

# Now.... Let's Get Down to Business!

By Dave Crewes

I am now, finally, at the end of a very long journey. When I started in 2001, I knew what I was getting into, and wasn't afraid..... Too much! After three years of working full time in a lab, going to school and helping to take care of my family, I had my teaching certificate. "Time to find a job!" I said. After three more years of subbing, while working full time at the lab, and helping to take care of my family, I caught a break and landed a full time teaching position. Shortly after that, I realized in order to keep my awesome teaching job I would have to go back to school. So I started taking classes, and teaching full time, and working part time (some improvement) at the lab, while helping to take care of my family. I knew it was going to be tough. I was asked to write a "Goal Statement" for entry into the Master's program at MSU. My Master's Degree would take me years to complete: years of taking classes, teaching full time, working part time and helping to take care of my family. I set my fears aside and focused on what I wanted to bring to my school and classroom. I left out one important goal. I would now like to make light of that personal goal as I reflect on my journey. Here it is: I just wanted to make it through the next three years alive, sane, and still have a job and a family! Well, I did it. I have one month left to tie up all the loose ends and focus on teaching and family. I am truly looking forward to the next chapter of my life.

Now that I have reflected on what I didn't put into my Goal Statement, I will focus on those things that I was concerned with at the time of its creation. The first, and most important to me, was that I created a nurturing classroom where learning was fun, exciting (sometimes....still working on that) and that students looked forward to coming to my class. I will now have a ton more time to devote to my classroom and environment, and I know it will even be better in the future.

I set out trying to integrate as much technology as I possibly could. I found that this was not always as easy as it seemed. I first had to develop lessons and plans and tests and all that wonderful stuff that goes with teaching. I found that my technology integration of my classroom was proceeding slower than expected. No worries. Last year was a good year, and I expect this year to be groundbreaking. Our district has outfitted all the students with iPads! It should prove to be exciting and taxing at the same time.

Starting any new job can be a trying experience. I wanted to make myself available to my new colleagues and become part of the team. I strived to give as much as I could to the people I worked with. This was a goal that I found easy to live up to, and I will continue to do so in the future. Over the course of my Master's classes, I learned much about integrating technology into classrooms. I am now on the Technology Committee, and I am going to serve as the building representative for the technology initiative as well. I am looking forward to working with everyone and giving back to the people who helped me out when I needed it.

As I look back over my Goal Statement from the beginning of my Master's program, I realize that I have stayed true to my goals and ideals. I still have much to accomplish to satisfy those goals, but I have made excellent progress. Most importantly, I am still alive, I still have a teaching job, I don't work in the lab anymore, and I am graduating with a Master's Degree. All paths lead to one. Now I can travel a single road and truly live up to the goals I set for myself