GENERATION YES

Generation YES (Youth and Educators Succeeding) students provide technical support, peer mentoring, leadership and support for technology professional development in thousands of schools across the U.S. and around the world.

Sharing Student Voice: Students Presenting at Conferences
Bringing local success to a wider audience

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Empowering students to make a difference can bring rewards to both the students and the community at large. Students who learn to collaborate with adults, present their ideas in constructive ways, and take action can be effective spokespeople for themselves, their peers, their school, and their community.

Events that take students out of their local environment, such as educational conferences are often offered as a way that adults can support student voice. These events present opportunities to spread your message beyond the local community to reach new and wider audiences. Students, as future citizens of the world, can gain perspective on their own actions and how their contributions are valued by others. Conference attendees can be inspired by your students to implement programs that encourage student voice in their own schools.

Enabling student voice is more than simply "listening" to students. While it is tempting to think that the act of students speaking at a conference enables student voice, it is dependent on the students having something authentic to share with the audience.

It might be more effective to think of conference presentations as "sharing" student voice, rather than enabling it.

This guide
This guide is intended to provide teachers with practical tips on including students in planning and presenting at educational conference-type events with primarily adult audiences. We assume that you have students involved in authentic, student-led projects that enable student voice, such as Generation YES programs, where students improve technology use in their own schools by working with teachers and peers.

Why Encourage Student Voice
research and common sense

Student voice

Students develop an authentic voice as they participate in creating change at the local level. For adults, enabling student voice is a long-term commitment to guide and empower the next generation.

"Student voice is the individual and collective perspective and actions of young people within the context of learning and education." -   Soundout Foundation

Student voice is about action, not words. Students are empowered through their participation in personally meaningful projects, and develop a "voice" by being included and listened to. While participation in adult activities such as a conference is not a required component of enabling student voice, most student voice advocates seek to integrate students more fully into society at large. Creating opportunities for students to participate side-by-side with adults means that students have the chance to really understand what it means to be part of a community that is beyond a typical classroom experience. By learning to speak, act, and think as part of a team, students can expand their identities beyond "student" and experience themselves as members of a community without regard to age. By facilitating as many of these opportunities as possible, we give youth the tools and experience they need to be engaged, effective citizens in the future.

Making meaning

It is tempting to view any youth participation in adult activities as important and meaningful. However, this is a

condescending view of student voice as simply precocious entertainment. We should be wary of any attempt to simply trot children out at conferences and then congratulate ourselves for listening to student voice. But as part of a continuous process of authentic engagement, students presenting to adult audiences can be a meaningful experience for everyone involved.

There is evidence from a broad range of school settings that students can participate meaningfully as agents of positive change at both the classroom and school levels. Calvert[1] maintains that this fits the current trend in educational research focusing on school climate, social conditions, and school culture. These are important factors for positive student learning environments and good working conditions for teachers. These trends also support research from educational psychology[2] that increasing student autonomy, membership, and agency leads to higher engagement and academic achievement.

Cook-Sather's [3] research that students not only have the knowledge and position to shape what counts in education, but they also can help change power dynamics and create new forums for change by learning how to speak out on their own behalf in a variety of arenas and on a range of issues.

Act locally, speak globally

There are no more global thinkers than children. They naturally want to "change the world" and their youthful idealism can be both invigorating and challenging to harness into useful activity. As youth engage in activities that produce change, a savvy teacher or leader can engage them in the reflective processes that result in clarifying their own ideas and attitudes towards that change. Youth voice, as it emerges from action, can be a powerful force for both the child and the community. Democracy depends on informed citizens who believe that they can make a difference and that their voice counts.

Students presenting at a conference can be a part of this continuous, reflective practice. This guide is a practical way to plan these activities and maximize the potential benefit to the students involved.

"Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results." - John Dewey

Net generation

Students are part of a digital generation -- they have grown up with computers and technology in their lives and need to be prepared for a digital world. However, schools are often not meeting students needs when it comes to use of technology.[4] Students are asking their schools to provide more opportunities to use technology to learn, and their voices need to be heard. In turn, adults need to teach appropriate use of these new tools.

