Assisting Well-Prepared Beginning Teachers to Overcome Obstacles in Integrating Technology in Their Classrooms

Abstract: Overcoming obstacles and difficulties in integrating technology into the curriculum by well-prepared teachers upon entering their first classroom will form the basis of the discussion for this session. The discussion will focus on ideas to help new teachers who are skilled in both mechanics and theory to make technology an effective part of their classroom.

Over a three-year period, a PT3 grant provided extensive training for prospective teachers in using technology in the classroom. An evaluation study based on a small group of teachers who completed this program was conducted in the fall of 2006. Even though these teachers received extensive training in integrating technology in the classroom, were well prepared, and felt self-confident, they expressed great frustration in terms of being able to use technology in their classrooms. Their greatest frustrations related to a lack of access to technology and a series of roadblocks for using the available technology. Now, in the fall of 2007, a much larger number of teachers who completed this training are in the field as beginning teachers. An extensive survey of all teachers who completed the PT3 program and who are presently in their own classrooms will be conducted and a summarization of the survey will form the basis of the discussion in this proposed session.

Often technology is available and teachers who are encouraged to use it lack the skills and/or motivation to do so. Based on the survey results from last year (2006), the difficulties and frustrations of a small number of well-trained teachers were great. This year we will have a larger number of new teachers to survey and we assume that we will find a similar level of frustration among all of the teachers, since the status of technology in the area where most of these teachers are employed has seen little change in the last year.

The discussion topic for this proposed session will center on how to assist well-trained teachers in overcoming imposed roadblocks in integrating technology into their classrooms. The discussion leaders will present a summary of the difficulties expressed by these beginning technology proficient teachers. This summary will form the basis for this proposed round table discussion. The focus of the discussion will be on recommended solutions to the dilemmas faced by new teachers who are well prepared to use technology in their teaching, but are frustrated by physical and administrative roadblocks. The discussion leaders will not allow the conversation to digress into a lament session, but will guide the discussion toward suggestions that can assist new teachers in overcoming obstacles and making the best use of the skills and resources they do have.