

Dear Portfolio Reader,

The goal I wrote for my professional portfolio was much different this year than my goals in the past have been. This year I focused on a technology goal because of the implementation of 1:1 iPads in the classroom rather than 1:1 laptops. Up until this point I have never felt like I needed a goal specific to technology. MLTI came into play while I was still in college, and I was able to take many courses in order to prepare myself for the use of these devices in the classroom. When the iPads were introduced this year, I knew I was going to need an avenue by which to educate myself as to how best to use these devices in the classroom, and in turn help my students benefit from their use. I did sign up to go to one conference, which was cancelled due to a snowstorm and was not rescheduled. This was pretty disappointing, but I was able to participate in one workshop session here at Warsaw, and I also received a lot of help and support from Lori Stevens. I'm glad I made this goal, otherwise I think I would have used the iPads a lot less this year.

As I thought about setting this goal for myself I realized there were three facets I believed my students would benefit from, organization, differentiation, and engagement. Therefore my goal is: I will increase my knowledge of applications of the iPad in order to effectively integrate technology into my classrooms. Students will benefit from the organizational tools, differentiated instruction, and engagement these devices provide. Progress will be measured through academic as well as habits of scholarship assessments. Throughout the course of the year I have realized that many of the apps students use from time to time or regularly on their iPad benefit them in all three of the ways.

The organizational tools such as Google Docs, and Ebackpack work in sync with each other to make sure that students work can go easily from one app to the next to be assigned, worked on, and turned in. Obviously there is still the need to help students with organizational strategies within these apps (i.e. creating folders, and titling documents appropriately), however, simply having all work kept in one place and being able to easily find something that we worked on months ago is a huge benefit for many students. Accessibility has two of the major features students in my class used to differentiate for their individual needs. Multiple students were also able to access audio books through the use of their iPads.

The iPad itself is a tool of engagement for so many students. While there are a few students who would rather not use their iPad to do work from time to time, the majority of students see the value in this tool. I have actually found that the 7<sup>th</sup> graders, who were not experienced with having functioning laptops last year, have an easier time working with the iPads. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have laptops to use as a comparison get frustrated with the iPads more easily and are less willing to troubleshoot than the 7<sup>th</sup> graders. Even so, as I stated above, and as you can see through the reflections shared, many students are engaged through the use of this device whether they in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

In multiple instances I have seen a students work habit and work quality increase with the use of the iPad. While there have been struggles with figuring out how to use this new platform this year, I believe this goal has helped me and my students troubleshoot many of these issues. All in all, for this being our first year using these devices, I feel it has been a success. Thanks for taking the time to explore my portfolio.

Sincerely,

Caitlin