

Future as a Learner Essay

Completing My Masters...Not Completing My Education Sara St. John

With my Master's of Education though Michigan State University concluding it is hard not to reflect on where I have started and especially where I want to go. Completing my masters is not the end of my education; it is a jumping off point into a new type of education for me.

For my first two of three years teaching I was working towards my master's degree. I thought it would be a struggle teaching and working on my masters but it was a great combination to push me to be a better teacher for my students. A lot of my master's courses used inquiry based learning as a way to develop knowledge and dig deeper in concepts that were the most interesting to me. I plan to use this type of proactive learning along with setting goals for myself to become a lifelong learner.

The first goal I have set for myself is to continue formal education. I developed a passion for literacy as I worked on my masters and started teaching. My long term professional goal is to one day become a reading intervention teacher, reading specialist, or literacy coach. With a reading specialists degree I would be better qualified and prepared for a literacy based teaching position. Even as a general education teacher I think having a reading specialists degree would be a great benefit for working with struggling readers.

The second goal I have set for myself is to continue informal education in areas that interest me or I feel I need to develop a greater knowledge base on. To continue effective informal education I will have to be a proactive learner and take initiative. I will use professional development opportunities at my school as well as the expert teachers and educators I work with. Sharing lessons, resources and ideas with colleagues is a great way to continue learning. Educational books like Daily 5 and Café are resources I have heard about from other teachers that would be great to read. Reading educational materials like books, journals, and websites will help me grow as a teacher and continue to stay aware of new educational research. Reading children's literature will provide me with books that I can integrate in cross curricular lessons and books that I can share with students to help promote a passion for reading in students.

The third goal I have set for myself is to develop an effective and positive classroom. The past three years I have taught at three different schools and three different grade levels. Just as I am starting to feel comfortable in a school or at a grade level the year ends and I'm moving on to a new school. Once I have the opportunity to stay at the same grade level and same school I will be able to be more knowledgeable about the curriculum, create more effective lessons, collect more books and resources for the student's I am teaching, and have a better understanding of the students needs and developmental stages.

The final goal that I have set for myself is to incorporate more technology in my classroom. I have always wanted to create a classroom website for my students and parents but I have been waiting until I settle in a school I will be at for more than a year so I can tailor it to those

students, parents, and even that school. I want to create a classroom website that includes homework, assignments, planner information, absent work, notes, study guides, downloads, links to educational websites, newsletters, communication, and even pictures of the students working in class. I want to integrate more ways that students can use technology in my classroom and especially learn from using technology.

Although I know more about technology compared to many of my coworkers I know that I still have a lot to learn about technology that can be used in the classroom. I have slowly learned about technology over the course of high school, undergraduate courses, and master's courses. In many of my master's courses I learned about a new type of technology that was integrated in the course as an assignment like google docs, wikispaces, blogs, and websites. Technology has been the center of my education for the past two years. I have learned just as much from an online based classroom as a real life face to face classroom. The opportunities to learn and gain knowledge using technology are endless. I will continue to learn with technology by reading educational material online and reading blogs or websites created by other teachers. Many teachers share technology ideas on their blogs and websites to help other teachers become familiar with the new and upcoming ways to integrate technology in classrooms.

I learned so much during my master's courses but I know I still have so much more to learn about students, education, and teaching. With the goals I set for myself I am confident I will continue to strive to become a lifelong learner. Completing my masters does not mean I am completing my education.