Generation YES programs specifically invite students to become part of the effort in schools today to improve learning with technology.

By asking students to participate in meaningful dialog about technology use, and allowing them to share their views with a wider audience, we not only gain their insight and experience, but we show students how their education is relevant for the world today.

"By listening to students' voices, educators can learn how schools and classrooms can be more relevant." - Dennis Harper[5]

Web 2.0, the read/write web, also opens up a range of new opportunities and options for student voice to flourish. Blogs, wikis, and podcasts can allow students to create an online presence that rivals any newspaper or media outlet. Syndication technology (RSS) allows user created and user defined feeds for targeted information. Students can achieve more control of both the information they access, and the information they distribute than ever before. Students can connect with other like-minded organizations or get expert help from anywhere around the globe.

However, while Web 2.0 technology can also help students reach beyond the walls of their classroom, addressing an audience face-to-face provides a different and complementary set of learning opportunities and challenges. There is no "one way" to enable student voice, nor is there "one way" to share it. Including students in the decisions on how and where to share their voice, whether online or face-to-face, will encourage student ownership of the process.

21st century skills

Students in today's schools enter a different world than that of their parents. "21st century skills" have come to mean the skills beyond traditional core subject areas including:

- learning and thinking skills such as problem solving, creativity, and collaboration
- civic, cultural and global awareness
- life skills such as ethics and leadership
- technology, information and media literacy

By participating in an adult event such as an educational conference, students get a glimpse of a world that is changing and learning. School and education are not permanently fixed objects and they are not cogs in an unbending wheel. Students may see teachers in a new light, as learners hoping to transform the world by improving education.

By including students in this world of educational improvement, they can visualize their own ability to transform it, their own lives, and the lives of others.

Back in the classroom, this experience can empower students to reach beyond the walls of their school and think beyond the next test. Reinforcing the belief that their voice and their actions, are important, necessary, and valued creates students who will go beyond a class assignment and be empowered global citizens of the 21st century.

[1] Calvert, M. (2002, April). Raising voices in school: The impact of young decision-makers on schools and youth organizations. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans.

[2] Larson, R. W. (2000). Toward a psychology of positive youth development. American Psychologist, 55(1), 170-183.

[3] Cook-Sather, A. (2002). Authorizing students' perspectives: Toward trust, dialogue, and change in education. Educational Researcher, 31(4), 3-14.

[4] Pew Internet & American Life Project (2002). The Digital Disconnect: The widening gap between Internet-savvy students and their schools. American Institutes for Research

[5] Harper, D.O., "Students as Change Agents", Book Chapter, Technology-Rich Learning Environments: A Future Perspective, Edited by Myint Swe Khine & Darrell Fisher, World Scientific Press, 2003, pp. 307-329.

Planning Student-led Sessions
where to start

Speakers needed
Educational conferences occur all year round. There are national events, state conferences, local conferences, and many other types of conferences for different curriculum areas, technology types, higher education and practically every aspect of life in a school.

Every conference looks for speakers to fill the meeting rooms and attract participants. They especially want people who have something fresh and new to share, with authentic voices and passion about education. These conferences are looking for you and your students!

It's about telling a great story
At countless professional development events and conferences, educators are eager to learn about new and innovative practices that they can bring back to their own schools. Empowered students are something that educators can get excited about -- real students in real schools doing powerful things with technology, not administrative systems or the latest technology gizmo.

This is a chance to share your stories. You know the ones--the shy student blossoming when given real responsibility. How the teachers in your school actually use the technology more now that they have students on their team. The time the student tech team saved the day when the superintendent came for the SmartBoard demo and nothing worked. You know these stories, you've lived them, and others want to hear from you.

