

## Can't Stop, Won't Stop

Learning is something that has been apart of the person I am since early on in my life. I'm surrounded by family and friends that are eager, inquisitive, and driven to learn something new or teach someone something. From an early age my grandmother always allowed me to learn through exploration. Whether it was through a simple backyard walk in the orchard looking at the different fruit trees, plants, or insects that were there, or if it happened to be learning to play a different card game or reading a new book. It could be my father's uncanny ability to teach me something new through his random informational tidbits or during home improvement tasks. My knack for learning may be due to the experiences that my parents have graciously provided my siblings and I where we learned through observations, happenings, and exposure to new places and things. Each member of my immediate family has always encouraged me to do and try new things, which has led to my evolution into a lifelong learner beginning in my childhood years. Because this sense of exploration, inquiry, teaching, learning, and encouragement to pursue new opportunities started at such an early age, it remains the reason why today I continually seek to learn in any and every way possible.

Just because I will have completed a high level degree via my graduate program, doesn't mean I'm finished learning. I have several goals in mind of various topics, activities, and information I hope to pursue to learn more about that involve both career-based concepts, but life activities as well. On the professional front, I have three immediate things in mind that I hope to learn more about. First, my school district as started our 1:1 Google Chromebook initiative in high school and middle school. Eventually it will move down to the elementary classrooms. With that, I would like to know how to implement and use Chromebooks effectively and efficiently in an early elementary classroom. Next, I would like to teach some higher education courses online. As the online learning realm continues to evolve, the demand for online courses and professors to teach them will as well. I would love to supplement my teaching career by teaching students online as well. Finally, for now, I would like to know how to create and publish my own book both in an audio format and digitally.

As I previously mentioned, my school district has so graciously adopted a new 1:1 Technology Initiative by putting Google Chromebooks in the hands of our students. The initiative has already began and is approaching phase two of four phases. Phase one involved dispersing Chromebooks to all high school students. Phase two, beginning at the start of the upcoming school year, will equip all middle school students with the technology. Phase three will follow middle school with upper elementary students and then lower elementary will complete the fourth and final phase of the 1:1 initiative. While this is all in the plans and has already been approved, the Board of Education has also approved two new computer labs in the elementary building containing Chromebooks for use in the lab, but also the ability to check out a few at a time for use within the classroom. With all of this technology in place and in the works, I want to get a head start with using technology in a way that is beneficial to my little learners with as smooth of a transition as possible. Everything from Internet etiquette, to subject specific games, to covering curriculum according to my school's technology curriculum, I hope to learn things

that are specific to lower elementary-aged children. In order to implement Chromebooks in my own classroom I will complete extensive research on various strategies for doing so via teacher blogs and educational journals, but I'm also going to take advantage of some professional development via [EdTechTeacher](#), [Google for Education](#), and [The Chromebook Classroom](#).

My higher education experience was nothing short of amazing and extremely beneficial at each level. One of the things that made it so great was the flexibility of learning via online courses. Although online learning has its pros and cons, I definitely think it has evolved to a more personal experience as far as the involvement with the professor and the collaboration efforts with peers. With the flexibility of an online course and the personal interaction of face-to-face experiences that new technology tools have allowed online, these courses and the evolution of them is much more appealing to learners across the country. In my graduate schooling, I have taken several courses that have equipped me with a solid foundation for designing and online course module and beginning an online course. I have already taken steps to connect with a local community college and my alma mater who recently started offering online course options. To help me with this process, I feel as though I've made a great first step in completing my Masters of Education degree in Educational Technology at Michigan State University, but that's not enough. I plan to seek out more research and professional development the [National Education Association \(NEA\)](#) and the [International Society for Technology in Education \(ISTE\)](#) have to offer. I think these two organizations are great places to further my expertise with online learning as well as experiences that I've had during online courses. From there, I will seek out online course instructor jobs where I can continue to learn alongside my students and gain even more experience.

Finally, I have already begun writing my own book. This is something that I've always wanted to do and something that was encouraged by my late grandfather who was an author himself of two books. I want to be able to publish my book online in a digital format, but also an audiobook version as well. I have heard many instances when authors have published their own books on websites such as [Amazon](#), [LuLu](#), [Xlibris](#), [CreateSpace](#), [ACX](#), and more. Many of these publishing platforms have their own YouTube channels that house numerous video tutorials as well as videos posted by others who have completed the process themselves. I think [YouTube](#) is a great resources for learning how to do things, and, along with much research, I think it definitely has potential for book publishing as well. One resource that I find to be especially helpful is [Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing](#). It has many learning resources and step-by-step guides that seem quick and easy to get my published book accessible on Amazon. While I think it is definitely a learning process through many hours of online resources, reading of reviews, and watching video tutorials, I do think this is extremely feasible for getting my eventually completed book published in the two formats that I mentioned. I look forward to trekking through this journey of learning as well!

While these are just a few goals that I have outlined for my professional career, I have several other goals involving learning as well. I was born a learner and will always be a learner. It's in my blood, and how I was raised. I look forward to the process of learning to achieve each of

these goals and hope for a whole new list as I complete each of these. When it comes to learning, I can't stop and I won't stop.