Field Experience Activity

Maegan Heath

University of Oklahoma

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**School Librarian Interview**

For my field experience, I was able to interview and observe a certified, experienced librarian.  Mrs. Piper (pseudonym to protect identity) has been a school librarian for 19 years.  Her Bachelor's is in Elementary Education, and her Master's is in Library Media Education.  She sees leadership, for her, as inspiring children to become accomplished readers and appreciate literature in all forms.

Mrs. Piper serves two school sites within the district.  This includes a developmentally delayed pre-kindergarten through first grade site and a second and third grade site.  Since she is split between two schools, she does not have extra duties or serve on committees.  In fact, she notes that the split between two schools is the most challenging aspect of her job.  The necessities of teaching classes, managing circulation, acquiring materials, fundraising, and general management of two schools does not leave much time for innovation or inquiry.

Mrs. Piper is also on a fixed schedule.  This leads to limited collaboration.  She is open to teachers collaborating with her to gather resources.  The fixed schedule serves as teachers' plan time.  Mrs. Piper does work to incorporate both American Association of School Librarian (AASL) standards as well as Oklahoma Academic content Standards (OAS).  Her lessons typically cover the reading and writing content in addition to the AASL standards. Although, she does not have a lot of collaboration time, she works to stay current on instructional practices in a few different ways.  She is a member of the Oklahoma Metropolitan Library Commission.  She also follows blogs and

attends workshops.  Mrs. Piper understands the need to stay abreast of best practices and collaboration.  She notes that time is the main obstacle.

This lack of time, a full-time, one-site position, and a limited budget affects her ability to offer many quality services.  The library does not have a makerspace, coding opportunities, or ebooks.  She does promote reading with the materials the library offers.  She creates a safe, positive environment that respects all interests and beliefs, and she attempts to stay current on children's interests.  She hosts a literacy night and keeps the book fair open late on parent teacher nights.  Checkout is a bit limited with a policy of one book a day, but children are encouraged to return daily for a new book. While library instruction is very much on a fixed schedule, efforts are made to provide decent access.  The library hours are from 7:50 AM - 3:00 PM with about an hour closure for lunch and recess.  There is no before or after school open times, and the library does not offer a virtual learning commons.  Because of this, access is somewhat limited.

Based on the interview, Mrs. Piper is aware of best practices.  She feels limited by her schedule and is unsure of how to overcome the challenges.  Minor changes could be made while a big emphasis should be on advocacy.  Perhaps, this advocacy could lead decision-makers to understand the value of libraries and librarians.

**First Meeting with Principal Plan**

I will first ensure the principal understands that this is more of a dialogue situation.  I will present him/her with my ideas, thoughts, and plans but know that his/her input is welcomed at any time.  Discussion questions or topics are included following my initial input under each heading.

**Mission and Goals**

School Library Mission

The School Library facilitates the students' and staff's use of high-quality reading materials and promotes reading for enjoyment.  The media center provides information sources and assists students and staff in becoming responsible users of information while providing instruction in information literacy and technology skills. The media center exists to support the curriculum of the school and inspires students to become caring, concerned, critical-thinking, lifelong learners.

Goals

- Support students' mastery of American Association of School Librarian's Standards

- Collaborate with staff, students, and families to optimize learning

- Create an environment in which students can construct knowledge and share information

- Ensure students, staff, and families can access the books and information resources they need and want

- Advocate the importance of libraries and librarians and communicate how they contribute to student learning

- Foster a life-long love of reading of reading and learning for enjoyment

Questions / Discussion Topics:

- Does this mission align with the mission of the school?  Do you think the mission needs any changes?

- Would you change the goals, or do you wish to add any goals for the library?

- Do you have any input on what would help us complete the mission or reach our goals?

**Focus for the Year**

For this topic, I would initially begin by garnering feedback from the administrators and staff (and students and families if possible).  I would do my best to assess the current situation in the library.  Most likely, the focus would be decided together as a collaborative team.  I will provide some overarching themes.

- Ensure the library provides an environment where students can consume and create information

- Create a collaborative environment in which families, staff, and students work with me to create the best learning environment for all

Questions / Discussion Topics:

- Ensure the administrator understands current, research-based best library practices and environment

- In what areas, could our library improve?

- What methods can I use to gather input from all stakeholders?

- What would you (the administrator) like our focus(es) to be?

- How can the library/librarian assist in meeting the goals and mission of the school and its staff?