Involve students in an authentic learning experience
When you bring students to share the stage, present on their own, and show what they can do, your extend their experience and provide the audience with a live example of your message. You may see these kids every day, but

other educators will be fascinated by your confident, articulate students and wonder how they got that way. Your students will shine on a new stage and learn how to address larger and more varied audiences. You and their parents will be proud of them!

Proposal submission
Most state and national conferences advertise for session submissions on their website. Some of them ask for submissions almost a year in advance. Usually, the bigger the conference, the earlier the deadline. Look on the website for deadlines and requirements.

Most conferences will not specially address whether student speakers are allowed or encouraged. In our experience, most conferences will embrace the idea and support sessions delivered by students--if they are of the quality level you would expect from any other speaker.

Can I write a proposal that will get accepted?
Yes you can! Make your proposal stand out by writing clearly and succinctly. Read the directions and follow the rules, especially on word limits. Use short sentences and be positive. Describe solutions and what session participants will learn from you and your students.

What if I'm not sure my students can come?
Don't worry if you don't have their names or that it might not work out at all. Most education conference organizers are educators too. They understand the uncertain logistics of bringing students. Write that you will try to bring students as co-presenters, and that if it doesn't work out, you will have video of student projects to share. Be sure to tell conference organizers immediately which days will work for you to bring your students; they can often re-arrange session schedules up to a certain point.

Even if you aren't sure you will be able to bring students, go ahead and submit. You can always decline later if you have to. Don't get caught waiting too long and miss deadlines.

What if I can't afford it?
You might want to try submitting anyway to see if you are accepted. Once accepted, things may have changed. Don't forget that the conference may be so far in the future that it may be in the next fiscal year, or that extra money can appear at year's end. You may also think about asking vendors to help subsidize the trip, they may be happy to have you represent their products at a conference. Students can be excellent spokespeople for the technology products they use. Finally, if it's impossible, you can cancel the session. Just be sure to let the conference organizers know as far in advance as possible.

Types of conference sessions

Most educational conferences, whether intended for local, state, national or international audiences, have a program of sessions given by educators about their professional practice.

Sessions

Most conference sessions run from 30 to 90 minutes, and are given in lecture style rooms to an audience of other professional educators. The audience at these sessions expect that the speaker will have a presentation that is polished and well-rehearsed, with visual aids and handouts.

Poster Sessions

Instead of doing a presentation in a meeting room, poster sessions occur in a common area where conference attendees walk around and look at a video or poster display. At the alloted time, you and your students will stand next to your display and chat with attendees who come to visit you. This will give your students a chance to participate, but will not involve the learning experience of creating and delivering a formal presentation.

Student Showcases

Many conferences have separate exhibit space for student groups to showcase their work and speak with attendees who visit the showcase. Student showcases are designed for student participation, so it may be somewhat easier to manage the logistics. The drawbacks of a student showcase are that similar to a poster session, you lose the learning experience of creating and delivering a formal presentation, and worse, it reinforces the separation of students from adults.

But remember, just because you are talking about what students can do, or bringing students doesn't mean you HAVE to be in the student showcase.

Workshops

Many conferences offer 3-6 hour workshops to attendees to learn about a subject in depth, usually hands-on with computers or other technology provided for each

attendee. Leading a workshop with students is a great way to showcase your students in action if they are doing something similar back at home, but it's not recommended as a first time outing.

A Special Note About Student Panels

Student panels are often arranged by conferences to show that they are listening to students and supporting student voice. Since your students are likely to be well-known as articulate students who are making a difference, you may get an invitation to bring students to participate in a student panel discussion.

These student panels can be nice rewards for students, but they do not promote student voice by themselves. Unfortunately, these panels often take place in a vacuum. Students are rarely present at meetings or working group sessions where real decisions are made. Too often the panelists are asked abstract questions that are well beyond the student's capability or experience.

If you can, ask if the students can participate in the full day's events by working on plans or proposals alongside adults. You may want to suggest that the students are not asked questions about things that they have little control over, such as national policy or how they could use technology to improve "education" as an abstract idea. Since student voice is always grounded in action, questions that focus on eliciting student thoughts about their actual work will be more powerful and more meaningful for both the audience and the students.

