Show What You Know!
By: Jackie Fincher

I've always had my life mapped out. From a young age, I knew I wanted to teach. I declared my major during Freshman Orientation at Grand Valley State University. While all my classmates were changing majors and career paths, I trudged on through the difficult mathematics courses that I thought I would never get through. When I graduated from my undergraduate program in 2012, I applied to endless jobs, went on numerous interviews and wound up teaching middle school. My dream job included teaching in a high school classroom that allowed me to influence older students in the years before applying to college. This past year that dream came true.

I write this to explain that my life plan did not include anything past getting a high school mathematics-teaching job. After graduating from my master's program, I didn't have a plan. Why did I get my Masters degree? Because I had extra time on my hands? For the money? Not even close. I truly wanted to enhance my education to better understand and teach each of my students.

Now that I have an endorsement in Educational Technology, I would like to continue to use the knowledge I acquired throughout my program in three ways: implementing and communicating best practice in the mathematics classroom by becoming Mathematics Department Head, taking on the role of technology coordinator in my district, and successfully teaching in a new-age classroom.

Goal #1: Become Mathematics Department Head
I have taken on the responsibility of restructuring our Geometry/Mathematics department to align more directly to the [Common Core State Standards](). Through restructuring and curriculum mapping, I am responsible for the growth of my department. With the immense amount of strategies and resources I've acquired over the last two years, I feel confident that I can communicate to my department ways to help their students be successful. My goal is to be asked to take over the lead in the Mathematics Department. I want each member of the department to feel comfortable communicating with one another and implementing new teaching strategies.

Goal #2: Make Significant Contributions to School District
I'm a natural born leader. Through successfully completing tasks, being asked to participate in additional professional development and

facilitating open communication between professionals, I am able to take give me great pride in what I do. Hearing that my name is positively mentioned during administration meetings and having those I report to tell me the potential I possess to lead our department are some of the reasons I decided to take on a greater leadership role in my school.

I've only been at my current job for less than a year and I'm already involved in various groups and teams throughout the district. The kids see me taking on various roles within our school: a mathematics teacher, SAT Prep Coach, and Night School Instructor. I am a part of groups that are district-wide, such as [Formative Assessment for Michigan Educators](#) (FAME), Next Generation Classroom Instructors, and the Curriculum Development Team.

I see a great future for my time in this district. My goal is to become a technology coordinator for secondary educators. Our students get little direction on how to properly use technology resources they have available to them, and I believe this is because our teachers receive little training.

Goal #3: Successfully Implement Learning in a New Age Classroom
New to this upcoming school year, my district has budgeted for several teachers to get an opportunity to design and implement a Next Generation Classroom. This opportunity comes at a great time for me as I finish up my Educational Technology program. What could be better than being given the chance to apply everything I just learned in my master's program to my classroom? Using the provided budget, I can buy technology for my students to use and design my classroom to support comfortable, collaborative spaces. Because I have experience teaching the [360 Degree Math Program](#), I am also asking for white boards on all walls in my classroom.

Reimaging the Classroom- [TedTalk Video](#)

To directly support learning, I will create resources for my students to learn both face-to-face and through online activities. My classroom website [THS Geometry](#) will be altered to allow hybrid learning to occur. Each lesson will have a learning assignment, practice assignment and assessment to show mastery. My students are also comfortable using [Google Classroom](#), so I will continue to ask students to use that resource to complete and submit assignments. It also provides them with opportunities to receive feedback and communicate with me and other students.