

# *Retooling Technology, Reformulating Leadership*

## Kayla VanEgmond's Goal Reflection Essay

Looking back at my goals when entering my master's program Spring Semester 2013, halfway through my second year of teaching, I identified two central goals. The first goal I had was to learn more about how to incorporate technology into my lessons given the technological limitations in my school. One thing that changed this goal was moving back to Michigan and shifting from middle to elementary school. At my old school, the best way for students to access technology was by reserving a computer cart, but my new school expects teachers to reserve time in the computer lab. This has changed how I use technology because the time limit on lab use makes me focus on ensuring the time my students spend with technology is meaningful. This has shifted my goal by adding a focus on prioritizing when technology would be best used in addition to simply how it should be incorporated. This shift was reinforced by what I learned in my master's program about the power of individualized authentic multimedia assignments. When I created products that used technology to show what I learned, I ended up feeling more invested and proud of my work, a motivation that I want to pass on to my students. As I improve at this revised goal of prioritizing which lessons technology should be used in, my students will do more of this meaningful creation. Another way this goal has shifted is that now I think more about how technology can be used to support my own professional development. At the start of this program, I was focused on learning about how to apply the technology I already know about to my classroom, but, during this program, I discovered there are also ways technology can be used to impact me as a professional. This includes both continuing my own education through new modes of online group interaction and honing my professional image through new tools for website design.

# *Retooling Technology, Reformulating Leadership*

## Kayla VanEgmond's Goal Reflection Essay

The second goal I had when beginning was to become more assertive, firm, and knowledgeable in order to fill my school's leadership void. One way this goal has changed is that I realized my belief that leaders needed to be assertive and firm was based on stereotypes about leadership style. Now that I know about different leadership styles from authoritarian to laissez-faire, I understand not all leaders need plentiful assertiveness and firmness. Therefore, I can exhibit leadership that affects institutional change without having to embody those characteristics. Another part of this shift is that I learned leadership is not something only done by those thought of as "leaders" because of their assigned roles. This realization shifted my second goal further by showing me what I had viewed as a void of leadership was not only due to failures of people in "leadership" positions but also due to inaction of teachers themselves to create change. This puts me, as a teacher, in a position where I now believe I can do leadership instead of just preparing for when I might someday become a leader.