**Site Responsibilities**

This topic would likely begin with discussion as to what the administrator believes my responsibilities should be or what is already assigned. I would also present the graphic (CedarReaders, 2018) noting the responsibilities that are automatically a part of the school librarian position (i.e. teacher, librarian, curriculum leader, instructional partner, etc.).
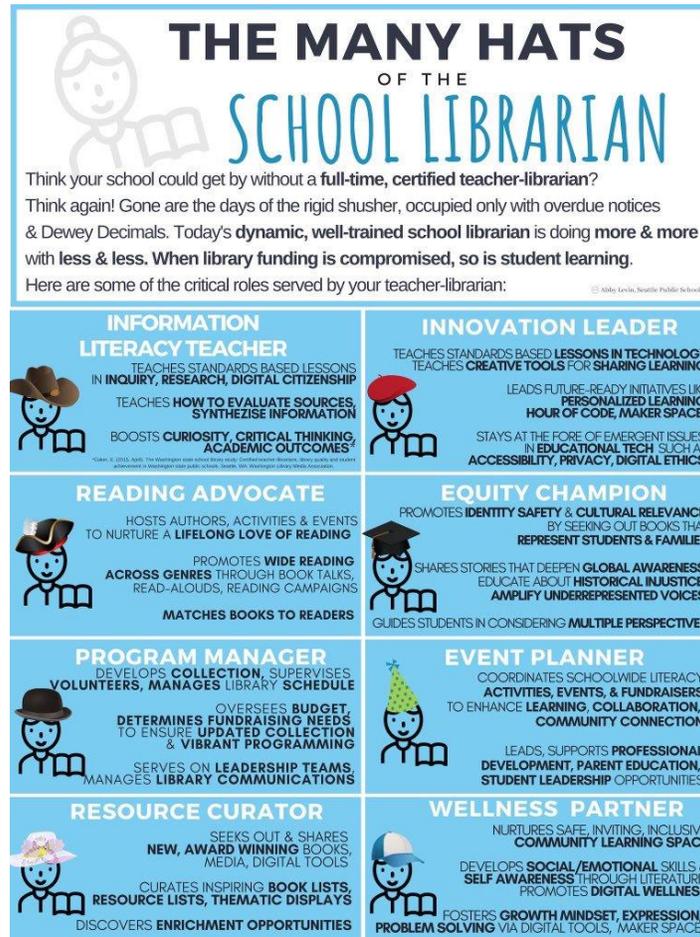


- **Technology**

   I will support responsible use of technology by students and staff. I will promote quality technology, applications, games, software, etc. that promote student learning. I will incorporate technology in library lessons and student activities while promoting its successful use in the classroom.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- o What technology do we have available now?

- o How does staff/students use the technology?

- o Do we have a budget for technology?

- o Are there any current goals to accumulate technology?

- o Do we have an employee (or employees) hired for technology repair and upkeep?  If not, how does this impact my responsibilities?  If yes, what kind of collaborative partnership could I build with him/her?

- **Committees**

    I would begin with a discussion on available committees and the best fit for my skills and goals.

    Questions / Discussion Topics

    - o What committees are available?

    - o What are the responsibilities of the committees?

    - o Which committee would be the best for my skill set?  Which committee would help us reach the goals of the library?

    - o Would an additional committee/committees need to be formed to reach the library mission and goals?

    - o Do we have any student-led committees or committees with equal staff and student collaboration?

**Collaboration Time and Frequency**

I would begin with a discussion on the importance of collaboration and what that could look like from the librarian/library.  I would express that collaboration should happen between staff, students, and families.  Collaboration can help the librarian keep teachers abreast of current best practices, resources, and technology while teachers help the librarian keep abreast of current content standards and classroom expectations as well as activities/events happening in the classrooms.

- **Coteaching Expectation**

    I would first express the benefits of coteaching.  It allows for a more in-depth look at lessons and activities and alleviates teachers' thinking and finding resources on his/her own.  Coteaching can help students learning because of the information and technology expertise librarians possess.  The library also, many times, offers access to more information sources than a typical classroom provides.

    Questions / Discussion Topics

    - Is coteaching possible (based, most likely, on schedule)?
    - How could we make coteaching more of a possibility?
    - How do we get teachers interested in coteaching opportunities?
    - Advocacy for the benefits of coteaching

- **Curriculum Committees**

    Questions / Discussion Topics

    - Is there a curriculum committee?
    - Can I serve on the curriculum committee?

- o   How often does the school obtain new, or add to existing, curriculum?

- o   Are there goals for curriculum replacement, alignment, and acquisition?

- o   The benefits of me serving on the committee

    - ▪   Knowledgeable of current best practices

        - •   Ensuring it supports student-driven inquiry and activities

    - ▪   Knowledgeable of developmentally appropriate activities

    - ▪   How curriculum supports AASL standards

    - ▪   Storage and maintenance of curriculum

**Staffing**

I would express the need for adequate staffing that allows the librarian to teach and be present when students have information needs.  I would express that an aide(s), or volunteers, can help with some of the maintenance tasks (shelving, basic resource location, book repair, etc.).  This would allow me to be more available to help students and staff and to stay engaged in teaching.  It would also allow for students and staff to checkout during all hours of library operation.

- •   **Support Staff**

    Questions / Discussion Topics

    - o   Do we currently employ any support staff?  Is there any potential for the hiring of support staff?  Do I need to, and can I, advocate to the superintendent/Board members the need for support staff?

    - o   What is my role in guiding/managing the support staff?

- o Do we have any library volunteers?  What do interested people need to do to become a volunteer?

- o Advocating for volunteers

    - PTO meetings

    - Meet the Teacher Night

    - Parent Night

    - Literacy Night

- **Flexible Schedule**

    I would express the benefits of flexible scheduling.  This includes being present when students and teachers need to collaborate, need to locate information, or have a question.  It also allows for more coteaching opportunities and offers more time for deeper-learning, student-driven projects.

