

Dr. Keller's Blog
Tuesday, June 23, 2009

Monday was a big day at AGS. In addition to the morning and afternoon seminars, the students heard from Dr. Alan Hargrave about 'cybersafety'. He talked about much more people are connected: through cell phones, Internet usage, Facebook, Twitter, My Space, e-mail, instant messaging, etc. While the technology has distinct advantages, there are also dangers associated with it. Students were warned that people can post just about anything they want on many of the web sites, so they should never assume that a stranger is who s/he says s/he is. Dr. Hargrave even related that he overheard a conversation on a plane where a man was flying from California to Tennessee to meet someone he had only met through e-mail contact.

Dr. Hargrave also pointed out that many employers and college admissions people look at community web sites such as Facebook, and that pictures or profiles have resulted in a loss of jobs and/or denial of admission. Students were warned to never assume that anything they send to anyone is private, since technology makes it very easy to post or send information to others. Students were also given tips about protecting themselves from identity theft, by using different passwords, by protecting sensitive information on cell phones, and by considering whether information posted could be used by someone to do harm.

As an indicator of how far technology has come, while Dr. Hargrave was speaking, he received seven invites from students to be friends on Facebook!