You can prepare your students ahead of time by helping them understand that their experiences, such as by teaching teachers how to use technology as a GenYES student, are valid answers. They do not have to invent futuristic solutions or make up grand plans. What they have already done is worth talking about and is the true expression of student voice. Be clear with them about whether they will have a chance to participate in any decision-making activities beyond a panel appearance.

Student trust is a hard-won gift, and over-promising that a student panel is a chance for them to have a real voice in creating change might backfire. It's not hard for students to realize that in reality there is no chance for any long-term participation on their part.

Finally, consider bringing some non-traditional students to the student panel. Students who are not your academic superstars and don't speak in 5 paragraph essays often speak the truth with greater ease than students who are more conventional. Be sure to make it safe for them to say the unexpected or unconventional, within the boundaries of appropriate behavior. Your guidance will allow students to move past what they know adults expect of them and share their authentic voice.

Planning and Creating the Presentation
student voice & ownership

Planning presentations with students

Planning a presentation with students requires extra time, but will pay off for everyone involved. The audience will respond warmly to students, after all, most will have started off as teachers. They will listen more attentively and forgive presentation lags and glitches. Your students will benefit from the opportunity to shine in an adult context, and their parents will appreciate the honor. Make sure to take pictures to show back at your school.

However, student-led presentations should be held to the same high standard as any work shared with an outside audience. One of the most important messages you want to share with your audience is that students are capable of doing high-quality, professional work. Student-produced does not mean amateurish. Your audience has invested money and time to attend this event, and if they choose to attend your session, they deserve valuable information that is at least as good as any other session delivers.

Trust leads to empowerment

Let your students do as much of the preparation work as possible. Help them understand the audience point of view, and your shared responsibility to provide valuable information to them. They can research presentation tips, write their own presentations, create the slideshow art and video, and practice together.

Tips
- Include students early in the process to gain input and buy-in for the final result.
- Don't ask students for input if there is no way that they will be listened to. Lost student trust will take a long time to regain.
- Include a wide range of students as participants. Set boundaries and rules, but your non-traditional students may surprise you by excelling at this. Student empowerment projects often encourage unexpected voices coming forward.
- Put adequate time in the plan for feedback and adjustments. Give students the responsibility to modify elements and make changes.
- Have your students shoot and edit the video and photos. This allows more students to participate in the process even if not all of them can attend the event. Your audience will appreciate you "walking the talk" about student empowerment.

Presentation basics

A unified, good-looking slideshow is more than just "bells and whistles". Studies show that people looking at presentations feel unsettled by fonts and graphics that are discordant and unappealing. You are adding credibility to your presentation by spending the time to make it look good. If you aren't sure if it looks good, ask colleagues and students.

Be sure to work with students to eliminate jargon and local references that might confuse your audience. Ask students to role-play as audience members who know nothing about your school, city, state, or even country.

Use this event to reinforce your previous lessons on planning, production and revision. Practice with your group and model taking feedback on your own presentation and giving constructive criticism.

Video and Photos
Videos and photos are an excellent accompaniment to any presentation. They prove to your audience that what you say is really true.

- Video showing your students in action will help them be less self-conscious. They can refer to the video as they further describe their efforts.
- Provide context for the audience with video interviews with your principal, other teachers or staff

Introduce your video. Explain to the audience what they will be seeing and who will be in the video. Are these students, teachers, or parents? It may seem obvious to you, but your audience is seeing it for the first time and needs time to process what you are showing and telling them.

Are we done yet?

Here are the three top ways to improve presentations:
1. Edit
2. Edit
3. Edit

There is a reason that TV commercials are 30-60 seconds long and theatrical trailers are 2 ½ minutes long. If you must have a video that is more than 3 minutes long, break it up. Separate segments gives you an opportunity to explain the significance of each section to your audience.

