How Web 2.0 Changed My Classroom
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Throughout my duration in the MAET program, I have been introduced to sites, programs, and communities that I'd never heard of before, but have made me a stronger teacher. Learning about all of the Web 2.0 programs and communities that exist for educators was just one major step in meeting the goals that I had written for myself a year ago.

Looking back at the goal statement that I initially wrote for my admission to the MAET program on 2/13/11, I found that many of my goals have remained unchanged, even though I have had the opportunity to learn and grow as an educator and student. In my goal statement, I wrote that one goal I had for myself with this masters degree program was to utilize the technologies that I learn about in my own language arts classroom to make learning more authentic for students. Ever since I started the MAET program, I began incorporating what I had learned into my own classroom. For example, in one course I commented about the challenges of wanting students to be able to collaborate across classes, while still knowing that they were writing in a safe environment. An instructor mentioned Kidblogs as a way to do just that. I incorporated Kidblogs into my classes almost immediately afterwards and was so excited to see how the students were able to communicate with each other. Another example involves the educational social networking site, Edmodo. While I had heard of Edmodo and used it a bit with my classes, another instructor advised me of new ways to use it that led to major change in my classroom. This site has led to more effective classroom collaboration and grading methods. I even was able to change how literature circles are done in my class. Now a student in 3rd period can talk about a book they are reading with a student in 8th period. It has really changed the format of my classroom. When I first wrote in my goal statement that I hoped to find ways to use technology to make my lessons better and increase student engagement, I had no idea about all the resources I would find that would help with this goal.

My other goal was to use what I had learned and practiced in my classroom to become a technology specialist for a school. My reasoning for wanting to do this was to help bridge the gap between traditional education and our students, and to make technology more accessible for all teachers and their students. It is still a goal of mine to someday hold this role in a school. I think that with my passion for both teaching and technology, I could really help teachers find new ways to use technology to make their lessons more effective and engaging. Having seen technology transform my classroom firsthand, I know what a powerful effect it can have on schools. Having worked with many teachers in my school, I know that many teachers are willing to do whatever it takes to create effective, engaging lessons if only they had some guidance. I hope to become a technology specialist so I can provide that guidance for teachers to help give students the best educational experience possible. I have seen how technology can turn a non-motivated student into one that is collaborating, thinking critically, and highly interested in school.

As I finish my final MAET courses this semester, I am looking forward to continuing to use my new found knowledge with my own students and eventually as a school technology specialist. While my goals have remain unchanged, my knowledge and desire to achieve these goals, certainly has not.