    Questions / Discussion Topics

    - o What is the current schedule?  How could we work towards flexible scheduling?

    - o Do my classes support teacher plan time?  How could we incorporate another rotation as to not take away from classroom teacher plan time?

    - o How to gather teacher input

    - o Advocacy for flexible scheduling

        - More collaboration time

        - More coteaching opportunities

        - Increased librarian/library availability time

**Facilities**

It may be beneficial to tour the library before, or while, discussing facilities. This may help to point out needs and possibilities.  I will relate the facility set up to whether our mission and goals can be reached with the current setup.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- The need for spaces that support student technology use, student creation of information, student collaboration space, accessibility for all, adult collaboration space, and teaching space
- What changes need to be made to the library?
- Do we have funds to support changes to the library?  How can we acquire funds?
- **Learning Commons**

    I would discuss the need for an area for students and staff to collaborate with their respective peers and with each other.  This includes flexible furniture for different activities and access to technology.

    Questions / Discussion Topics

    - Does the space allow for Learning Commons?  If no, what changes can we make, and what kind of budget do we have?  If we do not have a budget, where can we acquire funds?
- **Makerspaces**

    This discussion is going to depend on what the principal already knows about Makerspaces.  If s/he knows nothing or little, I would explain what a Makerspace is and how it can contribute to S.T.E.A.M. (science, technology, engineering, art, and math).  I would explain the constructivist approach and the need for student-driven inquiry and projects.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- o Would you be willing to incorporate a Makerspace within the library? This would help me know how to further advocate for one.

- o How could we incorporate the use of the Makerspace (flexible scheduling, incorporating times in a fixed schedule, S.T.E.A.M. club, before or after school access, etc.)?

- o How would we acquire the resources for a Makerspace?

- o Advocacy

  - ▪ Benefits of constructing knowledge

  - ▪ Support of 21st Century Skills: collaboration, critical-thinking, design, creativity, discovery, sharing products, etc.

**Open Access for Business Hours of the Library**

Open access relates to flexible scheduling and support staff. Students benefit from having more access to the library because it allows them to access more credible information sources and does not restrict their desire to read. If they are ready to check out a book, they can do it when they are ready. This also allows flexibility for teachers to send their students to the library at a time that works best for their instruction. Access can also be provided online, through the Virtual Learning Commons and links, while students are away from school.

- • **Access to Library and School Librarian Throughout School Day**

  The importance of this is described above. In addition, having more access will allow for more staff and student collaboration. It provides more time to work around instruction, plan times, and activities.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- o With the past librarian/library schedule, was the librarian easily accessible at all times?

- o Does the current schedule restrict student learning and collaboration?

- o What can we do to provide more access?

- o Advocate for access

    - ▪ More coteaching and collaboration opportunities

    - ▪ Easier to allow students to check out books when they, and the teacher, are ready

    - ▪ Students' and teachers' access to quality information and technology

- **Extra Duties**

I understand that most staff positions in the school require extra duties. With that understanding, I would try to ensure the duty did not take away from access to the library. I would also remind the principal of all the responsibilities of the librarian. This would not be an excuse to not have duties but would hopefully serve as a reminder of all the responsibilities within the job and the time it takes.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- o What extra duties are required of me? Are there duties that would least restrict students access to the library?

- **24/7 Access**

I would begin this discussion noting the busy schedules of staff, students, and families.  The library needs to provide access to physical items throughout the school day and offer access to digital items outside of school hours.  This can include Virtual Learning Commons with links to credible resources, ebooks, an online public access catalog, and email.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- o Do we have Virtual Learning Commons?  If so, does it need to be updated?

- o Does our library offer ebooks?  If not, do we have money in the budget to purchase ebooks?

- o Do our staff and students have online access to our collection?  Can students and staff place holds on resources?

- o Do we have an email available for contact?

- **Before and After School Hours**

    Again, students and staff are busy.  The school day is often packed with limited time for the library, exploration, and collaboration.  The open hours of the library may need to adjust to fit users' needs.  Families could also benefit from library resources.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- o What are the current hours?  Is the library open before or after school any time?

- How can we adjust the open times, and paid library staff time, to best meet the needs of students and staff?

- Can our hours be adjusted to accommodate working parents and programs for them?

**Funding**

Funding is crucial to the betterment of the library to keep a current, user-centered collection and to acquire up-to-date technology.  It is also essential to maintain programs and a Makerspace.

- **Title 1**

  Questions / Discussion Topics

  - Are we a Title 1 qualified school? If so, what is the typical amount we are awarded from Title 1?

  - Can any of these funds be used for the library?  How do they decide who receives the funds?

  - Would I work with a district coordinator or a Title 1 specialist to spend funds?

  - What does Title 1 already typically pay for at our school?

  - How to prepare for funds

    - Understand the rules and guidelines of how Title 1 funds can be used

    - Create a prioritized list of needed resources Title 1 funds could supply

- **ESSA**

I will ensure the principal knows what ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) is and that funds can be used to support school library programs.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- Do you have any needed items that could be purchased with ESSA funds that we can use in/through the library?