Edit your presentation graphics and text too. The slides should not be scripts, they should support what is being said by you and your students. As students practice, look for ways to tighten and hone the message.

Top Ten Tips for Student Presenters

1. **Make it personal.** Have each student tell their own story from their own perspective. It will be more engaging than a generic presentation of what the whole group did.

2. **Edit down to the essentials.** As you practice, help them edit their story down to the essential points. Student voice doesn't mean they don't need adult help.

3. **Practice, but not too much.** Practice out loud in front of other students or teachers if possible. Try not to over-practice; it will sound forced and boring.

4. **Memorize the opening line.** Practice the first line until you can do it in your sleep.

5. **Don't use a script.** Even a memorized script will sound stilted.

6. **Try it without notes.** It's a crutch that can be more of a distraction than a help.

7. **Look at the audience, not the screen.** Don't stare at the screen, it disconnects you from the audience.

8. **Timing is everything**. Agree on a "secret signal" that means wrap it up. Practice this so they learn to complete a thought without stopping mid-sentence. Explain that you will interrupt their presentation if they go on too long.

9. **Audiences may behave badly.** One very odd thing about conferences, is that people may get up and leave in the middle of a session. This is normal - don't take it personally. Be sure to warn students.

10. **Be authentic.** Some people are serious, some are born game show hosts. Let them be who they are, use their own words, and show their own personalities.

11. **Rules are made to be broken.** If you have one (or more!) exceptionally articulate students, give them more time, but make sure they can stick to the essential message of the presentation.

Bringing Students to Big Conferences

For larger and more remote conferences, your logistics and planning challenges will increase.

- Work out permission forms as required by your school.
- Be clear with students and parents if students will need lunch or money for any expenses.
- Recruit parents to come along to help you.
- Plan meeting points and times in advance so you don't rely on cell phones. Conference centers can be large, confusing, and often have terrible cell phone reception.
- Many conference food facilities are expensive and crowded at mealtimes. Give yourself plenty of time for your students to eat or bring lunches. You don't want a bunch of hungry, distracted students on your hands.
- A full day at a conference is a long day. Five hours is probably enough, especially for younger students.

Admission and entry badges

Speakers at larger conferences usually get free admission and a badge that allows them entry into other sessions and the exhibit hall. A co-presenter may also get a free registration. However, if you are bringing students, you will probably go over the limit for free badges. Check with the conference organizers about getting entry badges for your student speakers. Most of the time, they will be happy to give you extra free badges or passes for your student presenters.

A day before the conference, call the conference and make sure your badges are going to be there. You don't want to spend a lot of time at the registration booth trying to find out what happened to the badges you were promised. If there are no badges, just skip it and go to the room you are speaking in. Chances are no one will be checking badges anyway and if you have one as the main speaker, it will be fine.

Exhibit halls

Many conferences will allow students to visit the exhibit floor. You will need a badge for each student to get in.

Give yourself at least 2 extra hours if you want to spend some time in a large exhibit hall. Break up into groups of 2-3 students so they don't look like they are traveling in packs. Remind them that although companies are giving away free goodies, they should be extra polite and ask before they take anything. Most companies are happy to give their pens or candy to students, but asking first creates a good impression.

Your students (especially the older techies) may be able to do a lot of good research for you on the exhibit floor. Give them a "mission" such as finding the best projection system and ask them to bring back proof of their investigation.

The Teacher's Job
telling the rest of the story

Don't make this mistake!

Many teachers are rightly proud of their students and turn the entire presentation over to them. **This is a mistake**. Your analysis of the project is crucial. The audience needs to hear things that are outside of the student experience, and it's up to you to fill in those gaps. Don't assume that your audience will be able to deduce what happened from a student's literal description of the project. They need and deserve more.

Student presentations are typically very concrete and they love to provide detailed chronological accounts of what they did. Although that can be charming, it doesn't help the audience visualize how they could make it happen in their school.

Have students talk about...

