

Goals Then and Now:  
A Reflection on My Journey to Mastery  
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In 2009 I applied to Michigan State to start my journey toward completing a Master's of Education. When I first applied I had specific goals in mind that I wanted to accomplish for myself during the program. I had three main goals in mind at that time in my journey. The first goal was to complete the program and be the first person in my family to receive a Master's Degree. The second goal that I had for myself was to get a 4.0 grade point average for my entire master's program. The final goal was to use my master's degree to pursue a position as a school principal. At the time these goals seemed obtainable for me but as my journey continued I discovered that the goals were just that, obtainable and really did not push me to be better in all that I do.

As I continued my four year journey to mastery I discovered that my life was changing and priorities were rearranged. During the time I made a change and stepped down from my Assistant Principal position in the charter school that I was at and pursued a position in a public school as a third grade teacher. You see my outlook on what a leader of a school was at the start of my program stopped at the position of a principal. At that time I felt that the only way I could be a leader was to be the "boss". My classes in the area of leadership changed my narrow understanding and showed me that teachers can be leaders and make even more impact on a school environment than a principal can. Since the time of this new found understanding, my goal for being a principal has changed. I rethought my goal and changed it to be the best teacher leader that I can be with all of the new ideas that I learned in my course work. My goal is to be a positive force in my school and help improve those that I come in contact with, such as: students, parents, colleagues and leaders in my school and district. I feel as though I am accomplishing this goal daily and feel that I have done more good for others in my three years as a third grade teacher than my many years as an assistant principal.

My other two goals of achievement have also changed slightly. I did not accomplish a 4.0 for all my classes. Unfortunately, I received a 3.5 in one of my courses because I was marked down to a B- on my final paper because I wrote a quote that I came up with and did not reference myself on the reference page. To say the least I was not pleased about that whole situation and feel it was a little far fetched to be marked down like that for the reason I was given, but I did not let that slow me down. I am happy to say though I have received a 4.0 on all of my other classes so I will be graduating with a 3.9. I feel that I still accomplished my goal because I have worked very hard on all that I have done. The final goal was to be the first person in my family to graduate with a master's degree. That goal is not that important to me anymore since the birth of my daughter. My outlook on success is not really about me anymore, but more focused on my family. I want to graduate now from Michigan State with a master's because I want to be able to supply for my family and ensure that I have all of the tools that I need to be successful in my field of work. I also want my daughter to be a hard worker and I feel that by accomplishing this task that it shows my daughter that I am a hard worker and a life long

learner and hopefully by her seeing her father like that will turn around and want to strive for success in her own life.

This reflection on my journey for mastery really has shown me just how much I really have grown in the past four years. I am happy to say that my goals were met and that I will continue to make goals for myself and strive everyday to meet them. I feel that it was my goals that helped me through this journey and wonder what my life would have been like on this journey if I did not give myself a direction to go. In May I will graduate from Michigan State with my master's of education and I wonder after I get my diploma; what goals will I come up with next?