- Collaboration needs

    - Can I form a committee that gathers input from stakeholders (necessary if applying for ESSA)?

    - Ways to advocate the school library's need for ESSA funds

- **Grants**

    Most of this discussion would involve similar questions / topics as above. Some grants may allow for more flexibility. I would discuss grant opportunities of which the principal is aware and how the library can support overall literacy instruction and content specific instruction.

    Questions / Discussion Topics

- Can collaborative grant committees be formed?

- Will time be given for those who wish to write grants?

- Create a priority list of needs

- **Other**

    The principal and I will discuss other funding options.  This could include fundraisers, book fairs, the parent-teacher organization budget, and more.  We could discuss the possibilities for these along with a library budget creation that would help prioritize what, and how much, we need.

**Collection Development**

Discuss the current collection and its organization.  It may be helpful to do this while discussing facilities.  Discuss the importance of a diverse collection and quality resources.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- o Budget - Provide an approximate budget based on the number of students and resources needed.

- o Return rate - What has been the return rate in the past?

- o Weeding - Discuss his/her thoughts on weeding and what to do with books removed from the library.

- o What is the policy on library fees or charges for lost books?  Is this the least limiting possibility for the students?

- o What is the policy on materials challenged by students, parents, and/or teachers?  Discuss that a policy should be put in place.

- **Diverse Collection**

    I would discuss what a diverse collection means.  I will discuss needed books for content support and reading level support.  I will also ensure that the principal knows diversity includes races, cultures, sexual orientation, differently abled, and more.

- **eBooks**

Discuss that eBooks provide access to many more books than the library can contain.  They can also support a love for reading and lifelong learning as eBooks

can often be quickly found and downloaded.  For younger students, there is also

more potential for eBooks to provide read aloud versions.

Questions / Discussion Topics

- o   Does the budget allow for eBooks?  Do we have the ability to subscribe to

    an eBook source (i.e. Epic, Storia, etc.)?

- o   Assess needs and if we think our school population would use eBooks

**Professional Development and Involvement**

Discuss the need for professional development for me as the librarian as well as

needs the school/district may have.  Discuss professional development needs for the

district (information literacy, technology, S.T.E.A.M., student-driven learning, etc.).  I will

also note the importance of membership in professional organizations that keep me

well-informed on best practices and new resources.

- **Site, local, and National Level**

  Questions / Discussion Topics

  - o   When are professional development opportunities available?

  - o   Are stipends/funds provided for professional development?

  - o   Is there a radius I must stay in when searching for development

      opportunities?

  - o   Professional development needs for the district (information literacy,

      technology, S.T.E.A.M., student-driven learning, etc.).

- **Membership in Organizations**

  Questions / Discussion Topics

o   Does the district pay for / reimburse for membership in professional

organizations?

o   Would you like to be informed of information shared by the organization

that could affect our library and/or the entire school population?

**Evaluations**

- **Librarian**

Questions / Discussion Topics

o   Which evaluation system does the school use?

o   How often will I be evaluated?  Will is be scheduled or pop-in?

- **Library**

It is important that the library evaluates its effectiveness in meeting the

school's needs.  I would discuss the potential for a library evaluation I create.

This could then be used for a strategic plan and future evaluation of the plan's

effectiveness.  I would also discuss how an evaluation could assist us in

advocating for the needs of the library.  Evaluations can also be pulled off of the

cataloging system.

Questions / Discussion Topics

o   Would you want to collaborate on a library evaluation?  What would you

like to see on the evaluation?  Do you need to approve one if I create it?

o   Can I survey stakeholders to create a plan and evaluation?

**Quarterly Reports - Annual Reports**

Initially, I will garner input on if reports are currently required by the principal or the district.  If not, I will mention possible reports (resources checked out, total worth of books that have not been returned, use of Virtual Learning Commons (VLC), etc.) and how the information they provide could be useful (different collection organization for increased checkout, how to replace lost books, making the VLC more appealing, grant writing, etc.).

Questions / Discussion Topics

- o Do you, or the district, require any reports currently?

- o Would you be interested in receiving any reports?  When would you want them?

- o How can we use the reports to advocate library and user needs?

- o Check out what reports are available on the cataloging/circulation system

    - ▪ Amount of certain genres checked out

    - ▪ Amount of children who never/rarely check out books

**Closing**

I would close by asking the principal if s/he had any more comments or questions and thank him/her for the time.  I would leave him/her with an infographic that shows the graphic (below) of AASL standards (American Association of School Librarians, n.d.), so s/he could understand standards of the library.

**What Your School Librarian Can Do for Classroom Teachers Plan**

(This is typed as if I was presenting the information to teachers.  Questions and input

would be welcomed during the presentation.)

