

Summertime Learning

Editor's Note

Summertime and the learning is easy...ok, maybe learning is never really "easy." But it seems like many of my favorite learning experiences have taken place in the summer — from courses and conferences to special project teams. Even in the face of challenge, there is a lightness and energy that only lives in the summer.

It might be the relaxed dress code that I enjoy so much, or the occasional convening of a group outside. Thinking about an ice cream stop on the way home is a nice distraction—and it's even better when the ice cream is part of the class. (This was the case with Dr. Mary Kay Biagini's summer multicultural literature course in Pitt's School Library Certification Program, with visits to Klavon's—dating to 1923, <http://www.klavonsicecream.com/>—and Page Dairy Mart—open since 1951, <http://pagedairymart.net/>—on the itinerary for road trips to historic sites in Pittsburgh.)

But make no mistake, the appeal of learning over "summer vacation" extends beyond ice cream and other niceties. There are some notable supports to successful learning, like a pared down work routine that seems to afford sharper focus on new content. Without the rigor of a full set of classes to teach and meetings to attend, our minds have more room to think and grow and wonder. In my experience, summer learning settings also tend to bring out camaraderie in classmates or teammates. Working to accomplish projects in the often intense timeframe of summer is motivating, sometimes aggravating, and for better or worse, eye-opening. When we're forced to make it work as a team, we always learn—hopefully about the subject area, sometimes about working with others, and in the best circumstances, about ourselves.

In this Summer Escape issue of SLC, our authors offer creative and thoughtful suggestions for a school librarian's best summer vacation ever—really! Brittany Tignor writes about engaging with the National School Library Standards from her vantage point as a provider of state-level PD. Anita Cellucci reflects on the value of rest, including why it's a good idea to write your annual report over the summer and not during the school year. Stony Evans suggests recharging your school librarian batteries and remembering that as you do so, "sharing is caring."

Over in the realm of research and practice, summer brings two new columnists to SLC, Lucy Santos Green and Michelle Folk. They will be taking the reins from Melissa Johnston and Melissa Jacobs, whose work has been a part of *School Library Connection* since Volume 1, and whose insights on professional development and the intersection of research and practice we will continue to revisit and learn from, even as their regular column concludes. Thank you for sharing your knowledge with us, Melissa and Melissa, and welcome, Lucy and Michelle! Lucy is associate professor of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina's Knowledge School. Michelle is currently the librarian at Fort Atkinson Middle School in Fort Atkinson, WI. In their first column, Green and Folk explore the notion of self-care as part of professional growth and development. Against the research background of self-care practices, they offer three specific pathways for you to try, weaving together personal and professional aspects of your school librarian self.

Wherever your learning takes you this summer, consider learning about yourself as an ongoing goal, maybe made a little more attainable with the gift of longer summer days. I hope that you enjoy our version of a summer escape, and when the calendar flips over once again to fall and school and pumpkin spice, ask, what have I learned about myself this summer?

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