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Lifelong Learning *Goal Reflection Essay*

When I began graduate school, I entered with two main goals in mind. My first goal was to set an example for my students that learning is a lifelong process. It seems to me very natural, that, since I love to teach, I love to learn equally as much. To me, teaching and learning go hand in hand, and my passion for education truly stems from both ends. I want my students to share this same mindset, as well. I want them to believe that learning is more than just a temporary job, but a lifelong journey.

My second goal was to learn more about best practices in literacy instruction, and how to help those who need more. During my first-year teaching, I had a sweet young student in my class who struggled greatly in reading. With no support from my school and limited experience myself, I was stuck. I didn't know how to help my student, and felt like I was failing him as a teacher. I did what I could to help him, but I realized I never wanted to feel that way ever again. I knew towards the end of college that I was interested in graduate school, but it was after meeting this student that continuing my education became a priority.

As I come to the end of this chapter in my education, I'm now privileged with the opportunity of creating new goals. First, I want to continue to apply what I've learned over the past 18 months into my current teaching practices. I've been blessed with incredible knowledge and resources that I did not have my first-year teaching. I want to use that information to better myself as a thinker and as an educator. Second, I want to share this newfound knowledge with those on my team and at my school. I don't believe in keeping good ideas private, especially when sharing those ideas ultimately benefits children.

Creating these new goals causes me to think back to the goals I made at the start of this journey. While I feel like I've met my original goal of learning more about literacy instruction, my other goal is not one that I ever plan to check off. Being a lifelong learner is an ongoing goal, and one I hope to work on for the rest of my life. As an educator, it is my responsibility to make sure I am staying on top of my profession. In as ever-changing an environment as education, there are as many ways to teach as there are children to be taught. I must continue to grow in the

profession, so as to be best able to help my students grow in their own education capacity. While I certainly cannot know now where I will be in 10, 20, or 50 years, I know that “now” is surely not the end of my educational journey.