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A Career as a Technology Enabler
Future Goals Essay

Working in a 1:1 school with student computers, I have seen the many obvious benefits of technology. Students are engaged; teachers receive instant feedback; doors are open to connect with learners and experts around the world; etc. I have worked with wonderful teachers who have shown me how to use technology effectively. Sometimes, however, the hardships in implementing technology can turn away teachers and can send them running back to comfortable, stale lesson plans. I witnessed teachers' frustration as our district announced the third learning management system in three years. I observed teachers resistance to learning a new technology because it looked time-consuming or difficult. I felt disheartened when I tried a new technology and the lesson did not live up to my expectations. Experiencing these ups and downs as a teacher over the last three years has given me an idea for the next step in my career. Down the road, I see myself in a technology leadership role, helping teachers to see the good in technology, supporting them through the difficulties with new technology, and reinvigorating teachers' excitement and enthusiasm for new tools. My work in the Master's of Educational Technology (MAET) program at Michigan State University has given me this ready-to-try-anything attitude and the ability to choose technology tools that fit the lesson well which I would bring to my role as a technology integrator or specialist. To prepare for this future opportunity, I will focus my learning into keeping up with the latest technology trends in education, connecting with technology specialists around the country, and developing my skills as a leader.

To stay current with technology trends in education, I will reach out to my Personal Learning Network (PLN), do research about new technologies, and attend conferences to learn more. I have found many useful tech tools from teachers on Twitter and blogs. I will follow some blogs more closely and regularly like *Ditch that Textbook*, *the Innovative Educator*, and *MindShift*. I can also participate in Twitter chats designed for educational technology like #EdTech, #Flipclass, #makerED, and #INeLearn to share ideas. Finally, I want to attend conferences like International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) to deepen my tech toolbox and broaden my PLN.

Similarly, to connect with other educational technology specialists, I will turn to my PLN for advice. I will ask specific questions about how to overcome difficulties and resistance to new technology. I will also observe as other technology coordinators implement a 1:1 program or a new Learning Management System. In addition, I will ask to do site visits with different schools in my area (like Carmel Clay and Westfield Washington) to see how districts work with different 1:1 scenarios. I only have experience with 1:1 BYOC (Bring Your Own Computer) environment, so I am interested to see how classrooms with Chromebooks, iPads, tablets, or BYOD operate. I will turn to my MAET colleagues that work in 1:1 schools to see sample lessons and hear their success stories either through #MAET or by contacting them personally.

Finally, I will need to further develop my skills as a leader to be able to successfully take

on an educational technology specialist role. First, I will be more involved with professional development at my school and district. I can lead a few sessions on educational technology that I have researched or used. Next, I will look to present at a conference, like the Indiana Foreign Language Teachers' Association (INFLTA) conference. This will prepare me for speaking to my colleagues and give me experience sharing my ideas with teachers.

If teachers ignore technology because of past difficulties, time consumption, or resistance to change, classroom instruction would time a giant step backwards. Students would not be as engaged, students would not be able to share their ideas with a larger audience and connect with others around the world, and students would not be prepared to be digital citizens and 21st century learners. In the future, I plan to become a technology specialist in a district to push teachers to continuously grow, facilitate new technologies, and minimize difficulties with using technology. To do this effectively, I will learn from other experts in my PLN, observe classrooms with different 1:1 environments or learning management systems, and present at conferences and at PD sessions to gain experience working as a leader. My future goal is to make technology integration seamless so that teachers and districts can keep focusing on stimulating instruction.