

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

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When I first applied to the Master of Arts in Educational Technology (MAET) program, I had just finished my internship teaching 7th Grade Math. I was interested in using technology all throughout my internship, but when I actually used different pieces of technology like “clickers”, tablets, question banks, etc., I wondered if we were really using technology to effectively teach students, or if we were just using technology because we were given it. The effect that the technology had on student learning was questionable and so I decided to enter the MAET program with the goal to learn how to evaluate different pieces of technology in order to find useful ones to include in my classroom.

Another one of my goals when I started the program was to create a sort of directory to find High Cognitive Demand lessons in mathematics and pieces of technology that help build a more conceptual understanding of mathematics in students. During my internship, finding lessons and pieces of technology always resulted in long searches on the internet and not having any idea whether they are effective or not. I wanted to build a repository of lessons and resources that I know have been tested by other teachers and have worked. That same year, I had worked with a couple of my peers to create Action-Packed Math, a website that held and organized the High Cognitive Demand lessons that we and our peers had used and created over the course of our internship year. My goal when entering the MAET program was to continue building on this site and make it a website that educators around the world could use to find, revise, and add lessons.

Now here I am, my last semester with the MAET program, having learned so much toward my goals. My goals have still remained the same, however, they have just become more specific. I have learned over the course of this program how to evaluate different pieces of technology using the Technology, Pedagogy, and Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework and have introduced those pieces of technology into my own teaching using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) guidelines. Now my goal is to use these to search for effective technology that I can use in my classroom to benefit my students.

In regards to creating a repository of lessons and resources for math teachers, I have learned how to create websites using HTML and CSS in order to start building my own website for this purpose. I have also learned a lot about what teachers collaborating on lessons can look like from the MERLOT website and the discussion forums that I have been a part of with my peers. From here, my goal is to continue expanding my knowledge of different languages to build websites with including JavaScript as well as to create a draft of what this website will look like by sort of evaluating it like I have with other technologies, thinking about how other people will interact with it and what they will get out of it.