

Continuing my Quest to Learn, Lead & Think
Dan Hoekstra's Future Learning Goals Essay

Lately, as I finish up my educational technology master's degree program, a few people have said to me "won't it be nice to not have to learn anymore?" While I understand what they meant, I look forward to having more time to explore new technology tools of my choosing and on my time frame. I am excited to pursue better ways to reach all students; I am eager to find better ways to teach my coworkers. In the near future, I want to become a Google Certified Educator, find ways to improve teacher training, and help our school embrace personalized learning.

For a few years now, I have been interested in becoming [Google Certified](#). However, since I was already taking graduate classes while working full time and coaching, it did not seem like a very good time to pursue this interest. Now that I am completing my degree, I plan to get certified as a [Level 1 Google Educator](#). Hopefully, after that, I can complete Level 2 and then move on to become a [Google Certified Trainer](#). I love to learn about new technology tools and then figure out how to use them in my teaching. In addition, my role as an instructional technology coach calls on me to lead our staff in the use of G Suite. Currently, my school under-utilizes the Google tools that are available to us and this certification will show me better ways to implement these tools in my classroom and in our school. I will use the [certification training program](#) that Google provides which includes readings, videos, and practice opportunities. I also plan to talk with several colleagues who are Google certified to get a better idea of what to expect during this process.

I also want to learn about effective ways to structure teacher education at my school. Part of my role as a technology coach requires me to help design and lead our professional development. Unfortunately, I do not always feel that the way we approach professional development is the best. Too often, our staff has not been given a voice in

this process, nor do they receive an adequate explanation about the importance of the educational experiences. Our professional development often seems to focus on a one-day event that is isolated from the rest of the year or from our long-term plan. As I look for ways to make our teacher training more relevant, I will begin by calling on [my professional learning network](#) (PLN) and asking other educators what has worked well within their districts. I will ask them how they decide on topics, how their teachers are involved, and how consistency is maintained. In addition, I will follow organizations like [EdTech K-12 magazine](#), [Teacher Thought](#) and [Education Week](#) as well as keep an eye out on Twitter to alert me when new blogs/articles are written about teacher training. Finally, I will keep an eye out for seminars, conferences and other structured ways to learn more about the best way to design and lead teacher training.

Finally, I want to learn more about personalized learning and how my coworkers and I can personalize the learning of all of our students. Not all students learn the same so they should have options regarding how they will encounter the material. Students also have different interests so they should have a choice regarding how they demonstrate their learning. Finally, not all students perform the same so they should not get the same feedback, remediation or extensions. Teachers must tailor instruction to provide each student with opportunities to address their own deficiencies. My approach to learning more about personalized learning will focus on taking the time to find and study what has been written about this topic. For example, the International Society for Technology in Education ([ISTE](#)) has a guide for getting started on this journey. Also, [EdSurge](#), [Tech-Enhanced Education](#), and others regularly publish articles about personalized learning.

Mastering the skills to become Google Certified will allow me to better understand the Google tools available to our school. Researching the best ways to deliver teacher education will allow me to make our school's professional development more relevant and impactful. Learning more about how to provide all students with personalized

learning will allow our school to tailor education for each of our students. As I explore and learn more about these three areas, I will continue my quest to grow as a learner, leader, and thinker.