Never Ending

By Jenni McGrogan

I feel as though learning should never end.  The old saying goes- "You learn something new every day", truly applies to me.  As an educator, even though my formal schooling may (or may not) be over with I feel as though it is very important to stay current with trends in education and the newest technologies to help students succeed for their future.

Going through the MAET courses, I really tried my hardest to start to incorporate as much as I could in my classroom.  Although it was un-realistic to implement all of it all at once, I wish it was possible.  Once I saw how technology could positively (and negatively) impact the classroom it was really a spark of interest for me.   It hasn't been until recently that I have been trying to think of ways that I can continue my education and what I really have the potential to do with my degree.

As a Physical/Health educator, using various forms of technology in the classroom got really fun.  Although funding can be a problem, one of my goals is to continue to search for grants and write proposals for grants to make this available to students.  As the obesity trends continue to rise, budgets are cut and teachers are stretched to their limits with class sizes, technology in the gym can really be a life saver while in school and also with the hopes that the interest is there for students to continue using the technologies throughout their life.

The one class in the program that I somewhat struggled with was Approaches to Educational Research.  It was difficult to make connections to some of the topics that were discussed however; it was interesting to research on a topic specific to our subject area.  As I began to do this and collect data, it occurred to me that in order to implement any form of technology in a district, someone really should be doing all this digging to make sure that the technology will be a good fit for the demographic of the student population and have great benefit.  As I began my job search this past summer, a position came up for Educational Technology at the administrative level.  I was over the moon about it but was not confident in the portion of the job description that required the candidates to assess data from test scores.  Another goal that I have coming from this program would be to familiarize myself with the collection of data and really become more savvy with excel and input of formulas.  This goal can be accomplished by taking classes at a tech center or local community college or teaching myself with YouTube videos.   I feel this would be a vital asset to a school and myself to be able to have this skill be one of my strong points.

Finally, another area that I really enjoyed learning about and completing was online learning and the development of a course. The complexity of building an online course was so fascinating and challenging that I would relish in the opportunity to do this as a potential full time job.  I feel that education is moving towards hybrid and online learning that the growth potential to learn more about this area and be involved with businesses or schools that are developing curricula would be a dream.  To continue to

take courses that are furthermore challenging and learn how to develop other areas of an online classroom would really be a great skill to possess.

My goals reflect that learning is never ending.  I feel that going through the graduate level courses in the MAET program were merely an introduction and a good foundation to really get the ball rolling and ideas flowing.   I would very much enjoy going back to school for classes to keep up with technology and to also earn a second master's degree in educational leadership.  With the teaching experience I do have and continue to have, and with the strong foundation of technology in the classroom, I feel that having the know-how of a true leader would be influential to really making the whole package of knowledge come together.