NP Endorsement Reflection

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It is difficult to give a comprehensive review of the Standards for the Preparation of Teachers in Educational Technology document (hereafter referred to simply as the "NP Endorsement document") because the field of educational technology spans so many areas of education (teachers, instructional coaches, online course facilitators, student data management, assessment, networking, technology directorships, etc). Having said that, this reflection is written from my own perspective as someone who has worked as a teacher, technology director, and member of the professional community (MACUL) for almost a decade.

The stated goal of the NP Endorsement is to create "a growing cadre of highly skilled professionals" skilled in what are described as "Information Age tools, learning techniques, and processes". These are naturally based on Michigan's own Educational Technology standards (the METS-S). However, I am frankly unsure why Michigan needs its own set of standards (METS-S) instead of simply adopting the national standards set forth by ISTE (the NETS-S, NETS-A, and NETS-T standards). What does the state gain by having their own? Leveraging the work done at the national level might make make this entire process simpler.

Based on my readings of the relevant documents and my experience, the 2016 NETP is the most comprehensive and up-to-date document I have thus seen with regards to strategy, research, current technology usage, and directions for future development. Michigan would do well to strongly reflect this document in its own next-general Educational Technology plan, and by extension, the NP endorsement.

Educational technology is also a difficult content area for which to describe required skills or knowledge, because the field undergoes such rapid, constant change and progress. Ap-

plications, infrastructure, and tools all change on a month-to-month and year-to-year basis. For example, the 2016 National Education Technology Plan states, "Aside from wires and devices, a comprehensive learning infrastructure includes digital learning content and other resources as well as professional development for educators and education leaders." This often means that documents which attempt to assess or describe the field, such as the NP Endorsement document, must instead focus on overarching concepts and pedagogy. While this is generally a good thing (elevating concepts over tools), it can lead to vague abstractions. One place the could benefit enormously would be to add specific examples or case studies to clarify and situate the various standards and benchmarks. Take Standard 1.3.3 as an example:

Use educational technology to support learner-centered strategies that address the diverse needs of students, including addressing the individual needs of each student, and fostering collaborative, holistic, and self-directed learning.

This would be a perfect place to include a brief case study as an exemplar of what this might look like. I recognize the danger in giving examples in these kinds of documents (some readers will seize on the example and assume it's the only way to satisfy the standard), but it would make many of the more abstract standards more easily understandable.

There are also new technologies, uses, or topics not considered (or considered in insufficient depth) by the current NP Endorsement document, which include social media and digital citizenship, computational thinking and coding as a form of literacy, the open source and Maker movements, and more. A brief discussion of some of these areas is included below.

Social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and video streaming services, both on demand (YouTube, Vimeo, etc) and live-streaming (Periscope, Facebook Live, YouTube Live, etc) have changed the way that the many people interact with and learn from one another. While there is a section of the NP Endorsement describing ethical and safe use of Internet resources, this is generally framed in the context of online courses. The ever-changing landscape of social media requires more specific attention by educational technology leaders, to ensure not only student safety, but student success. That's why I particularly favor the specific phrase "digital citizenship" as a way to describe not only responsibilities (using resources ethically, being safe, etc) but also rights (communicating with others around the world, sharing learning opportunities digitally, etc). I suggest the NP Endorsement document adopt this phrase and adjust its language and examples accordingly.

I would also like to see the NP Endorsement document add more related to professional learning communities, both formal (such as MACUL and ISTE), and informal (such as online PLC like the #michED group). The document notes that candidates should able to "describe" these opportunities, but I believe that this isn't enough -we should expect both participation and leadership.

Finally, I would like to see both the Michigan Educational Tech and the NP Endorsement document updated to reflect the growing STEM and STEAM initiatives, and describe how educational technology fits into the larger context of these fields, both as a way of achieving educational success in the given areas of study as well as its own area of study. Educational technology resources can be used to make science learning more effective (through the use of probeware to collect and graph data, for example), but educational technology can also be its own area of

study, such as using resources to create a video log (vlog) of students' daily experiences in an integrative STEM or STEAM classroom. The 2010 MET document describes that "MDE will continue to seek opportunities to sponsor teacher professional development programs that incorporate critical elements of the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics teaching and learning." I look forward to seeing this continue and be deepened, and included in the NP Endorsement. I would also personally like to see at least a mention of the Maker movement and constructivism in the NP Endorsement document; not recognizing the excitement and new energy this movement has brought to the field, as well as the connections it makes to related areas of study (such as science, technology, engineering, arts, math, and vocational and trades programs) would be a missed opportunity.

References

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