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The Revolution Will Be Live

My professional role as a classroom educator is based around change. Every year roughly 140 new faces grace my presence each with their own strengths, weaknesses, and unique contexts that both help and hinder the education process. It is our goal to navigate those waters and ensure we all come out the other side of the school year a bit better than we started. What that looks like varies for each of us based on the person we are at that particular moment, but unique and individual progress should always be the destination we are seeking. From the earliest moments of my career, I have always wanted to do my best to ensure my students understand that I respect them as learners with unique perspectives. As part of my masters program, when determining my theory of learning, I asked former students "What learning looks like in my classroom"? The following video illustrates their views:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hn3rBYoEoAc>

I was thrilled how many students were understanding that the discussions that I hoped to facilitate were about learning from one another, and I think that mutual respect is a key component of the vulnerability needed to learn. There is a revolution happening in public education. 21st century educators are understanding that classrooms are a community of learning, and we are not the sole educators in the room. My future goals as a learner continue down this path and can be summarized by three categories:

Dynamic teaching,

21st century learning requires flexibility. Students are facing a world where information is at their fingertips. The memorization exercises that used to plague public education are now located freely on [Quizlet](#). Math can be completed, work and all, with [Photomath](#). Now, more than ever, we have to engage our students in learning through their contexts. What can our students teach us about the curriculum? How can they analyze the material through their own context? In my English Language Arts class, I attempt to give them platforms to voice their opinions, such as Flip, or use creative outlets to capture moments, feelings, or themes of their selected texts. Some of my preferred tools include, [CrAlyon](#) for creating art, [Spotify](#) to general playlists, and [Anchor](#) to create research podcasts. It is not about memorizing what happens within the curriculum, but how our students see it connecting, and benefitting, their lives, and these tools have them engaging with the material deeply, but also broadening their understanding of available technology. In the future, I want to continue to honor my students' lives outside of the classroom by leveraging technologies that interest them and apply to their world. I want to consider deeply how we can incorporate seemingly disconnected technology like coding in [Scratch](#), or [3D printing](#) in the ELA classroom. I want to always "swing for the fences" and take risks to ensure my students find a connection with the curriculum. I hope to continue to improve, finding and applying a wide range of technologies that allow my students to

practically connect the concepts of English Language Arts to their specific, and unique, worldview and interests.

Inclusive teaching:

The district in which I teach is getting more diverse each year. I want to ensure that all students feel welcome and represented in my classroom. As stated above, the learning process requires failure, and failure requires vulnerability. With a feeling of acceptance and respect, students can understand the power of diversity in the classroom. By offering assessments with student choice, diversity in literature and selected texts, and student-led discussions, I am hoping students recognize the respectful tone of my classroom and are willing to share their perspectives. [Booksource.com](#) allows for teachers to curate classroom libraries and it will analyze them for areas that are lacking based on reading level and inclusivity. It even offers suggestions for books to improve upon these areas. I can continue to grow in this area by using [Diversebooks.com](#) to bolster my library, and of course by engaging with my students of a variety of backgrounds and giving them a voice to share their recommendations. Sharing our viewpoints and connections to the course material breed empathy and understanding. Our understanding of cultural complexity is ongoing, but we must forge ahead with the same mindset the best teachers have, which is one of always learning.

Collaborative learning.

Ultimately, my goal is to work with my peers so we all get better. Engaging with conferences provided by [Michigan Association of Computer Users in Learning \(MACUL\)](#), and promoting these conferences with my peers in my home district. MACUL honors these same goals and works to provide inclusive integration of technology that is contextually relevant to students. I hope to continue to expand my learning network via Twitter and other social media platforms to find like-minded educators who can teach me to be a more dynamic and inclusive teacher. The road doesn't stop here, and given our profession, it never truly does. Working together as professionals, we can best bring our knowledge to the classroom and support our students. It takes a village to make us the best educators we can be.

While the conclusion of my masters is bittersweet, I am eager to apply these practices to my classroom and learn from my peers and students. By looking back at the ways I have started to achieve these future goals, I have a clearer picture of how to progress. We all should strive for progress, empathy, and understanding, and it is the most important trait of an educator to model these with every opportunity that they can. The revolution is live and, I can only hope, to be at the forefront of whatever best helps my classroom move forward.