

Dear TEPS Committee-

Please know that I am extremely grateful for your support in allowing me to attend the New York State English Conference this past October. The conference itself was invaluable -- both on a professional and collegial level. The workshops and speakers were outstanding and helped to clarify my understanding of the common core standards, the six shifts in ELA Literacy, and the rationale behind the changes at hand. I clearly understand how the common core standards are an integral part of all subject areas and how important these changes are. In order to compete in a technology-driven, global society, our students need to be equipped with a diverse set of skills, some of which have not been previously emphasized in our schools. The common core standards address this diversity of needs. However, we will be successful only to the degree in which all disciplines address the six shifts. Equally as beneficial was the experience of attending with six of my colleagues. Doing so allowed us to forge mutual trust and understanding that will ensure smooth implementation of the standards at each grade level. Overall, the two days of intensive training, materials gathering, and collegial discussion have given us all a firm grasp of the challenges at hand, a repertoire of best practices from which to meet them, and a confidence that the changes in instruction will be beneficial in preparing our students for the needs of the future

Sincerely,

Diane Hurley