Digging Deeper Under the Surface
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When I applied to the [Masters of Art in Educational Technology](#) (MAET) program at [Michigan State University](#), I had just completed my first year of teaching. As a future MAET student, one of my obvious goals was to incorporate technology into my classroom. I was not familiar with all of the technology tools available for classroom use, and I wanted to use technology to help keep my students engaged. Another goal of mine was to serve as a technology expert in my building. I wanted to have the ability to teach and instruct my colleagues how to successfully incorporate technology into their own classrooms. A final goal I set for myself was to collaborate with other educators who are also passionate about technology.

My current goals are not all that different from the goals I set for myself when applying to the MAET program, at least on the surface. Yes, I want to continue incorporating technology into my classroom. Yes, I want to be a technology expert to my colleagues. Yes, I want to collaborate with other educators passionate about technology. However, the part of my goals that has changed is the knowledge that I have gained that makes each goal dig deeper and become stronger.

Incorporating technology into the classroom does not mean just giving a student a computer and signing them up for an online website. Incorporating technology means thoughtfully planning out authentic learning experiences while carefully considering the technological, pedagogical and content knowledge ([TPACK](#)) of each lesson. It means repurposing technology for use in the classroom and allowing students the opportunity to play with technology. Because of the MAET program, I now know how to effectively use technology in my classroom. Through each course I enrolled in, I learned the importance of using TPACK to plan activities in my classroom.

Being a technology expert in my building does not mean just telling my colleagues about the technology I am using in my classroom. It means inviting them into my classroom to see the authentic learning experiences that are happening with technology. Prior to enrolling in the MAET program, I was still in my first year of teaching and hesitant to teach in front of my colleagues. I am now leaving the MAET program more confident and ready to authentically share the learning in my classroom with others.

Collaborating with others does not mean meeting one another face to face. It means having a strong professional learning network that continues to grow. It means seeking

out professional development and new resources in a way that is thought to be unconventional, such as connecting through Twitter. It means stepping outside of my comfort zone and presenting at conferences. The MAET program challenged me in all of these aspects. I created a professional [Twitter](#) account, I presented at a conference for the first time, and I collaborated with others, both face to face and online through the [MAET Summer Hybrid Program](#).

So while it does not appear that my goals have really changed, they have changed under the surface. I am leaving the MAET program with a greater understanding of educational technology, what it is and what it is not. While technology is always changing, my goals are staying the same, just digging deeper roots as more knowledge is gained.