

Professional Growth

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LIBS 676: Library Media Services and the Curriculum

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April 27, 2022

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On March 12, 2022 I had the pleasure of virtually attending the VAASL Spring Conference. This was a very exciting opportunity for me. I enjoyed spending a morning with other MLIS students, ODU professors, and future colleagues.

During the virtual conference, I attended both keynote presentations, the regional breakout room, and watched several of the recorded sessions. Not only did I learn a lot throughout the conference but it reinvigorated my desire to become a school librarian. The entire event truly met the ALA Code of Ethics that states “we strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession” (AASL, p. 261).

Opening Keynote

Presented by: Anne Blankman

The main reason I attended Anne Blankman’s Keynote presentation was because she was the first presenter. I wanted to get the full experience of attending a VAASL conference and wanted to be there for the opening of it all. However, I thought her presentation was wonderful and incredibly inspiring!

I really enjoyed listening to her backstory about her book *The Blackbird Girls*. It was so interesting to hear about her writing experience and the true story behind the book. I would absolutely love to try and set up an author visit with her next school year. I think it would be a wonderful learning experience for the students at my school.

Another thing I really enjoyed about her presentation was all the book

recommendations she shared. I definitely have a long summer reading list!

Virginia Readers' Choice Primary and Elementary Book Talks

Presented by: Jane Field and Tamara Teaff

I was interested in attending this session for two reasons. The first was to learn more about the Virginia Readers' Choice program. I have heard about Virginia Readers' Choice books but did not know a lot about the program (eg. how the books were selected). The second reason I wanted to attend this session was to become familiar with some new book titles. .

I was immediately hooked when one of the presenters said the books were "chosen to provide readers with models of well-written literature and to encourage independent reading" (Field, J. & Teaff, T., 2022). As a future librarian, it is very important to me that I help foster students' love for reading. I believe that one of the best ways to do this is by including high quality books in my lessons and collection. I plan to use some of the Virginia Readers' Choice books next school year in a book tasting lesson with my students. I also think it would be beneficial to highlight these books on the morning announcements or bulletin boards around the school. Finally, I would like my school community to be able to participate in the voting process for next year's book winners.

Make a Joy Journal: Recycled book page crafting

Presented by Linda Mitchell

I selected this presentation for two reasons. The first reason was because I love

to craft, especially paper crafting. When I saw the title of the presentation I was immediately interested in attending! The second reason I selected this presentation was because I used to have a craft section in my fifth grade classroom for free time or inside recess. My students loved pulling out the scrapbook paper, stamps sets, ink and stickers to create their own works of art. Since I saw how much my students enjoyed this activity, I had already planned on including it in my Makerspace area. I thought this was a great presentation to learn about a new craft idea.

I think there are several ways I can incorporate or adapt these journals into lessons that utilize Makerspace activities. I think it would pair well with a *Pocket full of colors: the magical world of Mary Blair, Disney artist extraordinaire* by Amy Guglielmo. I could adapt the journal idea into a personal sketchbook for each student. Another idea I had for it was creating a passport type journal. Then students could “stamp” their passports every time they read a book about or set in a different country.

Develop a Library Improvement Plan with TitleWise and TitleMap from Follett

Presented by: Christopher Hutto and Randy McLawhorn

I currently use Destiny as a library paraprofessional. While I feel like I have learned a lot about how to use some of the program's features (checking books in/out, putting books on hold, adding fines and so on), I know there is still so much more to learn. For that reason, I decided to attend this session.

I have to admit I found it very overwhelming since it was a side of Destiny that I have never used! I plan to rewatch it several times before the session expires in

June. However, I can see how this information will be valuable to helping me to maintain and improve the school's library collection.

By analyzing the TitleWise data, I will be able to ensure I am "maintaining a quality selection of curated resources" (AASL, p.98). My goal for my library collection is to meet the needs of all of my patrons so they can "find and use information in an authentic manner, simulating their real-world practice" (AASL, p.99).

References

- AASL. (2018). *The national school library standard for learners, school librarians, and school libraries*. ALA.
- Blankman, A. (2022, March 12). *Keynote: Anne Blankman*. [Video]. VAASL Spring Regional Conference. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHqMOuLjSc0>
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