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A Look Back Before Moving Forward

As I was applying for the Master of Arts - Educational Technology (MAET) program, I had clear goals for what I thought I wanted to accomplish with this program. I had a bachelors degree in integrated science secondary education, was near the end of my second year of teaching, and was seeing the increase in technology access in my district. I had two main goals for this program. My personal goal was to continue to be a lifelong learner and build a professional learning community (PLC), and my professional goal was to learn new and better ways to incorporate technology in my classroom.

I'm now nearing the end of my fourth year of teaching, involved in several committees in my district (including technology committees), and have almost two years of graduate studies under my belt. As I reflect on my original goals, there are a few updates I would like to make. Overall my personal goal remains mostly the same. I believe lifelong learning is incredibly important and with the ever changing nature of technology and education, lifelong learning is necessary. I have learned new resources and strategies when choosing and implementing technology and I will continue to search for and learn even after I have completed my graduate coursework. One way I will be able to continue my educational technology growth is with the PLC that I have been able to build that will support me as I continue to grow as an educator. My current PLC consists of creative and inspiring colleagues as well as an online learning community that I will continue to update and build as I move forward with my learning.

As I reflect on my professional goal, I see that it needs some alterations. Though I still place value in learning new and better ways to incorporate technology in my classroom and inspire my students, I know now that educational technology isn't just about adding technology to my lessons. Educational technology is about making conscious and informed decisions about *when* and *how* to use technology to better support our students. It is a blend and balance of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge and using this framework is going to be in my new goal for incorporating technology in my classroom. Another addition I would like to make to this goal is to share strategies, tools, and techniques with my colleagues. My original goal was very self focused. I wanted to learn and use technology to better myself and the learning for my

students. Now I want to share what I have learned with my team to better my school and my community.

As I move forward after graduation, I'm sure that I will continue to incorporate additional goals both personal and professional. However, I believe that these basic goals will always be something that I work towards as an educator. After all, one of the reasons I chose science and technology education is because it is always changing and there is always an opportunity to continue learning and growing.