

From Chalkboards to iPads: True Learning Never Ends
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The Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines learning as “the activity or process of gaining knowledge or skill by studying, practicing, being taught, or experiencing something.” Through my Masters of Arts in Education, I have become a learner in all of these ways. In looking at the definition more closely I can see that ‘experiencing something’ is an essential part of learning and something that I will do for the rest of my life. My masters is a stepping stone in my career as a learner, not an end point. I am confident that whether I choose to be a teacher, administrator, or have a career outside the education world I will continue to have the opportunity and the desire to learn.

This program has given me the confidence to pursue teaching and to integrate technology into my classroom. If I choose a career where I have a classroom to call my own, I will use the technologies I have learned, such as Glogster, Edmodo, VoiceThread, and Quizlet, among other available technologies. In learning from a variety of different professors, I have gained a broad prospective and knowledge base about technology and want my students to be able to choose and use the technologies that best fit their learning styles. As a young student, I used chalkboards and dry erase boards in class and remember the excitement when we had overhead projectors. Soon, there was a computer for the class to share and shortly after, computer labs with enough computers for each student. As I graduated high school, my district brought in smart boards to the classroom and eventually iPads. Each technology that was presented to us proved to be a new and exciting way to learn and we quickly learned the affordances and constraints of each one. The technologies that I have learned about just in this program are amazing and I cannot wait to see what else we have in store for us. These technologies have changed what is important to learn. For example, a subject like computer programming, creating an app, or having your own website are all powerful tools and are much more useful and practical than when I first started school. I know that my learning must continue outside the classroom to stay up to date on new technologies as they are released.

My concentration in Sport Leadership and Coaching has allowed me to understand the benefit of technology in sport. I was able to create lesson plans integrating technology and look forward to using that knowledge when I become a coach. I found incredibly helpful apps, Right Pro View and Coach’s Eye, which allowed me to break down an athlete’s swing, whether it was golf, baseball, soccer, or tennis. The possibilities to use technology in sport are endless. They allow us as coaches to see discrepancies or areas that need improvement in player’s techniques. The benefits of using these technologies were not available when I was learning to swing a bat.

The leadership aspect, both on the field and in the classroom is an important concept that I now more fully understand. Leaders are necessary for any and every team and school. In taking classes that emphasize learning and leadership from an athletic and academic stand point, I found that there are many similarities. Lifelong learning is essential to become an effective leader, and leadership can happen at any level. There are so many conferences and resources available to help me in my constant drive to be the best leader I can.

This program has changed my idea of what it means to be a learner. Learning can happen when and where you least expect it; whether from a text book, online resource, teacher, student, or experience, they are all important. I think the most important thing that I have realized is that you are never truly done learning; rather, it is a constant and continuous state of mind. I have learned more in this program

than I ever thought I could, and it has allowed me to see that I never want to stop learning. My goal is to be the best educator and leader that I can be, and I know that the knowledge I have gained from the MAED will allow me to do that. I know I will have to continue to push myself as well as others and never let my desire to learn dwindle. This program has given me endless opportunities for future career plans, and I look forward to implementing all that I have learned into my life knowing that there is so much more out there for me to grasp.