

I would like to thank the TEPS Committee and Dr. Coseo for giving me the opportunity to attend the 2007 American Association of School Librarians “The Future Begins @ Your Library” national conference from October 23-28, 2007 in Reno, Nevada. This is my second time attending this conference and I must say that the quality of the conference remains high. Attending a national conference gives me the unique opportunity to network with best-practice school library media specialists from across the country and I took full advantage of this opportunity by attending pre-conference activities and workshops as well as the full conference program. One of the great things about attending a national conference is that each time slot provides the opportunity to attend at least 10 workshops relevant to your daily activities; choosing which session to attend is difficult!

One session that I attended that left an impression was “Are Your Students College-Ready? Start by Ensuring They’re Research Ready.” This session focused on instilling into our students key “habits of mind” identified by twenty college professors as essential for achieving success in college. We actually practiced some of the student activities designed by the two library media specialists. There were several ideas regarding flexible thinking and questioning strategies presented in this workshop that I will be able to implement here right away and several others that I plan to modify and present to teachers as ideas for collaborative projects.

Another workshop that I attended was “Information Fluency Meets Web 2.0”. This session was given by Joyce Valenza, a very well known leader in the library field in the area of emerging technology. This session focused on the need to shift our traditional information skills that we teach students to embrace the new technologies such as Wikis, blogs, podcasts, etc. Keeping up with the information explosion that our students face truly is one of the biggest challenges in our profession today. Giving our students exposure to these emerging technologies before they go to college should be one of our building goals.

Other workshops that I attended included “Collaborate with Math Teachers Using Statistics, the Web and Multimedia” which showcased a collaborative project between a statistics teacher and a school library media specialist that involved using statistical websites and producing a Power Point to describe mathematical models, “CSI: Reno” which introduced a new, and as of yet untested, research model to use with students that uses the popularity of the CSI television shows to “hook” reluctant students into research, and “Powerful Programming for the Future @ Your Library” which showcased some very successful programming used by a high school library media center to get students more interested in reading and using the library media center.

Although I know that we have a great library media program here at CHS, I also know the role that professional development has and continues to have in my career. I am constantly learning new ways to prepare my students for success and it is in great part due to these kinds of inspiring and motivating opportunities to learn from best-practice professionals in my field. Thank you again for this tremendous opportunity for professional growth.

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