

Professional Statement

Angela K. Trunzo

The University of Tennessee

March 31, 2016

I have always had an interest in technology. I vividly recall the flap-flap-flap sound the 16mm film projectors made when they were done rewinding and how I thought it was a special treat when my elementary school teacher let us watch the film she had just shown backwards. Fast forward to 2006 when I moved to Florida for my husband's job. I could not find a job in my career field, so I took a job as a teacher's assistant. This opportunity led to the beginning of my adventures in teaching. I participated in my school district's alternative certification program, where I attended classes to learn the nuts and bolts of teaching. Since moving to Tennessee, I have spent the past four years working toward earning my master's degree in the evening while teaching special education high school students geometry during the day.

My background and experiences certainly influence the way I look at the instructional design and technology field. For the foreseeable future, I hope to stay in the K-12 setting, whether it is as a teacher or instructional technology coach. There are many frameworks that I can use as a guide for implementing technology in this setting. Since we are a 1:1 technology school, each of my students have their own MacBook Pro and I am fortunate enough to have a plethora of technology tools at my disposal. Within my own classroom, the technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) and substitution, augmentation, modification, redefinition (SAMR) models have influenced my use of technology.

Technology tools and integration aside, as I contemplate the type of instructional design and technology professional I want to be, my beliefs about teaching and learning will always be focused on the most important person: my students. I believe they should be put in charge of their ability to learn, and, as an educator, my job is to work with them side-

by-side as a collaborator, who assists them in their journey. Robinson, Molenda, and Rezabek (2008) explain the constructivist view of teacher-student relationships best when they write, "They are coproducers of students' learning accomplishments. Nothing happens until the students do their part of the coproduction. ...The student is not a customer but a worker doing the hardest part of constructing new knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p.20). At my current school, this idea is referred to as students "owning" their own learning. Moreover, I see technology-based learning as a way to address learners' needs and to engage and motivate diverse groups of learners. By using adaptive software programs to reinforce new skill acquisition and target deficient ones, I am able to build learning environments based on my students' preferences and their engagement with technology.

In order to be an exceptional professional in the field of instructional design and technology, I must strive to meet certain competencies. Since I would like to stay in the K-12 setting, the most relevant to my career goals are the International Society for Technology Education Standards (ISTE) for Coaches, which include six standards: Visionary Leadership; Teaching, Learning, & Assessments; Digital Age Learning Environments; Professional Development & Program Evaluation; Digital Citizenship; and Content Knowledge and Professional Growth. Due to my recent studies, I have grown more confident in my strengths in Visionary Leadership as well as Teaching, Learning, & Assessments. My current focus is on developing my skills and experiences in Professional Development & Program Evaluation and Content Knowledge and Professional Growth.

Over the past three to four years, I have grown my visionary leadership abilities immensely through my experiences in both the master's program and as an instructor in a one-to-one technology school. By collaborating with my colleagues to promote the strategic

use of technology and with the guidance of our school's TPACK coach, I have progressed to using it as more than just a tool to replace pencil and paper in our classrooms. I am able to use an online math program that adapts questions based on whether my students answer correctly and provides automatic feedback if they get the question wrong. Moreover, I have worked with our school's technology coach as well as my colleagues to promote strategic use of technology in our classrooms to "promote excellence and support transformational change throughout the instructional environment" (ISTE, 2011).

In the area of Teaching, Learning, & Assessments, my practice has grown exponentially. As an example, my colleagues and I use MasteryConnect (www.masteryconnect.com) to create common assessments, which allows us to see not only how our own students are progressing but also how our students compare to one another. This ability to examine learner data allows us to focus our professional learning community conversations about what each of us may be doing differently in terms of classroom instruction, and, in turn, adjust our own teaching practices in order to increase our students' understanding of common learning objectives.

The Digital Age Learning Environments standard requires coaches to "create and support effective digital-age learning environments to maximize the learning of all students" (ISTE, 2011). This standard is a relative strength for me. Because I am lucky enough to have access to a wealth of classroom technology, I am comfortable designing and delivering instruction that capitalizes on tools such as an interactive whiteboard, multi-media projector, document camera, and student laptops. Combining these tools with our access to the Canvas learning management system and subscriptions to online programs such as IXL, MasteryConnect, and Study Island allows me to create personalized learning

environments for my students. Ultimately, I want my students to be able to move through our curriculum at their own pace with the ability to look at me as a guide to their learning and themselves as their own teacher.

The Digital Citizenship standard is another area in which I am confident in my abilities. As our school requires all students, parents, and guardians to attend annual training in digital citizenship, I am able to foster a learning environment founded on ethical technology practice. Building on this foundation, I plan to address topics such as online communication and properly crediting other people's work as they come up naturally in class. For example, my students and I communicate through our LMS messaging or on discussion boards, so I model for them how to respond properly to me and each other, by emphasizing how to think about the tone of their words and encouraging them to use proper grammar even though it's a math class.

Two areas in which I feel I will always have room to grow in are the Professional Development & Program Evaluation and Content Knowledge and Professional Growth standards. Over the years, I have become more involved with how my school acquires and uses technology as well as how I support my colleagues who are interested in classroom technology. In fact, I worked with another teacher in my building to create a presentation for our district's in-service training on technology in the special education math classroom, where we shared online tools that we use daily and weekly with which we have had great success in motivating our students and improving their math skills. Additionally, I know I will always need to continue my professional development if I am to stay current with my content knowledge, and I am lucky enough to have a number of resources to do so. As a Knox County Schools employee, I have access to a number of professional development

courses related to curriculum and instruction as well as technology. I also enjoy participating in MOOCs and have found a number of relevant courses to take through Coursera and EdX. I plan to take advantage of these resources because it is my goal to stay up-to-date on current pedagogy regarding technology integration, not to mention doing so with satisfy my general love of learning.

Moving forward my plan is to use the ISTE coaching standards to continuously measure and reflect on my growth as an instructional design and technology professional. Just as the name and definition of the instructional design and technology field has changed through the years, so will the way I define myself as a professional. The goal for my future self will be iterative, just like the instructional design process. While I currently I see myself as a collaborative classroom teacher, in the next five years, I'd also like to add the roles of coach, leader, designer, and developer. In ten years, perhaps researcher and scholar will come into play. One thing I am certain of is that whatever direction my professional life takes, I know I will accept the challenge.

References

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). (2011). NETS for Coaches.

Retrieved September 1, 2012, from <http://www.iste.org/standards/nets-for-coaches>

Robinson, Molenda, & Rezabek (2008). Facilitating Learning. In A. Januszewski & M.

Molenda (Eds.), *Educational Technology: A Definition with Commentary*. Lawrence Erlbaum. Ch. 2