

Hitting Refresh: A Goal Reflection Essay

Lacey Ringman

As I stare at the screen of my laptop, reflecting on the initial goals I set for myself at the start of my Master's program, I find myself concentrating on the refresh icon at the corner of the screen. If I have trouble loading a website, my reaction is to hit this icon to reload the information for me. As I think about the start of my Master's of Educational Technology program at Michigan State University I hit my refresh icon, and look back at the educational goals I set myself. Too often goals are written and put away to never be seen again. As I browse through my application process for the program I am able to refresh my thinking of why I started this journey in March of 2012 and revisit the goals that have been tucked away for the past two years.

The main focus of my goal statement dealt with the need to better educate future artists to be successful in a technology driven art world, as I am an art educator. I wrote, "It is time to trade our paintbrushes for jump drives and our graphite pencils for graphic tablets." I also clarified the importance of traditional art training using the traditional mediums and not eliminating those from the art classroom but integrating the two together. Just like any classroom, integrating technology does not guarantee success, but using the technology to enhance the learning is the key to successful technology integration. In the application I stated, "It is great to teach students the basics of oil painting or shading with charcoal, but to prepare our students to succeed after high school they will need to be prepared with brand new tools." These tools are essential for students to succeed in an evolving art industry; increasing the technology use in my classroom as well as in the art we create. Students who choose to continue with the fine arts after high school will need to be prepared for a digital arts world.

The goal statement I wrote reflects the mindset I have today. It is relevant in the goals that my focus is on the future of my students'. The importance of teaching students to be successful when they leave our classroom and the school is a large focus of my educational goals as a teacher, as well as the goals for pursuing this degree. I am here for my students, to educate myself to enhance their learning and success not only as an artist, but as a future learner.