

## Foreseeing the Future Jennifer Stirling

Over the past five years of teaching, I've learned a lot from my observations and experiences. I've seen teachers go above and beyond for their students. I've supported students in all types of scenarios both positive and negative. I've witnessed teachers struggle through immense challenges and dealt with my own as well. At some point along the way, I realized I wanted something more from teaching. Not that I don't love what I do, but I wanted to expand my knowledge and use my passions. I wanted to truly be able to be a teammate to my fellow staff, instead of being bogged down with my teaching responsibilities. I started the Master of Arts in Educational Technology (MAET) program with the mindset that I would follow my personal interest in technology to be able to support other teachers in using it effectively. After doing some research, I found the future job title of my dreams - Educational Technology Consultant. This is what I want to do. Being an Educational Technology Consultant involves constant learning, leading, and communicating, so I need to continue doing those things to gain experience.

To start, I understand that technology is always changing, so I need to continue learning throughout my life. To further understand some common applications that teachers use, I will look into the Google Educator certification after completing the MAET program. A lot of listings for employment opportunities that I have seen in my future field have this certification as a preferred or recommended skill set. I will also consider continuing the Apple Educator certification that my school district started a couple of years back and never completed. I think learning more about common applications that teachers use, as well as practicing using a variety of student information systems and course management systems, will give me valuable knowledge that can make me more marketable to future employers. By doing this learning and having this knowledge, I will hopefully be recognized as a leader in technology at my current school.

The second thing I want to accomplish is to lead more professional development. Lately, as I am becoming more of a technology leader in my school, our principal has approached me to lead professional development sessions on certain software that teachers are attempting to use. These sessions have typically been extremely informal and I am given little time to prepare the presentation, but I've successfully taught the teachers at my school how to use Zoom and LanSchool, two applications that help them with remote teaching. Now, I would like to take my professional development plans - like this one - to a more formal and larger scale. I'd love to plan and present some professional development for the district as a whole that can be well thought out and also longer. This way, I will continue to have experiences that an Educational Technology Consultant may have. By presenting professional development, I am also practicing communicating and conveying my knowledge, which I look to do on an even larger scale as well.

Lastly, after learning and exploring new technologies or software and presenting to my local community, I'd love to start communicating my knowledge with the world through tips and

tutorials. Recently, in one of my MAET courses about assessment, a lot of my peers were struggling with how to publish their game-based assessments that we had been working on. I ended up researching, and through a lot of trial and error, I figured it out. To support my peers, I made a tutorial video on how I was able to get my game published. Many of the students in my class emailed me to say thank you. It is the most viewed video on my YouTube channel and every time I see it, it brings me great joy. I feel that I helped more people than I ever have before with one simple tutorial video. Therefore, my last goal would be creating tutorials on YouTube and other social media platforms (maybe the newest trend: Tik Tok?) to help teachers be successful nationally and internationally.

I can't wait to continue learning, leading, and communicating to help support teachers and students toward successful and effective technology use. By learning more and sharing my knowledge, I will only be gaining more experience to truly make me the best Educational Technology Consultant that I can be. I am excited to see where my knowledge from the MAET program takes me and how much more I can grow from here.