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The South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation

5 Tips for Finding Professional Development Opportunities

1. Consider universities, museums, other cultural organizations, and professional associations.

In addition to colleges and universities, major cultural organizations and professional associations have education departments that provide instruction for teachers on how to integrate arts, humanities, science, and history into education.

2. Think beyond your subject.

Is there a subject area you'd like to explore? Are you a science teacher hoping to fine-tune writing skills? A language arts teacher wanting a deeper understanding of American history? Look for professional development opportunities outside of your subject area in order to enrich the subject matter for your students, yourself, and your teaching colleagues.

3. Think beyond the classroom.

Every teacher knows that a positive school environment enhances daily classroom learning. Take the lead in your school's 21st century learning project, anti-bullying program, peer mediation services, tolerance and race relations forum, character development initiative, or another topic that interests you or is pertinent to your school.

4. Look outside of the New York City region.

With rich educational and cultural experiences just a car or train ride away, consider programs in nearby cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.

5. Look for online courses.

You may not even need to leave home to participate in a professional development opportunity. These are just three examples of websites to explore:

- American Museum of Natural History: www.amnh.org/education/teachers/
- PBS: www.pbs.org/teacherline
- CybertSmart!: cybersmart.org/workshops