

Uxbridge B&N Bookfair

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On Sunday, December 5, 2010, the Uxbridge Public Schools held a book fair at the Millbury Barnes and Noble store. The book fair came just in time for holiday shopping and helped us raise money for a new, district-wide, web-based library catalog. All in all, it was a great day. We had several student and staff volunteers there supporting the Uxbridge Public Schools and helping to coordinate various events. Students in our Family and Consumer Sciences classes baked dozens (and dozens!) of scrumptious and complimentary cookies for customers to enjoy while doing their holiday shopping. We also had high school student and staff volunteers conducting story-time readings in the children's department throughout the day for young children shopping with their parents. Story-time readings included coloring activities as well.

In addition, we had local young adult author David Yoo <http://www.daveyoo.com/html/index.html> on hand signing copies of his latest young adult novel, *Stop Me if You've Heard This One Before*. I recommend Yoo for any library event you might be planning for your teens – he was extremely personable, funny, and got along great with our students. Uxbridge Public School supporters enjoyed chatting with him and he was instrumental in helping to make the day a success! Our Uxbridge High School Book Club students are excited to be reading his novel for our next discussion meeting. As for what a new, web-based library catalog would mean for our district - the benefits are numerous. Right now, students and staff are only able to access the library catalog while they are physically in the library at the school they attend. A web-based catalog would give them access from home or any other computer lab in the building. For instance, if a student or staff member is interested in a particular book, they can search the catalog from home, find the item, reserve it, and then pick it up the next day at the library. A web-based catalog will also allow students to create individual student accounts where they can manage their search histories, rate or post reviews of books they've read, create book trailers if they want to get creative, etc. We will also be able to link to all of the online research databases we subscribe to through this web-based catalog so in essence it will be "one-stop shopping." Another great feature of a web-based library catalog is that it will allow all of the school libraries in the district to communicate. We will be able to see each other's catalogs and implement an interlibrary loan feature for the district. There are a lot of materials these days that seem to have mass appeal; having an interlibrary loan feature would give a student or staff member access to any item in the district. For instance, there is often times a lot of crossover between those grades on the cusp; a 4th and 5th grader or an 8th and 9th grader could have very similar reading interests. Having this interlibrary loan feature would really expand the list of materials students would have access to. They wouldn't be restricted to just those materials located at their own school library. From a management perspective, a new catalog would offer more sophisticated reporting capabilities. We'd be better able to analyze and develop our existing collections based on circulation statistics, search histories, status of materials, etc. The Uxbridge Public School district is in the process of planning a new high school. With a new high school slated to be built, comes a new library media center. It's the perfect time to be upgrading our district catalogs. We've got some great stuff at each of the school libraries in the district; a new web-based catalog will not only increase people's awareness of what is available to them but it will also provide them with easier access to those materials. Although we still have a ways to go in our fundraising efforts for a new catalog, the proceeds from the book fair will make a nice dent in the amount needed to purchase such a catalog. For those of you looking for minimal effort fundraising opportunities with the potential for a nice chunk of change, a Barnes and Noble book fair is a great option. If you can coordinate your fair around a seasonal event like the winter holidays or say spring graduation, even better. And for those schools in the Central MA area, I highly recommend Diane Abramson, Community Relations Manager at the Millbury Barnes and Noble store. Her knowledge and suggestions for running a successful book fair were invaluable. I see many more book fairs in our future!