

I Have Always Been A Geek for New Technology Tools and Gadgets A Goal Statement Reflection by Angela Clark-Pohlod

I grew up with two parents that both started their careers as computer programmers and continued to work in computer-related positions throughout my youth. Technology, in the way of computers, was not a foreign concept to me. I started writing BASIC programs for fun around second grade. From that early exposure, my love for and desire to tie things to technology has continued to blossom. I did not choose to follow in my parents footsteps and go into programming, but I did take some programming classes in college and continued to have a love for technology tools and gadgets both through my undergraduate training and into my early years of teaching.

When I began the [Masters of Arts in Educational Technology program at MSU](#) in the summer of 2011, I had been teaching middle school science for 14 years. I had also been a member of my school district's K-12 Technology Committee for three years, presented at [MACUL](#) and had taught a couple of years of computer classes for our 8th grade students. My goals at that time were mostly related to technology tools and gadgets, more than substance. I wanted to continue to engage students with technology gadgets and tools, push myself to use tools like Twitter and blogging more effectively and to learn more about online teaching. As I reflect upon these goals now, I can honestly say that I have met and exceeded them all; I have continued to learn about new technology tools and gadgets, as well as, played an integral role in the research, planning and implementation of a 1-to-1 iPad initiative at our high school last year. I have been successfully blogging with my students for the last two years and have moved many resources for my classroom onto my own [classroom website](#).

When entering the MAET program, I was, and continue to be, introduced to a plethora of new tools and gadgets, but I have learned through the program that Educational Technology is about so much more than just the cool tools and gadgets. It is great to have so many tools and gadgets at our disposal, but truly finding that "sweet spot" where the technology comes together with content knowledge and pedagogy to truly support learning and student mastery should be the real goal. The idea of [TPACK](#) was not something I had previously considered and now it is at the forefront of every lesson I create. I do not use technology for the sake of using technology, but rather determine first what content my students need to have and what method will best help me to get that content across. After looking at these pieces, I then determine what type of technology, if any, will best support and/or enhance their learning.

So, while I still consider myself a technology gadget "geek", I am much wiser now about how technology is integrated into my lessons and how it helps to meet the needs of my students, rather than simply using new tools and gadgets for the sake of using the technology.