

Learner For Life

On this website, I describe myself using four words. Teacher, student, seamstress, and equestrian. These words are key components of who I am, and the order isn't arbitrary. Student comes in at number two for a reason. After teaching, I consider learning to be the most important task I can undertake as a human being. After all, if I am always asking my students to grow and change, isn't it only fair that I do the same?

With my thoughts always turned toward the future, pursuing growth and change, there are three main goals I would like to accomplish:

1. Bring my language students closer to the cultures they are learning about.
2. Teach digital citizenship to my middle school technology class.
3. Become known as a technology implementation leader in my district.

These goals at first seem to be wildly different from one another, but that is only because I wear so many hats [in my district](#). At the moment, I teach French across three different buildings as well as tech in one of those buildings. However, my goals are each important because they either do something specific for my students, or provide a service to the colleagues I see in each of those buildings. My hope by achieving all three is to grow and change in my practice throughout all buildings and hats, not just one.

As a French teacher, it is important to me that my students understand the cultures of the language they are learning. From a classroom in the middle of Michigan, that isn't exactly the easiest thing to accomplish. Understanding culture takes some amount of...immersion. Thankfully, there are new technologies out there that offer a level of immersion that wasn't possible just a few years ago. To accomplish this goal, I will:

- Use [Google Expeditions](#), [Google Cardboard](#), and student devices to plan lessons where students can experience parts of various French-speaking countries in virtual reality, taking in the sights and sometimes even sounds as if they were standing there in the real.
- Take advantage of school computer labs and internet resources to plan lessons that expose students to authentic resources like vlogs, blogs, music, etc. in the target

language. There is nothing quite like seeing your student make the connection that the children in other countries are more similar to them than they ever realized before.

As a technology teacher, I think one of the most important lessons I can teach my students is how to be a good digital citizen. I've been teaching a technology class for the last two years, but have yet to do an in-depth exploration of what it means to be a digital citizen and the responsibilities that come with using all the tech tools at our fingertips. I plan to explore other avenues on how to accomplish this goal in the future, but for now to get a start, I will:

- Teach the 5th and 6th grade [units and lessons on digital citizenship](#) from Common Sense Media to my tech students during either the first or second quarter of the school year.

As a colleague, I think it is important to help support those around me. In that vein, I would like to become known as a technology leader in my district. I do not necessarily mean I want to be in charge of finding and implementing new technology, but I would like other teachers to know that I am willing and able to help them implement new technologies that they would like to use with their students to enhance their learning. To accomplish this goal, I will:

- Gain approval from building administrators to be able to offer tech help to other teachers in the building.
- Send out a survey to teachers in each building asking what tech they would like help using in their classrooms.
- Review the surveys and learn about anything I don't already know how to use.
- Keep a schedule that is shared with other teachers where they can check out a half-hour of my time where I will go to their classrooms and help them or collaborate with them on whatever they are looking to do.

Looking to the future can be a scary thing to do. The fear and uncertainty that I felt being a language teacher when I looked toward the future was one of the reasons I chose the [Master of Arts in Educational Technology](#) program at Michigan State University over any other graduate program. Language education, and education in general, has seen and will continue to see many

changes. Technology integration and technology education seems to be the future, and being able to use tech to continually grow and change will, I hope, help me (and my students!) stay relevant throughout my career (and theirs!).