- How and why they got interested in the project
- How this changed how they felt about themselves, a subject, or about school
- How other people (students, teachers, parents) reacted to what they did
- Changes in other people. For example, if they worked with a teacher, how the teacher learned new things, or changed the way they looked at technology

Steer students away from...

- Going into too much technical detail
- Relating every step of a project (and then...and then...and then...)

While your students are speaking

- Don't correct their mistakes while they are speaking. Your audience will not notice if they skip a point or two.
- If they have forgotten something essential, you can make the point after they finish in your wrap-up. Don't say, "What Jimmy forgot to say is…" Say, "By the way, Jimmy created a website with streaming video in addition to the editing work he just showed you."
- If a student freezes, give them a little time to recover or try prompting them. If it's just not going to happen, just move on. It's not the time to have a showdown or prove a point.

Assign students various jobs to distract them from being nervous. One can be in charge of the equipment, one can be responsible for handouts, one can advance the slides, one can be the timekeeper, and another can do the very important job of making sure nothing is left behind.

Share your story

Your audience will most likely love your students, but it's you they will identify with. Help your audience understand where you are coming from and it will help them connect with what you are saying. Be sure to tell them:

- Your background and teaching experience
- Something about your school and the project context. For example, the climate surrounding technology use and did it change due to your Generation YES program.
- Your student grade range and demographics
- Geographic location and whether your school is rural, urban, or suburban
- Things at your school that contributed to the success of what you did, with specific examples (like a supportive principal, parent volunteers, etc.)

You don't have to list all these details at the beginning; weave some of them into your examples or as illustrations of your points.

Wrapping up

As with any presentation, the end is as important as the beginning. The teacher must be the primary timekeeper to make sure there is adequate time to conclude, distribute handouts, and answer questions. If questions arise, keep in mind that your session is still in progress and the answer should be tailored for the whole audience. Stay in control and don't allow the session to just taper off. Remember to distribute handouts or evaluation sheets if you have them.

When the alloted session time is over, you must stop, pack up quickly and leave. The audience needs to move on to their next session, and the next person speaking in the room needs to set up their equipment. Finishing on time is the mark of a good presenter.

What Do Audiences Want?
their experience is paramount

Of course the presentation experience will be good for students, but the audience is there for their own benefit, not to be used as a part of a students' learning experience. By sharing audience expectations with students, you can help them understand that their role is similar to providing great customer service. You may want to brainstorm with your students a "portrait" of a typical audience member at this conference and why they will be there.

Public speaking and adult learning experts Beebe and Beebe say adult audiences want:

- To be given information that they can use immediately
- To be actively involved in the learning process
- To connect their life experiences with the new information they learn
- To understand quickly how the new information is relevant to their needs and busy lives

Tell your story - start to future

Paint the whole picture for your audience so they can visualize following similar steps. Many times, student presentations focus only on the student part of the process, which leaves out important information that your audience needs to hear.

- **The meta-view**. What do you do as a leader to facilitate student voice?
- **Bookend it.** What decision-making steps did you take as you got started? Where are you going?
- **Money**. How was/is it funded?
- **Synergies**. What other school initiatives does it support or partner with?
- **Balance.** Combine practical tips with overarching philosophy.
- **Reasons**. Why is this working? What went right? What went wrong?
- **Impact**. What is the impact on all stakeholders? (Students, teachers, parents, administration, technical staff, others)

You want your audience members to see how wonderful your students are, but more importantly, you want them to realize that their own students are every bit as capable as yours and what you do isn't magic. To do this, share the conditions for success that allowed this to happen. Your context for your students' stories will make the presentation much more valuable for your audience.

For most people, memorable things are **personal and emotional**. Your audience will not remember exactly what you said; they will remember **how you made them feel**. For many educators, enabling student voice will connect deeply with the reasons they became educators in the first place--to change the world. Help your audience **connect with those emotions** by showing them your passion for your students and the learning process. You will create a more memorable, more intellectually interactive experience for them.

