

GOAL REFLECTION ESSAY

“Life Lessons Lead to a Masters”

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In the Spring of 2018 I applied to the [Masters of Arts in Educational Technology \(MAET\)](#) program. My main goal when I applied to this program was to learn ways of better including technology in the classroom with the resources I am provided. I also wanted to make sure I was educated enough in different uses of technology. This way I could assist coworkers, whether it be those on my grade level team or across my district, no matter what district I may find myself. In order to understand this goal, you need to understand my history in education.

When I graduated from Michigan State University in 2014, I received a [Bachelor of Arts in Education](#). My teaching major was language arts, and I also graduated with a teaching minor in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL.) I did my year of student teaching in a district which had resources that I expected most schools to have: SmartBoards, iPads, etc. When all of my teaching firsts started to align I felt like I was ready to take on the rest of my life. I would get a job where I could contribute my love of the arts, learning, and technology to my students. However, I was not ready for how different this teaching experience would be from the rest of my experiences in the classroom. My three years teaching there in second grade (1.09 years) and then fourth

(2.91 years) were imperative to who I am now as a teacher and the lessons I've learned:

1. Not all schools have the same resources.
2. You don't control what grade you end up teaching.
3. (Finally, and arguably the most important): There are some things you can learn in a college classroom, and others that you learn from a classroom full of 28 7-10 year-olds.

In our society, most children have access to technology. Or so I thought. For the first month my classroom projector overheated every 5 minutes, so I taught without it until Halloween (#1.) I love using technology. I thrive as an educator when I use it in my classroom. For the majority of my time there our technology resources were limited. Later, teachers received Surface Pros to use within our classrooms. This was a monumental addition! Surrounded by outdated technology, that one device started to change things. In my final year in that school, now teaching fourth grade (#2) for the second school year, we received Chromebooks. Two students had to share, but imagine all the ideas flowing through my brain of how we could use them! And use them we did. The most substantial change was that we were using them daily in science. I could see the growth in my students' understanding, both in their excitement over the content and their test scores. Those devices were making learning more accessible and engaging.

By this time I had already been thinking about getting my masters. I leaned towards something that just felt like *me*: technology. And here we are back to why and when I applied to MAET. I always see myself staying in a classroom setting, but if the need ever arises for support from a classroom teacher with the technology department, I would be more than willing to help! Though my teaching location has changed, teaching methods may have changed (#3,) and resources are more at hand now, my goals for why I chose to pursue this masters have remained the same.