

A Lifetime of Learning: A Commitment to Education

A Desire for Learning

One quality I believe all teachers should possess is a love for the learning process. The whole reason why I decided to become an educator was because I had a great desire to make education my duty, passion, and profession. During my time in elementary, middle, and high school I couldn't wait to learn new things and discuss new ideas with my teachers. I formed relationships that were based on this passion and eagerness to learn. I couldn't wait to go to college and learn how to inspire others in the classroom setting, just like my former teachers did so many years ago for me.

Upon completion of my Bachelors degree, I knew I wasn't done learning. I can't get enough of this process and I want to make sure that I am doing my part to be the best educator I can be. It is important for teachers to always want to make their classroom the most rich, engaging, and up-to-date environment for his or her students, in order to promote the greatest opportunities. Learning from professional development opportunities, colleagues, and books are a few of the most popular ways I have used and witnessed other teachers taking part in.

For the past two years, I have devoted much of my free time to this passion and desire for further education. I have greatly enjoyed reading about current best practices in education, meeting with fellow teachers with similar experiences, and working closely with instructors to better enhance my knowledge base in the field of education. Although my formal journey towards my Masters degree will be completed in May (2013,) my journey for further learning will never cease.

No Classroom? No Problem

My desire for further education beyond my Bachelors degree in Elementary Education lead me back to my alma mater, Michigan State University. Now that I live

95 miles from East Lansing, I was not able to attend classes on campus. I was thrilled to learn that I could take courses and obtain a Masters degree completely online! Beginning an online education, there were many things that I had to learn to do, time management being the most important. The emphasis on technology and using different web-based resources to complete assignments, discuss with peers, and learn about new ideas was another obstacle to conquer. Luckily, during my four years in undergraduate classes at Michigan State we used the same online resource (ANGEL) to organize many components of my classes, so I was very familiar with the basics.

Dedicating myself to a virtual classroom was a different, but not difficult task. Due to my desire to learn and try new techniques/ideas, logging on and getting started was something I was excited about. Each new semester brought new instructors, new content, and new peers to work with. Beginning a new class within this program was always something I looked forward to. Looking to the future, I see myself getting excited about future professional development opportunities I sign up for, and maybe even someday, another degree program! Knowing that I can have this success, with an online-based education opens many doors in the future. I will never be afraid of taking an online class because I have had such a great experience with this Masters program.

Technology Onward and Upward...

Growing up and attending elementary school during the 1990s gave me early exposure to the earliest forms of technology in an educational setting. I remember learning proper typing skills not only at school during our computer lab period, but also at home with my parents on our family computer. An emphasis on new technology was not only a part of my life at school, but when I was at home as well. I distinctly remember my father bringing home many new technologies, from our first computer, to an early PDA, our car phone, a digital camera, a DVD player, and many more! From an early age, my dad has sparked an interest in new technology inside me.

Learning to do something in an easier, more efficient way is always something I enjoy. This will be something I will always be interested in.

Within my school, I am definitely one of the youngest and most technologically savvy teachers. From my first day with a SMART board, I dove right into this new form of technology and began using all that it had to offer. Trying something new for the first time requires patience, diligence, and devotion. It takes a while to learn all the tricks and features; I am still learning these today! Keeping my patience and devotion when working with new technology is something that I vow to strive for as I continue on in education. With all of the wonderful products and technologies out now, it is a shame to bypass these intriguing and unique ways of teaching.

Promises & Goals Moving Forward

- I promise to continue reaching out to colleagues, resources, and other professional development opportunities in order to continue learning new skills in the teaching field.
- A goal of mine for the next few years is to explore as many of the new technologies available to teachers and students; I will not only strive to use these in my classroom, but share successes with teaching colleagues.
- I promise to try new things and not discount them before giving them a shot
- It is my goal to develop inquiry-based projects and activities for my students to participate in, in order to develop their passion for learning, exploring, and continued knowledge acquisition.