Help your audience be actively involved

This doesn't mean you have to literally make them be physically active during the presentation; you want them to be mentally active. You don't want them sitting there having words wash over them like a warm dull bath.

- Move around, use expressive language, and project energy. Some students will be great at this!
- Change-up verbal styles, ask for audience input, or a show of hands.
- Share the "aha!" moments you had so they will feel your excitement and understand the journey you took along the way.

Explain why this Is worth your time

The educators in your audience are at this event because they want to learn new things and improve education at their own schools. Every session they go to is something new and different, and every company in the exhibit hall is promising that their product is easier, better, cheaper, faster, etc. By the time they leave the conference, they will most likely be suffering from information overload.

When they get back to their schools, they will be dealing with the usual crises and budget woes, but really, the crisis that affects most educators is a shortage of time. Even if there was unlimited money, there is not enough time in the day to do all the wonderful things that could be done. People have to be ruthless about guarding this most precious resource.

For your presentation to stand out, you need to explain exactly what it is about your ideas that make it worth their time and attention. **To make this clear, tell them why it is worth it for you.**

Before and After
setup to reflection

Before the presentation

Leave extra time for traveling and meeting up before your presentation. Talk to the group once more about your day's plan, buddies, meeting times and other pre-arrangements. Find the room you are scheduled to speak in. If no one is there, you can walk around, check equipment, and get acclimated.

Use your judgement about going to the exhibit hall or splitting your group up before your presentation. It's very easy to get distracted and lose track of time. Even parent volunteers can get lost in unfamiliar surroundings.

Setting up

Set a time to meet outside the room. Check the presentation schedule to see when the previous speaker will finish. Usually, they will finish on time and then you can walk in. Make sure you are not making a lot of noise while you are waiting. As soon as they finish their session, you can walk in and wait as they clean up with equipment and move out. If they are chatting and not cleaning up, you can politely ask if you can start setting up and that will get them going.

If you have technical issues, immediately alert conference staff. Even if you fix it yourself in the meantime, it's better than not getting started.

Start on time. No matter what happens, you will not get extra time to complete your presentation. If you are having technical problems, you will have to keep going and do without that piece of the presentation. Consider it a good lesson in being prepared and adaptable!

After the presentation

After the presentation is complete, quickly move out of the room. Once out, remember to tell the students what a great job they've done! They may focus on a few small mistakes and not realize what they have accomplished. Get photos and report your success to your administration, school board, and local newspaper.

If you have time, sit in on other sessions or visit the exhibit hall. (See page 7 about *Bringing Students to Larger Conferences* for some tips.) Visiting other sessions can give students a glimpse into the presentation styles of other speakers. Often, a keynote is a good session to attend, these speakers tend to be more professional and the topics of more general interest. You can also ask colleagues to recommend speakers who have dynamic presentation styles.

Reflective activities

Like any good learning activity, reflection is a critical part of the learning process. Give students the opportunity to reflect on the whole experience, both preparing and presenting, and what it meant to them personally. Include all the students who participated, even the ones who didn't get to go to the actual event.

If you had a chance to see other speakers, include a debrief of those sessions in your reflective activities.

Reflection gives students a chance to re-process their own experience, compare it with other students, and think one more time about the subject matter they presented. Join in the reflective activity yourself and share your own doubts and critiques. Students need to see that although presenting is a culminating activity, it is unlike a test that marks the end of learning. Presenting to adult audiences can reinforce student voice as part of the learning journey--a continuing experience that is never "done."

About Generation YES

Generation YES supports schools as they empower students to use technology to improve teaching and learning in their own schools. Our research-based resources provide implementation support and long-term sustainability.

GenYES - Student-Supported Professional Development. Students in grades 4-12 provide tech support and partner with classroom teachers to build technology-infused lessons that improve student achievement school-wide.

TechYES - Student Technology Literacy Certification. Students in grades 6-9 learn technology and receive a certificate by creating cross-curricular projects that meet NCLB requirements for 8th grade tech literacy. Peer mentors are trained to assist students and assess projects.