

American Association of School Librarians (AASL) 15th National Conference and Exhibition “Turning the Page” Oct. 27-30, 2011

Attendee: Debra Rossman

Attending this National Conference for School Librarians was definitely a once in a lifetime opportunity for me. It is rare that this type of a conference would be so close to home and thus possible to attend. The sessions, author dinners, and exhibits were all very interesting and exciting.

I was excited to hear the experts in our field speak to us in their sessions. I try to use the Big 6 approach in teaching research in my school and library and was intrigued to hear Robert Berkowitz (co-creator of the Big 6) talk about the Big 6 and his “executive skills” approach to literacy skills. His session was not at all what I expected but his message was loud and clear. Don’t worry so much about collaborating with teachers/staff that don’t want to; just work around it and do something for kids anyway. He seemed to be quite a character!

I wrote my master’s thesis on collaboration in the library with classroom teachers. I was thrilled to hear the session “Strength in Numbers: Turn the Collaboration Page with Measurable Student Achievement” by Toni Buzzeo. I used much of her work in my research so was excited to hear her in person. I also posed with her at her book signing where we each wore our Mrs. Skorupski fancy eyeglasses. What a treat!

In addition to the many great sessions, the exhibits were wonderful! I felt it was worth every minute of my time to listen to the vendors and find out about their products. The biggest treat was to buy a book or get one for free and then get it signed by the author. I took my camera and got photos of as many authors and myself as I could. It is great to show these photos to my students at school. It really makes the author come to life for them too.

The author dinner was one of the highlights of the conference for me. We listened to authors, Pat Mora, Andrea Davis Pinkney and Joan Bauer. Each had their own message and then of course autographed their books afterward. I also enjoyed visiting with media specialists from across the country as we ate our dinner.

Another wonderful networking experience was the final banquet at Nicolette Island pavilion. The food was wonderful but it was a great time to visit with other media specialists from Minnesota and around the country. It seems we all face the same dilemmas and have the same concerns. Hopefully we will come up with some great solutions.

Thank you Northern Lights Library Network for making this event possible for me!