

What Did I Get Myself Into? Meagan Provines

When applying for the Masters of Arts in Education program in spring of 2013, I had to create a video with my goal for the program. In my video I stated that one of my main goals was to learn how to incorporate tablets one on one into my Social Studies classroom. Shortly after that, I remember talking with my friend Kristen, who works as an Instructional Technology Specialist and she said that my masters program should incorporate more than just tablets. At that point, I could not fathom what else I could learn about in a technology masters other than tablets. Once my master program began in the fall of 2013; It quickly became apparent to me that I truly did not know what I was signing up for when I applied for the MAET program. That fall, I learned about theories of learning, essential mindsets for teaching with technology, what a MOOC is, experienced "maker culture", and created videos and posted them on Youtube. Neither CEP 810 or CEP 811 mentioned tablets at all.

About 10 months after I applied for the MAET program and wrote my initial tablet goal, my district announced that with a grant from the Virginia Department of Education, each freshman and sophomore for the 2014-2015 school year would be receiving a tablet as a part of the E-Backpack initiative. **I was invited to a technology committee meeting to give teacher input on the tablet initiative.** At this point, it was also decided that my district was switching from teaching World Geography to World History 1 for all freshman; therefore, all of my students would be receiving a tablet along with a new online textbook resource. I am very appreciative of my educational technology background in order to provide opinions and feedback throughout the E-backpack initiative process. Due to the fact, administrators knew I was pursuing a masters degree in technology; I was asked for my opinion throughout the E-Backpack initiative and presented to the school board. While it would appear I have reached my initial MAET goal; however, I found that my educational technology goal continues to evolve.

Moral of the story, is that Kristen was right: I have learned about so much more than tablets throughout the past 18 months. Recently, a science colleague asked me about my masters in technology program because he was interested in it as well. It was hard to explain to him all the things I have learned. I have learned how to create a course management system, how to obtain instant feedback from students through Google Forms and PollEverywhere as warm ups and exit slips in my classroom as well as how to create audio clips and video projects. I have learn how technology, pedagogy and content depend upon each other. Throughout all my technology learning, my goal has evolved into: How can I continue to engage students with my World History content through modern technologies? I love that I can bridge the gap between the ancient and modern in my classroom.

