

The Journey Ahead

My experience in the Masters of Arts in Education (MAED) program has confirmed for me that I am in the right field. When I began, I wanted to learn more about special education. My background is in special education for the visually impaired however, I wanted to expand from that and learn more about other areas of special education. As I progressed through the program, I realized that there is so much more I want to continue to learn about. Technology was a huge component of this program as it was entirely online. I learned how to blog and create websites including graphics, videos, audio clips, and movies. One goal of mine is to continue to utilize and learn about the most current technology. Another goal of mine is to continue to develop various strategies for teaching self-advocacy and independence skills to students in special education. This is a passion of mine and one that I will always promote for my students. My third goal is to enroll in an Education Leadership program. Being in administration has always been a goal of mine and I plan to pursue this within the next 5 years.

As technology is always evolving, I want to stay up-to-date as much as possible so that I can integrate it into my classroom. Students are more and more tech-savvy and relate well to using technology. Teachers need to integrate technology as much as possible into the classroom because this is an outlet that our students understand and value. In addition, it is one of our jobs as educators to prepare our students for the future. Technology will continue to evolve and have a prominent role in society. *This quote by John Dewey is one that I came across in one of my courses in the MAED program and resonated with me. It emphasizes the role that teachers have in preparing our students for the future.* One way to stay current with the newest technology is through educational technology blog sites. This [one](#) is a weekly blog that highlights the newest technology tools and how to use them in the classroom.

As a special education teacher, I feel that self-advocacy skills are critical for my students. Self-advocacy skills allow students to seek out the assistance, accommodations, or modifications that they need. These skills are important to develop and become especially essential when entering the workforce and university programs. I am always looking to learn new methods and strategies of how to implement lessons on self-advocacy skills for my students. In order to continue in this pursuit, I will attend special education conferences around Michigan where topics of self-advocacy are discussed. Such conferences may include [Michigan Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired \(MAER\)](#) and [Council for Exceptional Children\(CEC\)](#). In addition, [Wayne County RESA](#) hosts a number of workshops that provide valuable resources for general and special education teachers. While I want to always continue to learn more about best practices in special education, I eventually would like to pursue administration as well.

My third goal is to continue my education in an educational leadership program. I would like to be in an administrative role, specifically one relating to special education services. There are a couple of programs that I have explored. The first is Michigan State University's [Certification to Pathways Leadership program](#). Another program is Eastern Michigan

University's Post Master's K-12 Basic Administration Certificate. Both of these programs offer extensive training necessary for an administrative position. My goal is to begin this program within the next five years. The reason for this is that I would like to have a substantial number of years in a classroom before I enter administration.

My experience in the MSU MAED program has been eye-opening and I have learned as much about myself as I have about the field of education. With the skills I have developed throughout this program, I will continue to learn more about the latest technology and how I can bring it into the classroom as well as the best ways to teach self-advocacy skills to students in special education. Furthermore, I will use all that I have learned to contribute to my next educational pursuit of a leadership certification.