The Journey Goes On

By: Stacy Blemaster

My growth and development does not end just because I am finishing my master's in Educational Technology. Instead the end of one journey is the beginning of the next. Over the past few years I've embraced the opportunity to grow as an educator, connect and share with other educators, and learn how to enhance my teaching with technology instead of using technology in my teaching. Although I have made significant progress in each of these areas, I have unfinished work that I look forward to embarking on. Over the next several years of my teaching career I will focus on continuing to develop and grow my personal learning network, continue integrating technology into exploration or discovery based lessons, and take on an educational technology leadership role in school.

While working on my Master of Arts in Educational Technology, I have been introduced to several educational technology models such as Technological, Pedagogical, and Content Knowledge (TPACK) and Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition (SAMR). I've been exposed to several ways to integrate technology into my classroom in an authentic way that helps the students gain a deeper understanding of the content. In the short period of time that I have been implementing these strategies into my classroom, I have seen dramatic affects. I want to continue to integrate technology into more of my lessons. I want to continue to design investigation and exploration style lessons where students are discovering math concepts instead of being told or memorizing them. To continue my growth in this area, I will refer to leaders in this area such as Dan Meyer. His blog and LiveBinder are full of ways to design investigation style lessons. I will also draw inspiration from sources such as Desmos and GeoGebra. They each have a large catalog of ways to use their dynamic math software to let students explore math concepts and make generalizations about the patterns they discover.

Since I will no longer be meeting with my MAET classmates, I won't be able to pick their brains for ideas in different areas of teaching. Instead I will have to develop a more thorough personal learning network (PLN). My personal learning network is a collection of resources, people, and groups that I draw inspiration and classroom ideas from and in turn I can contribute to the resources and groups with lesson and strategies that I have found success with. To grow my personal learning network, I plan to be more active on Twitter. I want to learn and gain ideas from my peers so I will start following #mathed which is a hashtag conneced to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and other education related hashtags such as #mathchat, #edtech, #byod, and #blendchat. Following and participating in these hashtags on Twitter will provide me with additional strategies I can try in my classroom and keep me from becoming stagnant.

Lastly, I want become an educational technology leader for my school building. Currently my building and district do not have an educational technology instructional. However they could benefit from someone stepping into this type of role even if it is not truly a position recognized by the district. After having brief conversations with several of the teachers I work with, many of them would be more willing to enhance their lessons with technology if they only knew some programs or applications that would work best for them. Based on my master's work, I feel that I

could be a go to person about technology for other teachers in my building. To make sure I am staying current and able to help all my coworkers I would use my PLN and additional training from conferences put on by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) or a Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning (MACUL). Using these resources, I would be able to direct my coworkers to resources, software, programs, and applications that would best suit their and their students' needs.

Continuing to develop investigation based lessons that use the power of technology, developing a stronger PLN, and becoming a technology leader for my building are the three main areas that I plan to focus on after I graduate from the MAET program. As I leave the program, I feel prepared and confident that I have the skills and resources to challenge myself to grow in each of these areas. Although I am graduating, I don't have to stop learning. For me, the journey goes on.