**School Librarian as a Member of the Instructional Team**

**Collaboration**

- **Describe Collaboration and What This Looks Like for You**

Teachers, collaboration from me comes in many forms.  It may involve

getting the information resources you need from the library or online.  It may be

helping you find materials, online tools, or apps to help you and/or your students

create.  I will also be happy to work with the principal to organize collaboration

times between you and me, you and your peers, you and your students, or

between students themselves.  I can help with instructional planning, inquiry

lessons, and more.  I would also love to co-teach a lesson or unit with you.

- **Coteaching**

Coteaching can occur in a couple of different ways.  Coteaching can

involve me helping you plan and find materials you need.  You can bring your

students in the library, or I can come to your classroom, for a lesson or an activity

that will aid your project during an available flexible scheduling time.  I can also

join you for a lesson taught concurrently.  Just speak with me about all the

possibilities!

**Technology Integration for Teaching and Learning**

I would love to help you integrate technology into your lessons and activities.

There are hundreds of websites, computer programs, and apps that can help you

transform and add to your lessons.  Students can also create many products to share

their learning in creative ways.  Several of these are listed in our Virtual Learning

Commons (VLC), but you can also come to me for help or an idea.  I also have iPads

and Chromebooks that can be checked out.  You can reserve these on the VLC page or

catch me in the library some time.

**Redesigning Assignments**

In addition to adding technology to enhance lessons, I would love to help you

deepen students' learning in other ways as well.

- **Inquiry and Collaboration**

    Most of you are aware of the benefits of inquiry-based learning.  Inquiry learning is designed around questioning and, preferably, student-directed inquiries.  We can incorporate many content standards with the inquiry approach. I would be happy to help you find those connections or help you add inquiry activities to your lessons.  We can co-plan.  You can also tell me your overall content standard and we can coteach concurrently, or you can bring your students to the library for me to support them in an inquiry-based approach to meet your content standard.

- **Local and Global Sharing**

    Local and global sharing benefits both teachers and students.  We can share each other's creations to enhance the learning of others.  Check out our VLC for shared projects, a place for you to share, or links to projects outside of our school.  Students can also share their projects to our VLC.  This often provides motivation for their efforts as they know someone else can learn from them and see their work.  We also have teacher team tubs and binders in the library for print and artifact sharing.

**Ethical Use of Resources**

We all need a refresher at times on the ethical use of resources.  Please let me know if you have a question on using/copying curriculum, showing a movie, citing sources, etc.  In the library, a big focus is teaching students how to properly use and

share information, what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, and how to cite information.

Please let me know if you, or your students, need more information or resources on this.

**Support for Instruction**

I have spoken a lot on supporting instruction through technology, resources, co-planning, and coteaching. Here is a bit more information.

- **Meeting Curriculum Standards**

    In the library, my main focus is the American Association of School Librarian standards, but I am also here to support you in helping the students meet content standards. I understand the Oklahoma Academic Standards for each grade level and subject. Please let me know what resources we should consider ordering, or subscribe to, in order to help you meet standards. Remember, I can also help with planning and teaching.

- **Shared Teaching Responsibilities**

    This has also been covered (see aforementioned information).

- **Providing Appropriate Resources**

    Again, I am happy to help you find resources to aid, or add to, your lessons and activities. These can be print sources or digital resources. I want to ensure you, and your students, are using sources appropriate for their development level and that are accurate and credible. I teach the students

methods for evaluation and places to find accurate information, too.  Some

resources are also linked within our VLC.

**Learning Commons**

Our library serves as a physical learning commons, and we also have our school

virtual learning commons.  Both places are designed to find, use, create, and share

information.  We can all learn from collaborating with each other.  The commons are

designed around sharing and collaborating.

- **Collaborative Culture**

    I have spoke on collaboration previously.  I want to help create a culture

  where we are all respectful of the input and ideas of others.  This includes all

  staff, students, and families.  We can model this for our students by co-planning

  and coteaching.  Feel free to use the VLC, its resource links, and our

  collaborative space in the library (when available) to collaborate.

- **Inquiry Culture and Students Pursuing Personal Interest**

  We have also spoke on inquiry culture.  Inquiry-driven instruction, and especially

  student-driven inquiry, allow for deeper learning.  Inquiry helps to meet multiple

  standards, and you can build off content you already teach.  Allowing students to

  pursue their personal interests will help with engagement and motivation in

  lessons because they have been given choice.  We can work to allow the

  inquiries to be within the realm of whatever subject you are teaching.  For

  example, an Oklahoma Academic Standard for kindergarten states that students

can use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals need to

survive (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2018).  Allow your student to

form groups based on a specific animal or plant to research.  They can then

collaborate to observe the animal/plant on explore.org, use research sources,

create a presentation with findings, and share the information.  Their personal

animal/plant choice will help them to stay engaged.

**Makerspace**

Our library has a makerspace!  What is a makerspace (I would then pull up video

explaining what a makerspace is)?  Our makerspace use will sometimes be based on a

lesson with certain standards to be met.  Other times, the students will be free to create

whatever they wish with the materials. I will have designated times that I will be using

the makerspace for lessons.  Other times, you may schedule a time for your class, your

student, or a small group to use the makerspace.  We can also collaborate on a lesson

designed for its use.

