

## The Future is Bright (My Future as a Learner Essay)

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When thinking about my future as an educator, there are still several unknowns. When I began the program, I had no idea how much it would change my perspective on teaching. I didn't know that it would awaken a new passion in me and give me a new direction as a teacher. I can say that I want to keep learning and keep experimenting with technology in the classroom. I also want to share my learning with others, even though I'm not 100% sure in what capacity, yet. I also don't see this as the end of my formal education, either. I now know more about myself as a teacher and I know that I truly enjoy learning and school. I don't see myself taking more than a couple years of from formal education.

I previously alluded to the fact that the program's impact on me was not something that I had expected. I heard about the MAET program from a colleague in my first year of teaching. She had completed the program and recommended it. I had no idea what exactly I would learn, but I was excited about learning to integrate more technology into my classroom. I can say that over the past two and a half years my love for educational technology had grown immensely. I truly believe that as a young teacher technology in the classroom will only continue to expand and become more readily available. I am committed to continuing to develop this area of my teaching even after I complete the program.

My strategy for continued learning is varied. My main source of learning comes from social networking through Twitter. I will continue to find new people to follow and read things that they tweet. I will also interact with fellow educators and technology leaders through Twitter via chats or just messaging. Twitter has become an invaluable resource for me. I am also looking into using Twitter as a classroom tool as well.

My second strategy for continued growth is blogging. I truly believe that reflection is a key part of an educator's growth process. Throughout the program I used a blog to reflect on what I learned and this is definitely important for me to continue in the future. I also read other blogs (usually posted to Twitter) to gain ideas for my classroom. I always find something I can use when I'm blogging.

Formal professional development (such as conferences and teacher in-service days) will always be a part of my learning. I enjoy attending conferences such as MACUL and Michigan Flipteaching Conference and will continue to do so in the future. I recently had the opportunity to plan some PD at my school involving technology. I would like to continue to on this path in the future and contribute as an organizer and presenter in future PD opportunities.

Another goal that I have set for myself is to be a technology leader at my school. I have just taken a position on the Building Instructional Leadership team as my grade-level representative. This means I am available for my colleagues to approach with questions about technology in their classrooms. I am also involved in planning PD experiences for our school. I am excited about this new role and even though I don't feel I know everything about technology in the classroom, I am willing to seek out answers if I am unsure of the answers.

The MAET program has truly made an impact on my life as an educator. I have learned that I love to learn about being a better teacher with technology even more than I love to study in my subject area (don't know if this is a bad thing). I have also learned how to keep learning by building my PLN through Twitter. The biggest gift that the program has

given me is a desire to know how to effectively integrate technology in my classroom and this desire is what will lead me onward.