

Reach For Your Goals

By, Miranda Bender

Everyone has heard the phrase, “live like you are dying” and for me that is a living testament for my life. From the day I was told that I had cancer I knew my life would be forever changed. Cancer took my life and has completely transformed it into a whole different one, and in my experience; it has changed my perspective on how to live. For many people, setting goals means looking into the future and figuring out the path you want to take in order to reach those goals. For me, setting goals means getting to another day. With that said, I still try to remain positive and hopeful that I will live to see the long distance future, which means I need to keep setting goals. When I think about my future in education and where I want to take my learning, I have formed three specific goals. These goals include using my knowledge from my master’s program to become a technology leader in my school, learning how to network with other educators outside of my school in order to learn about new technology as well as collaborate on how to use that technology in a meaningful way in the classroom, and work towards building online units in Reading for my students to access both at school and at home in order to begin creating a blended classroom.

To begin, I think that being an educator means more than just going into a classroom and teaching students. I think that in order to fully embrace the role you must also know how to collaborate and work as a team with those around you. This is where my goal of becoming a technology leader stems from. I have set this goal because I witness so many good teachers slip through the cracks to becoming great teachers because they do not want to use technology in their classrooms simply because they do not know how to use it. My master’s courses have taught me a lot about how technology can deepen student learning and knowing this, it would be a dishonor to not use my skills to help other teachers in my school become stronger in the classroom. I will work towards this goal by attending the curriculum and technology leadership collaborative summit in Lansing, Michigan.

My second goal is to network with other educators outside of my school in order to learn about new technology as well as collaborate on how to use that technology in a meaningful way in the classroom. I thought of this goal because I first thought about what I do become a stronger teacher. Currently, I am taking college courses to obtain my master’s degree. Once that is complete, I will need to focus on going to some professional development classes or conferences that will help me further my technology knowledge. By going to different classes and/or conferences such as the MACUL conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I will be able to meet and talk with other educators about new technology as well as how it can be used in the classroom.

Lastly, I would like to work towards creating online reading units that align with the Common Core State Standards in order to begin a blended classroom with my students. After reading and learning about blended classrooms in my master’s courses I have discovered huge benefits to this type of learning for students. I think that through this type of environment my students will be able to develop stronger discussions with each other as well as build on technology skills while also learning about different reading standards. Since there are so many reading standards, this goal will take a very

long time to accomplish but my goal is to create at least two units each year. I will learn more about creating these units by following blogs such as Edutopia, where I will be able to watch videos and read blogs about blended learning in the classroom.

In conclusion, my master's courses have set me up to strengthen my teaching both inside and outside of the classroom. I need further learning to be able to keep up with the new technology that is designed each day and I will do that through different goals that I have set for myself. I will work towards becoming a technology leader at my school, network with other educators outside of my school to learn about new technology and how to use it in my classroom which will then help me develop a blended classroom where my students will be able to learn about specific reading standards through online courses that I will create for them.