- **Creative Expression**

    The makerspace allows your students to express their creative side.  This

will employ 21$^{st}$ Century skills like design, collaboration, critical-thinking, and

problem-solving.  Options include digital design, robotics, circuits, sewing, and

more.

- **STEM/STEAM Skills**

The makerspace allows us to delve into STEAM skills. These include science, technology, engineering, art, and math. Many times, using the makerspace hits a portion of all these skills. For example, building a floatable device to test on real water could include science (buoyancy), technology (use Tinkercad to design the structure), engineering (the building of the structure), art (the design of the structure), and math (how much weight can the boat hold). This is just one of many examples.

**Professional Development**

Just as I can retrieve instructional tools and sources for you, I can also try to do the same for professional development resources. I have provided links in the VLC as well as a place for you to share and collaborate resources you find. Please let me know if there are any specific needs you have.

**Access to Resources for Students**

I have spoken about the diverse collection and credible resources provided in-print and digitally to our students. Now, let's speak about access. The goal is to use flexible scheduling (no set class times), so students have more of an opportunity to check out resources and get the assistance they need when they need it. The library will also be open 20 minutes before and after school, so students and their families can come in to browse and check out what they need. The VLC and online public access catalog provide resource links and ebook options online. Many audiobooks can be found through the public library link. We need to discuss the amount of items we are comfortable having students check out. At this time, I would like to allow a maximum of

3 items to be checked out by a child.  This number works with the size of our collection.
If you start noticing students struggle to keep up with these many items, please inform
me.  We can also discuss children checking out more items than three.  Please let me
know your thoughts.

**Reading**

Main goals of the library include creating students who read for pleasure and are
lifelong learners.  We can do this by providing programs and completing everyday
library tasks.  We can also spark enjoyment of reading by ensuring resources represent
a variety of interests.

- **Support More Reading**

    We will have programs and constantly promote reading.  This could be
    through regular happenings like book displays, book talks, read-alouds, features
    on what other staff and students are reading, etc.  Reading promotion could also
    be through challenges (i.e. March Madness, competition to read the most,
    principal's challenge).  Meeting diverse needs and reluctant readers involves a
    few aspects.  Librarians must provide a diverse collection with representations of
    multiple ethnicities, cultures, orientations, abilities, topics, and reading levels.

- **Reader's Advisory**

    Another way to engage the students in reading is by offering a Reader's
    Advisory.  This is a way to connect students with books and resources they may
    enjoy based off interests and other items they have read.  Our school's

Goodreads and public library OPAC link (on the VLC) shows similar books to those searched. I will also host a book club where students can discuss books they enjoy, and I can provide advice.

**Closing**

I know I have provided you with a lot of information today. Now, and always, please come to me with any questions and suggestions. A huge goal of mine is to support a collaborative culture, so I am always open to ideas and suggestions. Come see me or submit feedback, questions, ideas, and more on our VLC.

## Behavior Observations Summary of Students

**Access - Before, During, and After School Hours**

Library access was available during most times during school hours (7:50 AM - 3:00 PM). There were no before or after school hours. The children could be sent to check out a book most any time with the exception of lunch and recess times or when the system/internet was down. This access was for books but not necessarily librarian assistance as she is shared between two schools and is on a fixed teaching schedule. The computer teacher / library aide and Parent Teacher Organization volunteers often assisted with checkout and shelving of books.

**Unrestricted Checkout (Computerized Programs, Labels, Etc.)**

The children are allowed to checkout one book per day. The first graders are required to check out books that match their leveled color dots on Monday through Thursday. These represent a grade level. For example, if students have a blue dot,

they can check out first grade books.  If they have yellow, they can check out second grade books.  There are 5 color dot ranges from kindergarten (includes lower level books as well) to fourth grade level and up.  Some students' cards included multiple dots.  On Friday, students are allowed to check out any book they choose.

The school does not participate in a computerized program.

**Independent Use of Resources vs. Whole Class Checkout**

The only resources available to students for independent checkout are books.  Again, they may visit most anytime they are ready for a book.  This is at the classroom teachers' discretion.

**Student-Centered Learning and Instruction - Collaborative Learning, Interaction Between Students and Students to Teachers**

Students entering for library class often sit at the carpet.  The librarian then delivers the core instruction, reads a book, and discusses with children. She then either plays a video reinforcing the lesson or one that is about the book, or the children do some type of paper activity at tables.  The lessons are mostly based on content standards and are teacher guided. The librarian questions the students and allows them to share their answers/thoughts.  She walks around, observes, and interacts when the children are at tables. Students can quietly visit (and unintentionally collaborate) at the tables while they are working.  Students are in the library for instruction for a fixed time of thirty minutes every other week.

**Collection and Environment Where Students See Themselves**

The collection seems to represent diversity as far as culture, ethnicity, and differently-abled.  I saw books on people and food from different communities and parts of the world.  I saw different skin tones represented and girl and boy genders as main characters.  As far as the environment, there is not much décor, posters, etc.  The environment consists of the furniture, collection, rug, Apple television, circulation desk, student work tables, and the computer lab.

