

Letter To My Future Self

It was the first week of sixth grade and my teacher, Ms. Anderson, was going over the daily assignment right after we completed our Bell Work. The assignment was a letter that we write to ourselves. This letter had to include what our life is currently like, our interests, our friends, and what we want to be when we grow up. The special thing about this letter is that we are not allowed to open it up until the last week of high school. As I looked down on my blank piece of paper, I realized I had no idea what I wanted to be. I knew I loved playing with the children in my neighborhood, I idolized my teacher Ms. Anderson, and I really enjoyed summer vacation. With my mechanical pencil, I started writing, I wrote all about my best friends and the boys I had crushes on, the sports I was playing, and my dog, Buddy. I got to my last bullet point and wrote; I want to be a teacher when I grow up. As I now sit in my apartment in Chicago with my two cats, Layla and Styx, I look at my blank Word Document and think, what is my purpose and what do I aspire to do with the rest of my career in education? Three major goals that come to mind are, 1. Be a confident leader, 2. Be a culturally responsive educator, and 3. Continue to learn and grow as an individual.

Confidence comes with time and experience, and as a child I was severely lacking in this category. I did not believe in myself, I was very shy, and I chose to stay quiet and let others around me handle situations. When deciding on the concentration I wanted to focus on throughout the Master of Arts in Education Program (MAED), I chose P-12 education and post-secondary leadership because I knew this is a skill I could improve in and one thing I believe that the world needs more of is better leadership. When I think about my future self as an educator, I will strive to be a confident leader in my school community. I will focus on

working as a team with the students, administration, coworkers, and families in the community.

I will make sure I use different perspectives and viewpoints when making decisions and I will believe in myself as a leader. To continue to focus on leadership, I plan on attending the Leadership Academy Program that is offered through the Archdiocese of Chicago.

The MAED program has demonstrated the importance of being a culturally responsive educator. With the injustice in our world today, it is our responsibility as teachers to stop the cycle. In my classroom, I strive to use culturally responsive curriculum, include books and resources from all different cultures, and hear all of my students' voices. I will view decisions and situations from different perspectives and work with the families from our school community. To stay up to date on culturally responsive teaching, I will use resources such as Teaching Tolerance and Bias Assessments.

Looking back, I realize I have spent my entire life in school. Whether it is preschool, elementary, high school, college, or now being a preschool teacher, I have been inside the four walls of a classroom. I have grown up being a student and now an educator, and with my master's program coming to a close, I could assume that my learning is done. This is the exact opposite of what I believe in, I truly believe that my time as a learner is just beginning. I will bring my learning and experience into my school community and figure out what works best and what I still need to improve in. With the fast pace of technology and evolving nature of education, I will strive to always be a life-long learner. To continue my learning, I will stay active in professional developments and training.

As I opened that letter during the last week of high school, I was excited to read about my sixth-grade self. I laughed as I read through the paragraphs and reminisced on my time as

an eleven-year-old. I got to the final paragraph and I read the words, I want to be a teacher when I grow up. I smiled and thought about my future and how I would soon be attending Michigan State University and will be joining the college of education. I set a goal for myself and I pursued that goal throughout my education. I now stare at this essay and I smile because I know that I am going to continue to set goals and strive to be the best educator I can be.