

Wesley Machiela

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Hello Dana Veldhouse,

My name is Wesley and I am grateful for the opportunity to apply for this technology teacher position. I graduated from Holland Christian high school in 2012 and went on to GVSU where I studied for six years graduating this year with a double major in history and education with a minor in geography. I am not your traditional college student, when I started attending GVSU I went for an engineering major but after feeling called to education I made the switch. The two extra years I spent in college gave me the chance to take engineering courses and some literature courses that have allowed me to develop a different approach to the craft of teaching than most. I look to implement elements of engineering based group problem solving skills and technology in the classroom. I love technology in my classroom and I've presented at the Grand Valley eLearning symposium on the use of Peardeck.

On campus I worked with a ministry called Intervarsity to start a new Bible study in 2015 with the focus of discipleship and giving students a place to learn more about the cultural background of the Bible. This teaching style placed emphasis on the idea that in order to more deeply understand and appreciate the Bible, one has to have a sense of the land and the culture from which it sprang. The Bible is full of images and analogies that still hold meaning today but if they are placed in the context of the original listeners and in the original geography become enhanced and this allows for a deeper understanding of God's word. I wrote and taught lessons to a group that today is around 30 fellow students strong. Most students may find themselves falling away from their walk with Christ in collage, I rediscovered my passion for Jesus.

My first teaching placement at UPREP downtown Grand Rapids was a very transformative experience for me that exposed me to the diverse learning needs of students. At this placement I was given the chance to fully implement a Project Based Learning Cycle with students. I was one of the twenty-five GVSU students out of three hundred and fifty to be accepted the Out of the Gate program by the Buck Institute for Education and receive extra training in the power of PBL. The project I created placed students as museum docents creating exhibits. I was even able to get a contact I had at the Grand Rapids Museum to come in and view the students work providing them with an authentic audience.

Kent Innovation High, my student teaching placement, was a full dive into Project Based Learning and it has forever changed the way I will teach. All of the lessons I developed were done with an English teacher and co-taught meaning as I taught WWII she taught argumentative essay writing. The pairing of subjects in this manner is something I will seek to do in whatever classroom I end up in even if it's just going to see what the students are learning in math or english and seeing how I can re-enforce those lessons. At Kent Innovation I worked to amplify student voice through the use of Peardeck and Flipgrid in my everyday lessons. The uses of these tools also gave me data to drive student growth and comprehension. I developed a close relationship with the students and administrative staff as I took charge to be the representative of the five student teachers in the building and help plan showcase activities and assignments that were required by GVSU.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to apply for this technology teaching position. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your time,
Wesley Machiela

