



A few months back, the 18th Annual Teacher Research Conference was held at the Waterford at Fair Oaks on May 27, 2009. Of the more than 250 in attendance, over three dozen educators shared their research during round-table discussions or in larger Workshop settings. These educators were mostly from Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) but educators from other Virginia school systems also participated. At the start, all were greeted by Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Terri Breeden. She took a moment to mention that research shows us that “educators reported they were more likely to be influenced by professional practices and action research of their peers than they were to be influenced by journal articles or undergraduate or graduate courses.” What a perfect segway into a night devoted to professionals sharing their research with peers!

Then it was the Teacher Researchers turns to talk. Participants checked their program guide and chose a topic, and proceeded to the designated Round Table or Workshop Room. Many Teacher Researchers quietly chose to share what they learned through research on Tri-fold Boards which were on display in the conference room as well. The research discussed involved K-12 students. The topics included all four core subjects, as well as, technology and the arts. During the evening, the FCPS teachers who had earned grants from the Apple Federal Credit Union for the 2008-09 school year were recognized. After having the opportunity to be inspired by educators’ research at a choice of three round-table discussion sessions, door prizes were awards. Teachers learned, networked, had fun, and won prizes. It was a great evening!

Now FCPS educators are gearing up for another year of teacher research. While spending the summer relaxing, Teacher Researchers also took time to reflect. What went really well last year? Maybe in 2009-10, they systematically will focus on that aspect of their teaching and see where the research takes them. What aspect are they still trying to master? Maybe a year of teacher research will bring clarity to the topic.

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