

## Lifelong Learning and Leading

Educators, I think, are naturally driven to learn. We participate in professional development, get advanced degrees, and form learning communities with other teachers. We are constantly learning about the newest and most innovative concepts for our classrooms. I know that continuing my own education is integral to who I am as an educator, in order to grow and evolve.

When I began this program, my goals were simple: learn about new and innovative technology tools that I could use in the classroom. As my goals changed, my thinking evolved as well. Now, I want to share my knowledge of these innovative education and technology practices with others, both students and fellow educators. And, always, I want to continue to challenge myself in my own learning. From these two ideas, I have set three future goals:

1. Understand coding concepts, and integrate coding into the classroom
2. Become a technology leader
3. Continue to be a fervent lifelong learner

### Understand Coding Concepts and Integrate Coding Into the Classroom

Learning to code has been a significant, albeit difficult, goal for some time, for a couple of reasons. First, coding and the underlying concepts are challenging for me. It's something I struggle to understand, therefore, I must conquer it. But, more importantly, I believe that coding can play a meaningful role in the classroom. It helps students develop problem solving abilities, expands their creativity, and nurtures a culture of learning from failure. Coding can be utilized in more than just math, though integration into other subjects is less common. I'd like to help change that.

One way I am already working towards this goal is through another graduate class I am currently taking - CEP 824: Programming Concepts for K12 Educators. This course allows for learning with different programming applications, as well as deep discussions as to how coding can be used as a tool for problem solving in all subject areas. Another invaluable resource is [Code.org](https://code.org). There are a multitude of lessons for learning code at all ages. It's also a fantastic resource for educators, offering professional learning opportunities for teachers of all grade levels.

### Become a Technology Leader

Over the course of the past four years, my professional goals have evolved. Where I originally saw myself a classroom teacher for years to come, I now envision a role of a technology leader. This broad term could take on many forms, from a director of educational technology at the district level, to a instructional technology consultant at a school. Regardless of what my role may end up being, I will always want to be working with both teachers and students, to enhance learning through technology. There are innumerable resources available for building leadership skills, and I plan to utilize many of them. The International Society for Technology in Education

(ISTE) provides [standards for Educational Leaders](#) that are crucial to any technology leadership role. The ISTE also has a [yearly convention](#) that would be a dream to attend. Additionally, Matt Harris, Ed.D has released a [set of videos](#) outlining the tenets of educational technology leadership, discussing topics such as systematic thinking, being a professional learner, and management. Finally, I'm just starting out with [LinkedIn](#), but I believe it will be a valuable resources for networking and creating professional connections.

### Continue to Be a Fervent Lifelong Learner

As I said before, continuing education is important to who I am as an educator and leader. I plan on continuing to learn about topics related to educational technology, leadership, and innovative education, among other things. I have always enjoyed learning, and don't want to become stagnant or content with what I know. I want to always be pushing myself to dive deeper, and continue to develop and improve myself, both professionally and personally. By making learning a lifelong process, I will become a better teacher and leader.

There are countless ways to make learning a priority. Watching and attending lectures, subscribing to relevant journals, and simply making use of your local library all amplify learning. While I don't have concrete plans, I would love to attend a state or national education conference, such as the Michigan Association of Computer Users in Learning's annual [MACUL conference](#). With a membership to the ISTE, a host of [online courses](#) are available for furthering my educational technology education.

Together, I believe these goals can provide a foundation for continued growth as an educator and leader. Regardless of the role I eventually end up in, I believe that through these goals I can make and impact in both students' and teachers' lives.