**Available Technology or 1:1 - How is it being used?**

Technology is not available as a 1:1 ratio.  The school does have about 6 iPads for each classroom.  These are checked out at the beginning of the school year to the classrooms and checked back in at the end of the year.  Classroom teachers decide if and how the iPads are used.  The computer lab is in the library but is offered as a fixed class, separate from library class, for 30 minutes every week.  They are not used in any other way.

**Makerspace Activities**

Currently, there is no makerspace or makerspace type activities in their library.

**OPAC Searching**

OPAC searching is not available to students.  They can ask the person at the circulation desk for a title, topic, genre, etc., and that person can search.

**Charging Stations**

The library does not have charging stations.  They do provide charging stations that are sent with the iPads checked out to classroom teachers.  The computers are plugged into electrical outlets.

**Interaction with School Librarians**

The school has one librarian who is shared with another elementary school.  The library also has a computer teacher/library aide and PTO volunteers.  Students' interaction with the librarian typically occurs either when they are checking out materials from her or when she is having class.  Due to the number of students checking out books, the interaction I witnessed was typically short, small talk (i.e. asking how they were and commenting on the book choice).  During instruction, interaction was typically through questions and answers, commenting on a child's work, and giving directions.

**Interaction with Other Students**

In the beginning of the lessons, students could pick a spot on the rug.  This, sometimes, resulted in students trying to quickly work together to sit by their "friends."  During instruction and book reading, children were not allowed to interact with others besides rare small comments based on another child's answer/thoughts.  If the students went to the tables to work, they could sometimes visit or discuss each other's work.  If it was deemed too noisy by the librarian, she would tell them to quiet down.

**Students Using Space for Small Group Collaborative Efforts**

Collaboration was not intentionally built into the lesson.  Students would sometimes discuss the work of others, but each had their individual assignment.  There

were a couple first graders who showed other students book excerpts.  A couple

students also helped others read from thier books.  This collaboration was spontaneous

and not built into the lesson.

**Narrative**

Overall, the library situation could be improved to be more student-centered.

They do some things well.  This includes the nearly fulltime access to checking out

books.  Although, students are limited to one book at a time.  At least, they have the

possibility of going each day.  The librarian also considers both literacy content and

American Association of School Librarian standards.  This builds the students' reading,

writing, and information abilities.  Lastly, the library offers an overall positive

environment.  The students are excited to visit the library to choose a book.  They seem

attentive during lessons and appreciate that they can visit a bit while working.  Positives

exist, but there are several areas of improvement.

The library could use both some minor and major changes.  Many of the

restrictions exist because the librarian is shared between two schools.  Ultimately, it

would be best if the school could hire a full-time librarian.  As that is a major change that

must be decided by administration, a focus can be on changes within the control of the

principal and librarian.  Book level labels and labels designating what students can

check out can be removed.  The students would not be limited on the books they can

choose and can, instead, learn how to choose a book that is right for them on their own.

Lessons can be more student-driven and allow for more collaboration.  Student-driven

would be difficult as classes are only thirty minutes every other week.  However, their

interests could be incorporated.  Collaboration would be easier to implement with more

discussion and open-ended projects.  This could also be enhanced with makerspace

and technology opportunities. Overall, the librarian, administration, and teachers should

collaborate to garner student input and reflect on what is best for students.  Minor

changes could be implanted quickly, while others could result from long-term planning.

### Observation of School Librarian Teaching

### Overview

I observed two lessons. One lesson was completed with pre-kindergarten

students and was an overview of fairy tales.  The other lesson was conducted with first

graders, and the topic was biographies.  Each lesson lasted approximately thirty

minutes.  The classroom teacher did not stay with the first-grade class.  A pre-

kindergarten aide stayed with the pre-kindergarteners.

### Instructional Strategies, Integration of Technology, and Student Engagement

For each lesson, students came into the library and sat on a rug in front of the

librarian and an Apple TV.  The librarian started each lesson by introducing each genre

(fairy tales to pre-kindergarteners and biography to first graders).  She provided details

on book characteristics that fairy tales and biographies possess.  She then showed a

book and they found some of the details together (magic, the occurrence of three, real

people, facts, etc.) with the children either calling out what they saw or with the librarian

calling on a child to share.  The librarian then read the books and asked questions

afterwards.  The librarian read *The Three Little Pigs* to the pre-kindergarteners and then

showed a short movie (about 7 minutes) to the group.  After a bit more discussion it was

time for the pre-kindergarten students to return to class.  After the first-grade group

listened to a biography read-aloud, the librarian presented a tub of biographies.  Each

child chose a book and completed a paper.  The one sentence on the paper was a fill in

the blank that read, "This biography is about _____."  The children wrote the name

of the person and drew a picture from the book.  The instructional strategies included:

lecture, video integration, question and answer, discussion, hands-on manipulation of

books, and paperwork.

**Presence of Collaboration and Inquiry**

There was very minimal collaboration and inquiry witnessed during the lessons.

