

It has been a few years since I entered the Master of Arts in Education program (MAED) at MSU and I have lost the "official" goal that I came into the program having, but, to be honest, I was just going through the motions to continue my education and maintain my Michigan teaching certificate. My goals were simple and I focused only on completing my course work and teaching my students the skills they needed for their tests. I felt like I was just jumping through the hoops, keeping my head above water as a new teacher, and often felt confined by the standardized tests.

As I moved through the MAED program, I quickly figured out I was gaining so much more than just a degree. I have taken away methods to enhance my teaching from lessons in technology, to writing better lesson plans, to how to research in my own classroom, and even classroom management. These learning experiences have taught me to be more open-minded towards what I can learn and from whom I can learn. My goals have shifted significantly since the beginning of the program. The carefully guided courses, the feedback from instructors, and the cooperative learning with my peers really guided me and pushed me to change my vision and grow as an educator. I now desire to be a life-long learner, a researcher within my school and classroom, challenging myself, and trying new things to improve education.

As the image on the right says, "The future lies before you, like a field of snow; Be careful how you tread it, for every step will show." I strive to make every step of my career and my teaching meaningful. Our students' lives at the beginning of a school year are a lot like the snowy field. We all have a blank slate but as soon as we make a move, it is going to show and impact that student's life. I want every move I make as a teacher to have a positive impact, in some way, in the lives of my students. I want to teach my students not only the math and Spanish contents but also life lessons necessary to be successful in the "real world." Additionally, I want every move I make as a professional educator to be worth sharing with the world around me as I continually grow. The growth that has occurred as a student in the MAED program is just the beginning of the path I am creating. I want to utilize the technology skills and the lesson ideas that I have gained to create beneficial and engaging lessons for my students. I want to take the research skills I have learned to determine what is working in my room and what is not so that I can consistently change and adjust to improve learning. Most of all though I want to be able to continue learning and share the joy of learning with my students, everything from life lessons, to Spanish grammar, to factoring quadratics.



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