

Gathering Knowledge, One Step At A Time: Continuing learning essay

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When I began this program I wanted to build upon my previous knowledge of the visual arts and add new methods and techniques for teaching literacy so that I may provide for my students a more comprehensive educational experience. The next step in the process does not take place in the traditional educational sense. Yet, with a self directed approach, I am looking forward to improving my understanding and the practice of bringing together linguistic and visual literacy.

The implementation of technology plays a curtail role in this process. Our students are interconnected through a multitude of platforms and giving them an outlet and the ability to responsibly participate in this environment is vital to their development as global citizens. The MAED program has been my only interaction with on-line learning I am taking the methods introduced to me here to advance the educational experience of my students beyond the traditional classroom walls. Upon entering the program I underestimated the amount of collaboration that we experienced even though participants were distributed across the globe. Knowing that we, as teachers, educators and fellow learners, can be that connected with so much physical distance between us is inspiring for the potential that technology can bring to the educational experience, both inside and outside of the classroom.

In the 4 years that I have been in my present position our school has tried three different learning management systems. Beginning with eChalk then Angel, and currently Edmodo both my students and I have needed to learn and implement these new forms of technology in ways that would be beneficial to the learning goals. As technology advances I fully expect, through the duration of my career to encounter continually progressing tools for the classroom and having experienced how a successful program can utilize this technology via on-line learning I am confident that I will be able to not only adapt to these forthcoming technologies but with the foundation set in this MAED program be able to successfully integrate them into my curriculum.

At the conclusion of my career teaching at the secondary level I would like to put myself in a position where I would be able to train future teachers at the university level. In order to facilitate this goal my next step would be to seek and obtain a masters and certification in administration. I love being in the classroom, sharing in the creative process with my students and being a firsthand witness to their artistic development I would like to experience the educational process from the administration level. My passion lies in the understanding of visual culture and ultimately preparing my students to being positive contributing members within the 21st century global society. I feel that from an administrative position I would be able to direct the culture of an entire school and be able to influence the educational experience of not just the students but the communities that we serve as well.

Additionally, I would like to pursue a Doctoral degree in Curriculum Development to continue my formal education and in order to ensure that I am best implementing the scholastic vision set out by my school and students' needs. While I plan to maintain a strong adherence to the need for fluent visual literacy within the schools, I desperately want to know how I can best place myself into a position where I can direct educational development of my students. I believe with the on-line experience that I have gained through Michigan State University MAED program and the experiences that awaits in the classroom in these coming years, I want to see what the educational landscape becomes and how I might do my part in shaping it for those future students.

I feel that ultimately the best way to do this would be to teach at the university level within a teacher preparation program. I do not want to keep my achievements and mistakes a secret. I look forward to the opportunity to share with those aspiring educators what I have experienced and what I have learned. I want to tell them what it was like first entering into the classroom, what it was like to experience the early stages of on-line learning. I want to tell them what the educational process looks like from the perspective of a learner, a teacher, an administrator, a colleague, and as an invested member of the global culture. I believe that the educational experience is a lifelong venture and I am grateful for having been able to participate in the MAED program. I look forward to seeing where the next step in venture will lead.