

## **Continuous Learning Through Discrete Goals**

Sometimes when we are asked to think about what the future holds, we look back at where we have been. Looking back now, the reason it took me so long to pick a masters program and start working towards furthering my educational goals was because I couldn't imagine myself not being a high school mathematics teacher. Thinking about my future goals now that I have almost completed my [Master of Arts in Educational Technology \(MAET\)](#), I still see myself as a classroom teacher however I have so many more tools at my disposal and I can see a clear path on how I want to continue to learn and grow for my own personal sense of betterment, become a leader in my department and district, and to better educate the students. The three main things I would like to focus on is to continue improving my online teaching presence, my mathematical instruction by incorporating more real world applications and tasks, and I would like to propose and design a new mathematics elective course to my district.

One of my main goals when choosing to pursue my MAET degree was to improve and promote my online teaching presence for the benefit of my students and other students or educators who may be looking for extra resources to help them be successful in their mathematics education. Little by little throughout this program I have done that, however there is still room for improvement and specifically I would like to make all my materials more cohesive and comprehensive. My personal website is a great place to house all my materials (units, lessons, videos, etc) which I am beginning to work on but in addition to that I would like for all my materials to have a cohesive look and specifically with my YouTube channel make sure all my videos talk to a broad audience and not just to my students. This will be a big undertaking and while I am excited for it to be completed I am disappointed that I didn't just record them that way from the start! I take a lot of inspiration from other math teacher 'content creators' such as iteachalgebra a creator and teacher I follow on Instagram and YouTube. I also recently received a book on how to incorporate Canva in the classroom which I intend to read and put to use.

Something that I have come to realize during my 12 years of teaching experience and during my master's study, is that students appreciate when math is presented in a way that it is made useful to them. When you can

connect math to a real world task students do not have the excuse of, when will I ever use this? But also, they are more engaged while learning and it is obvious why they are being taught that particular skill. From the start of my career to now I have slowly moved away from the 'sage on the stage' mindset or the 'I try, we try, you try' and more towards the 'guide on the side' or as a truly inspiring Professional Development I went to puts it, 'experience first, formalize later (EFFL)'. I have used the resources from Math Medic, which coined the phrase EFFL as their teaching philosophy to great effect in my classroom and want to continue to incorporate more of these types of lessons and begin to make my own creations like them in my classroom.

While my previous two future goals are continuous and broad in scope I can work on them as much or as little as time allows in each subsequent school year, my final goal of adapting and pitching a new course elective to my board of education is discrete which, for me, puts the pressure on to actually get that task completed. During the past few years, and even more so during my masters program I have found inspiration and taken many resources from Jo Boaler. Her website, Youcubed.org and her book Limitless Mind have helped me to further promote a growth mindset amongst my students and find activities to do with them that support this. She has made the argument that learning and understanding the data science branch of mathematics is key for graduating students to become educated citizens in a heavily data driven world. She has an eight unit curriculum on her website that I would like to investigate, adapt, and eventually pitch to our board as another option for an elective math course for our seniors to take.

While some of my future goals are broad and will always be ongoing and others are finite and I hope to complete within the next few years, my biggest take away from reflecting back and thinking ahead is I am proud of the educator I am, but perhaps more importantly I am proud of the student that I continue to be.