

“Some people succeed because they are destined, but most because they are determined.” - Unknown

When I began my journey as an educator, I focused on growing into the best teacher I could be in spite of looming adversity and challenges. No journey worth taking is every easy, as they say, nor is the road smooth and flat. But I, always determined to succeed, looked past the adversity and toward the future and the professional educator I desired to be. My first choice as I continued my journey was completing the [Master's in Educational Technology](#) program through Michigan State University with the [Educational Technology \(NP\) endorsement](#). My graduate work inspires me daily to be a creative problem solver and technology innovator. The MAET program also guided me to refocus my energy on a career path that would satisfy my desire to remain in a classroom environment and foster my abilities as a technology savvy and creative individual. Now as my graduation approaches, I now look ahead to new goals and challenges. I am determined to continue to grow professionally, present at technology conferences, and to become a certified Google Educator.

Very recently, through a leap of faith, I applied for and hired into my ‘dream job’ as a technology coach and educator. I am fortunate enough to have quite a bit of freedom and flexibility with my role as a middle school literacy technology specialist, but it bears an even greater amount of responsibility. My most imminent goal is to continue to grow and further establish myself as a technology leader in my current position. To fulfill this goal, I intend to build upon and nurture the professional relationships I have with my staff members. Next year, I plan to have a rotating trimester schedule with a volunteer group of educators. This would include scheduled co-planning time in which we would build lessons and materials centered around the curriculum and the classroom needs.

I also believe continued professional develop in technology is necessary. From conferences to professional learning communities to continued graduate courses, I am excited to see what the future has in store for my journey. One continued educational experience I look forward to the most is [Michigan State University's Master of Arts in Educational Technology \(MAET\) Refresher Course](#). Not only does the opportunity to travel to Ireland tempt me, but the chance to meet fellow MAET Graduates face to face is exciting.

After attending the [Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning \(MACUL\) 2015](#) and the [International Society for Technology Education \(ISTE\) 2015](#) conferences, I am in awe of the presenters, most of whom are everyday teachers, innovators, and educators. Their presentations and sharing of knowledge helped me build my skills as a technology leader and educator. I have challenged myself to present at a conference at least once a year. I plan to attend MACUL 2016 with the joint intent to study the presenters and content for inspirations for a future presentation. There are several local opportunities to begin presenting such as the local county ISD and smaller regional conferences. These will serve as perfect launching points for a rookie presenter such as myself while I build up to a bigger presentation. Even though this

goal itself is personally daunting for me, I am determined to put myself and my leadership skills out there and help other educators pursue their passion in technology education and integration.

Almost as soon as [Google for Education](#) began to be an integral part of my professional sphere, I wanted to earn my Google certification. After speaking with members of the Google for Education team at the ISTE 2015 conference, I knew it was a crucial next step after I earned my MAET degree. First, I plan to earn my [Google Certified Educator Level 1](#) and [Level 2](#) and offer to pilot a small team of educators from my middle school. There is comfort and encouragement in engaging in a journey together, and this also provides an opportunity for me to grow as a technology leader in my building. My ultimate endpoint is to become a [Google Certified Innovator](#). Despite of the competitiveness and eliteness of this program, I know I possess the determination and passion for education and technology to be a candidate for this program.

These goals I now set for myself professional are lofty indeed, but within my grasp with the same hard work, determination, and spirit I always carried with me on this journey. My experiences in the MAET graduate program at Michigan State University has strengthened these qualities in me. The "Spartans Will" philosophy runs deep in me and will no doubt help me succeed in reaching my future learning goals.