

*My Journey Through Doubt, Perseverance and Determination:
From Scared to Proud!*

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In the bitter cold month of January 2011, I decided that it was imperative that I began classes for my graduate degree. My teaching certificate would expire within the next year and it was time for the new chapter in my life to begin.

In my entrance essay to Michigan State University, I wrote about knowing exactly what I wanted to do with my life when I was five years old. Being a teacher was something that I had always dreamed about, imagined, and planned out. I never went through the ordeal of having to choose what classes to take or what to major in; my passion has always been educating children. Throughout my undergraduate degree; those goals never faltered. I took in every bit of information I could to help me become the best teacher I could be.

Finding a teaching job was very difficult and resulted in many sleepless nights and days full of worry. Without trying to sound too cliché, I was at a “fork in the road.” It was tough to not just give up on teaching and take the other road. Rejection was so difficult. There were so many applicants and not nearly enough positions available. When it finally happened, and I became a Kindergarten teacher; my dreams became a reality! My determination helped me to fight through all the struggles that came across and in the end, it paid off.

Words cannot describe the fear and doubt that I felt when thinking about going back to school. I had only been a teacher for six months and had no idea how I was going to juggle teaching and school. I was equally as excited to begin my journey but was filled with doubt; as many are when they begin something new and challenging. Choosing an online degree program was a risky choice; knowing that I would need to be organized, determined, and have excellent time management in order to be successful. I knew there would be sacrifices; but I was ready and up for the challenge. I had three goals in mind.

1. To not allow anything or anyone to get in the way of my dreams. In the past, I had allowed people and events restrict me from attaining my goals. Not this time!
2. To be a lifelong learner and to appreciate new creative ideas and possibly new and different ways of doing things that I already do to ensure my continued success as an educator of children.
3. To not give up no matter how difficult things got. Juggling a full time (40+++ hours) and full time school would not be easy; I was determined to stay strong and dedicated. It would be more than worth it in the end.

As I entered my final semester in my MAED program at Michigan State this summer, I am filled with so many different feelings; excitement, relief, fear or the future, inspiration, happiness, a

touch of sadness, and most importantly, thankfulness and pride. I am thankful to and do proud of myself for staying strong and never giving up on my dreams, to my family and friends for being so supportive of me throughout this long and difficult but rewarding journey, and to my professors and peers at MSU for making this such an amazing and memorable experience that I will hold close to my heart and carry with me wherever my journey takes me next.