

The mission of the World Conference on E-Learning, sponsored by the Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education, is to engage and empower specialists and professionals in computer education and e-Learning to share new technologies and approaches for teaching and learning in the digital age. Similar to the South by Southwest conferences, many sessions focused on innovation, creativity, problem solving and looking forward to the future of education. In this way, the overall conference and individual sessions I attended fit well with the district's personalized learning initiative and reimagining schools. I also walked away from the conference with a variety of resources for the mathematics, intervention and online support settings at Homer High School. Here is a sampling of those:

The Power of Beautiful Questions

One keynote speaker at this conference was Warren Berger, author of "The Book of Beautiful Questions." In his book (and presentation) he tackles the idea of what makes a question a better, more beautiful question? He states in his book that a beautiful question is one that is "an ambitious yet actionable question that can begin to shift the way we perceive or think about something – and might serve as a catalyst to bring about change." In this way, he encourages educators to ask questions that can be **acted upon** and thus foster innovation. In his blog and through his book, he gives practical (and historical) examples of beautiful, actionable questions and what inventions/innovations those questions led to. His website and blog are located at <https://amorebeautifulquestion.com>

Transformational Geometry via Geogebra (12 pointed star drawing by dynamic geometry)

Every since I invited a quirky college professor to present "star dancing" to my geometry students at Bartlett High School, I've been enthralled with exploring pointed stars (or n-gons) and how they can be leveraged to encourage exploration of mathematics in all its glory. This particular session utilized a free graphing utility to engage students in the exploration of transformational geometry, patterns and rotational symmetry in a joyful way. This particular task allows for a variety of entry points for students who may still be thinking very concretely to use the technology to draw conclusions inductively and be more likely to transition to abstract thinking and deductive reasoning which is needed for success for the higher level reasoning needed in STEM fields as well as life after high school.

The Importance of Empathy

There were several sessions at the e-Learning conference that focused on the importance of empathy when working with students in both traditional face-to-face classes or in online settings. To support our most at risk students, it is essential for teachers to work collaboratively with students to identify barriers and supports to developing empathy so that students are more likely to stick with learning regardless of whether it is taking place in a physical or virtual environment.

Without the opportunity to attend conferences and trainings through the Career Development Grant funds, it would be challenging to keep up to date on current educational technologies and new resources for proven strategies. During this conference, I was also able to present my own research on teacher disposition with practical applications to the secondary school environment in a session titled "The Missing Link: Gauging Teachers' Dispositions Toward Education Technology". It was great to share my conclusions on teacher disposition with interested educators and learn from their experiences assessing teacher disposition.

I would like to thank the Kenai Peninsula School Board for supporting me in my continuing professional development.

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