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Capstone  
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Hindsight Gives the Best Insight  
*Goal Reflection Essay*

**That was Then**

I began my graduate journey about halfway through my first year of teaching. I knew I wanted to continue my education and better myself as an educator and life-long learner. I was optimistic that furthering my education would give me the opportunity to become a highly qualified teacher and gain valuable experiences through the convenience of an online program.

One of my initial goals was to gain professional experiences within a close learning community of online peers. Over my course work in the program, much of my learning and professional growth can be attributed to working with teachers in this program striving for similar goals. While textbooks and research articles always provide beneficial teaching strategies and knowledge, sometimes the most meaningful learning comes from someone living it. Gaining professional experiences will continue to be something I pursue throughout my career. It's inevitable that there will be more resources, colleagues, and studies that will allow this goal to grow continually.

My second goal was literacy improvement because I recognized the importance of this content area in young learners. Through courses such as elementary reading assessment and accommodating differences in literacy learners, I've learned and successfully implemented reading strategies, and techniques that can be used in daily instruction. My goal was to become more skillful, and resourceful with these styles to be utilized in the classroom and I feel that the courses from the Master of Arts in Education program are responsible for this.

I wanted to increase knowledge and expertise in technology because I was aware that the world of technology is never stopping. I was pleased with the variety of technology courses that were offered through the graduate program and was hopeful that the courses would provide me with lessons I could implement into my classroom. I have found success from technology courses and have had the opportunity to experience the world of the "maker movement" and this door of innovation in classrooms.

**This is Now**

Upon reflecting on the success of my goals at the start of the program, I want to continue to set goals for myself. I plan to explore the world of technology in the classroom further by adapting lessons that include websites and apps that motivate students in their learning. I have seen the active engagement from students when participating in technology-based lessons and believe it's a valuable practice.

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I have spent time teaching professional development seminars for our district and my goal is to continue to do so with the knowledge I have gained through my master's program. I believe I have become more qualified to instruct others on meaningful and innovative classroom technologies to their classrooms and believe others will be able to easily implement such lessons.

It's my belief that some of the greatest educators in the world of technology are fellow teachers. I look forward to working closely with colleagues for innovative lessons that implement technology. I recognize that this goal of exploring, creating, and sharing will be a mindset that doesn't have an endpoint. There's no finish line in learning, no matter if you're a student or the teacher.