

Reflection and Questions "Transitions" Post-Conference Workshop

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Mary Miller, Gina Phillips, Charlotte Hill and I met with Marilyn Schneider at Bismarck State College Library on September 26, 2011. Marilyn and I shared highlights of the Post-Conference with those who were unable to attend. Marilyn also shared the comments of a survey given to BSC professors. This survey focused on incoming students' and their lack of many research/library skills. (See my attached notes of this lively discussion: "What BSC Professors See in Their Incoming Students".) We spent the rest of our time together brainstorming ways to help our student become more competent in these skill areas.

At the secondary library staff development meeting, I shared with Darlene, Mary, Robin, and Charlotte a couple of the articles that we received at the Post Conference: "Thinking beyond Technology: Using the iSkills Assessment as Evidence to Support Institutional ICT Literacy Initiatives" and "Information Technology Assessment: A Foundation for School and Academic Library Collaboration. As we discussed these articles and the BSC survey results, I suggested we spend some time reviewing the recent draft of the new ND Library/Technology Standards. (See attached copy of the recent draft of the new Library/Technology Standards.)

Although I believe that the new standards themselves are well-written, I am concerned with the organization. I suggested that we use the seven measurable skills discussed in the article, "Thinking beyond Technology", as the seven strand names for our ND Library/Technology Standards document. (The new Math Standards document uses skill statements as their strand names.) Furthermore, I suggested that we clarify the cluster names by using verbs, instead. (The new English Language Arts Standards document uses verbs as their cluster names.) Robin pointed out that the seven measurable skills would be ideal "I can..." statements for our district. Darlene and the secondary librarians agreed with these suggestions and asked me to discuss these at the next ND Library/Technology Standards writing committee meeting. We then spent some time adding our comments on the recent draft of the new ND Library/Technology Standards to the online survey that was sent out by the ND Library/Technology Standards writing committee.

Therefore, at the October ND Library/Technology Standards writing committee meeting, I requested time to discuss the issues brought up at our BPS secondary librarian's meeting. During the time allotted, I highlighted our discussion and presented the suggestions made for organization and clarification. After small group discussions, a consensus was reached to revisit the issue at a later date. (This was after we were told that if we thought we were done, we could leave right after lunch." When I brought the issue up later to one of the leaders of the committee, she said that there will always be a few that don't agree, but that we can't worry about that...

After lunch, I went to the Library Media Office and discussed the meeting with Darlene. We were both disappointed that secondary librarians in the largest school district in ND were so easily ignored. I

offered to rewrite the grade 6-8 ND Library/Technology Standards, with my suggested changes for strand and cluster names, to see if all of the standards COULD be organized differently. (See attached copy, "Berg I Can statements with suggested strand and cluster names".) All of the standards fit under these 7 strands and cluster names. I believe that these changes would make the ND Library/Technology Standards document much more user-friendly to librarians and non-librarians alike.

As very few survey comments were received the first time around, I also offered to personally email the survey to the district librarians in Bismarck Public Schools, stressing out the importance of responding to the survey. I once again attached the recent draft of the new ND Library/Technology Standards document. I also highlighted the changes we would like to see in this document and attached the copy, "Berg I Can statements with suggested strand and cluster names".

At the following staff development meeting of all BPS librarians, we discussed the issue briefly. However, Darlene pointed out that the district is eliminating any programs that aren't part of the "core curriculum" which means that we need to focus all of our energy on integrating/overlapping the library standards into the core curriculum. So, although I still believe that my suggested changes to the ND Library/Technology Standards document would actually make it clearer to all that the library program IS indispensable to the core curriculum (and our students' futures), I feel that I have stated my case to the best of my ability and need to be a team player on this one.

On a more positive note, we are planning to use the seven measurable skills as our "I Can" statements for the district. I plan to keep my version of the grades 6-8 ND Library/Technology Standards within easy reach, as a personal checklist to ensure that I am focusing on those skills necessary to "close the gap" between K-12 and academic information literacy skills.

I plan to suggest that our district librarians devise a survey for our students that are based on these seven measurable skills (iSkills Core-Level Assessment), with necessary grade level vocabulary/comprehension modifications. For example, on a scale of 1-5, with 1 = a lot of guidance and 5 = independently:

1. I can formulate a research statement to facilitate the search for information.
2. I can find and retrieve information from a variety of sources.
3. I can judge the usefulness and sufficiency of information for a specific purpose.
4. I can manage information safely, efficiently, responsibly, and ethically.
5. I can summarize or otherwise synthesize information from a variety of sources.
6. I can generate or adapt online (?) information to express and support a point.
7. I can adapt information for an audience or for delivery via a different medium (for example, e-mail, slide presentation, word-processed document, and spreadsheet)