

## Math Leadership Final Reflection

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December 8, 2018

The last two assignments in EDU 532 ([PRIME - Reflective Questions](#) and [It's TIME - to the Future](#)) have required me to reflect not just on the Math Leadership Certificate program, but also on the Math Coaching Project in which I was previously enrolled. It also has forced me to look back at my 24 prior years teaching high school mathematics, and see the changes that have come about over my career.

Probably one of the most important paradigm shifts that has occurred happened about 10 years into my teaching career, when I realized that I was teaching my students as if they were all going to be mathematicians like me. I realized that I was teaching the way that I was taught, and that in fact most math teachers do the same thing. When one starts looking at “why did I become a math teacher?” the answer is often because my mind worked the same way as my math teachers, so it was easy to move into that same role.

Upon the belated realization that not all students would be mathematicians, I began my journey towards finding ways to teach ALL students the mathematics they would need. It forced a change in our curriculum, including shifting some topics normally taught in Algebra 1 or Algebra 2 to Pre-Calculus, and it resulted in finding better ways to connect the mathematics to the real world.

The coaching project expanded this paradigm shift in many ways challenging me to look at Elementary mathematics through the same lens. Recognizing that students need to understand WHY things work and not just blindly follow an algorithm or memorized rules, I have been forced to look more deeply into how we explain the way arithmetic works. It has been eye-opening!

The combination of my job as a coach and my participation in the Math Leadership Certificate program has broadened my eyes to concepts and ideas which I need to work to communicate to math teachers, both within my district, but also on a larger scale as opportunities arise. In particular, the emphasis on equity in math education has been a defining piece for me to read about and write about. I need to work to continue to provide ways, even at the youngest grades, to ensure that ALL students have the same opportunities to reach a high level of mathematics. Part of this goal may be accomplished through my website/portfolio.

My portfolio for Math Leadership actually had its beginnings as a toolbox for the Math Coaching courses in which I was enrolled from 2015 - 2016. One course required us to create a

digital portfolio/toolkit for various resources we could use in coaching, and I decided to do it as a Google Site on my district account. It worked well, and provided me with a location where I could easily gather some common tools.

In the summer of 2017 I began the Math Leadership Certificate program and one of the requirements was to create a digital portfolio of resources. It made sense to me to continue doing this as a website, but then I began thinking about the future. Although I have no plans to leave RSU #74 anytime soon, at some point I WILL leave, even if only through retirement. I began thinking about these resources and other things I could add, and decided that creating a full fledged website with a new domain made sense.

Thus, Maine Math Teacher ([www.mainemathteacher.com](http://www.mainemathteacher.com)) was born. I purchased the domain, designed a logo, set up hosting space, and started to build a Wordpress-based site. I intend to move my materials from the coaching toolkit over eventually. Currently this site contains all the resources and papers for the Math Leadership classes, some articles I have written about math education, links to a variety of resources, and even an option for a forum if I ever had people interested in joining.

By creating a public website such as this I expand my sphere of influence. It is not just something for teachers within my own district, but is visible to anyone on the web. As I continue to build this site, I hope to have a resource that is useful to the larger math education community.

When you visit my site today, please be sure to check out three things in particular. First, if you hover over the menu for “UMF Course Work”, a drop down menu appears. Slide down to the Math Leadership, and you will see a menu for each of the four courses. Please explore any of these that you wish. Second, please be sure to go to the “Articles” section. Although I’m not a very prolific writer, there are a few things here that may be of interest. Finally, the menu at the far right labeled “External Links” has numerous categories, and each category has one or more links that you can select. Just note that these links will open into a new tab, so you can close that tab to return to my main site.

Thank you for attending today’s celebration. I hope you enjoy the things that you see.