

## What the Future Holds, You Never Know

By: Christine Novak

When concluding one portion of our lives, we always need to look to the future. My time at Michigan State University, working on my Masters of Arts in Educational Technology, has changed the way that I think about technology and its role in the classroom. When I first entered the program, my goal was to learn about technology and how to incorporate technology into my classroom. Having no knowledge of TPACK, I never gave any thought to how I was incorporating technology, only that I was. I was also ignorant to many available technologies that I have found which simplify life and improve productivity. Simplicity and productivity is huge for a teacher who is always on the move!

While my goal is still to incorporate technology into my classroom, I now wish to do it purposefully and in such a way that it supports content and pedagogy. I now have many resources and technologies that I learned about during my time in the MAET program. MERLOT is a web based community for sharing resources and lessons which I have used in the past, and will continue to use in the future. I will also continue to use my RSS reader to keep up to date with how other math teachers are using technology in their classrooms. I would especially like to learn how to incorporate my iPad into my classroom and lessons more. I have already found some neat applications that I have used to illustrate the mathematical concepts we were studying. I plan on learning new ways to use my iPad in the classroom by attending professional development offered by the ISD.

My second goal is to put my new web publishing skills to work by creating a classroom website and web-resources for my students to use. I would like to use Wordpress for this and to host it on my personal web-server. This would be a challenge, but would help me to further my web publishing skills and learn more about working with Wordpress. I would like to create screencasts and podcasts that my students can access from home if they are struggling. I would like to include lessons for students who are absent or missing from class. I would also like to include additional online resources students can go to for each section. This will require that I find additional resources that help my students to better understand the content. Ideally, I would like to find resources that allow the students to manipulate examples of what we are studying, or practice their skills and receive immediate feedback. While I am comfortable creating and finding these pieces, I will need to learn how to upload these to Wordpress. I will also need to learn how to create a Wordpress site that is creative and unique. There are many videos and tutorials available for Wordpress that I can use to achieve this goal. Having a site like this would be a wonderful resource that my student could use when they need additional help.

My third goal is to continue to be part of the Building Leadership Team. As one of the youngest members of the building leadership team, I have become the go-to person when it comes to technology. I would like to continue to learn how to support other teachers in using technology and how to use technology to make the other teachers lives easier and more efficient. I would like to use my knowledge of technology to come up with a way for the Building Leadership Team to share what we do, and the data that we collect. A lot of the decisions we make as the Building Leadership Team affects everyone in the school, and by finding

a way to share our information, and communicate more openly, everyone could benefit. This would require keeping up to date with the technology that is available to us and what we could accomplish if this technology is used properly.

Eventually, I would like to teach online or hybrid courses. I spent a semester teaching with a hybrid program. This was prior to starting the MAET program, and I had little idea what I was doing. Now that I have experience, I would like to use my knowledge about technology and web 2.0 features to teach online. I feel like I could be a much more effective online teacher now with my knowledge and experience. To achieve this goal, I will need to continue my classroom teaching, as well as staying on top of the technology that is out there and how it can be used in a virtual or hybrid classroom.

Now, upon leaving the program, my goals are a little loftier and better formed than when I started. For me, the MAET program was just a starting point to further myself as a teacher and possibly take me off in a new direction. As someone who spent the first two years of their teaching career moving from school to school, and program to program, I know that the important thing is to keep trying and keep focused on your goals and dreams. I do not know where I'll end up, but I know the journey has started here.