The librarian did not collaborate with teachers.  Perhaps, students answering questions

could be considered collaboration to some extent as they added to the learning of

others with their answers and discussion.  A slight amount of inquiry existed as students

looked through (and some read) the chosen biographies.  This was very much self-

guided as children were not directed to complete any task other than looking through

the books, finding the name of the person, writing the name of the person, and drawing

a photo.  The inquiry did lead to some of the students collaborating to share the

information they found or ask for another student to help read.

**Instructional Resources Used**

The librarian used a few resources for the lessons.  For the pre-kindergarten

lesson, she used a book as well as an Apple TV with a short YouTube video.  For the

first graders, she used books, and the children used paper and pencils.  Each lesson

also included the use of an index card with the words "fairy tale" and "bibliography."

She added each of these words to a word wall that listed vocabulary from her past lessons.

**Coteaching**

For the most part, coteaching did not occur.  As aforementioned, the first-grade teacher dropped her class off and left.  The pre-kindergarten aide that stayed did help with behavior management.  If a child could not listen with a reminder from the librarian, the aide assisted by reminding the child, physically sitting with the child, or being present near a child who needed some movement.  The classroom teachers and aide did not help with planning or teaching.

**Integrated Content**

Oklahoma Academic English Language Arts standards were integrated with the library lessons.  The pre-kindergarten lesson included standards such as actively listening and speaking using agreed-upon rules, asking and answering questions, book orientation skills, and answering basic questions from text.  The first-grade lesson integrated reading and writing standards.  For example, the lesson included distinguishing nonfiction texts, answering basic questions, identifying the purpose of text reference sources, and using resources to find correct spelling of words (i.e. the subject's name in the biographies) (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2018).  Several reading and one writing Oklahoma Academic Standard were incorporated in the lessons.

**Facility Evaluation**

**Computer Generated Floor Plan**

Current Floor Plan



The current floor plan serves several purposes.  The library contains the school's

computer lab, and this setup limits space for additional library uses.  The technology

(computers) are separate from the teaching area, and this makes it difficult to

incorporate into lessons or allow as-needed access.  There is plenty of space and

shelving to hold the library's book collection.  There is also space that allows for whole-

group teaching, student collaboration, and independent work.  The circle tables do not

allow for a lot of flexibility as they cannot be pushed flush together.  The library also

lacks a makerspace.  The storage is dedicated to books and teacher materials, so this

leaves very little to no room for makerspace materials.  There are also no comfortable

spaces to relax and read.  The library does allow for movement and access, and the

shelving is well adjusted to students' heights.  The setup of the library is mostly

dedicated to checkout, computer lab class times, and teacher-led learning.

Changed Floor Plan

If possible, I would make the changes pictured above.  I would add areas and furniture that support different uses of the library.  As Sullivan (2011) notes, librarians should ensure the library space is flexible with areas for multiple learning and teaching styles, collaboration, project-based learning, lounging, and more.  In my updated layout, the collection is still supported with plenty of shelving.  I have placed a majority of the shelving on one side of the library and have added comfortable seating for children to sit at and read if they wish.  They could also share books, collaborate, and discuss in this area.  At times, it would be designated as a quieter place while students read.  I have moved the instructional rug area and replaced the Apple TV with a SMART Board to allow for more interaction.  I have also changed the round tables to square tables with wheels.  This makes the space more flexible for various uses and possible larger group collaboration.  It would be ideal if the computer lab was moved to a different room.  I have left some desktop computers and added iPads.  These could be used for instructional activities, as-needed access, makerspace activities, and online public access catalog searching.  Lastly, I have added tables and storage designated for a

makerspace.  These tables could also be moved to allow for more space and/or

collaboration.  These spaces are designated for students; however, the flexibility allows

for teachers to read, collaborate, and use the available technology.  The circulation desk

and area have remained the same.  Overall, the main goal of the changes was to allow

for more uses of the library and flexibility.

| Space | Maximum Number of Persons | Minimum Space Requirement | Types of Needed Furniture |
|---|---|---|---|
| Collection | 35 | 220 ft$^2$ | shelving (13 shelves); 1 cabinet; 1 closet |
| Comfy Reading Space | 13 | 35 ft$^2$ | 4 square, cushioned seat stools; 5 round, cushioned stools |
| Instructional Area | 30 | 120 ft$^2$ | rug; SMART Board; 5 tables with wheels; 30 student chairs or stools; 2 double electrical outlets; digital connectivity |
| Technology Area | 20 | 242 ft$^2$ | 8 desktop computers; 9+ tablets; 4 tables; 5 double electrical outlets; 2 charging stations; wifi connectivity; 20 student chairs; digital connectivity |
| Makerspace | 20+ | 140 ft$^2$ | 2 rectangular tables (tables from the instructional area could be moved/used to accommodate more makers); one shelf; cabinet; technology can also be used for making; 15 stools or |

| | | | chairs (more can be pulled from instructional area, others can stand and work) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Circulation Area | 4 | 64 ft$^2$ | 3 shelves (2 backsides are used for collection); 1 shelf is used as checkout desk; 1 teacher desk; 2 or 3 adult chairs; 1 computer; 1 double electrical outlet |

## Collection Volumes Per Section and Shelving

The current library consists of nonfiction and fiction sections. The current librarian noted she removed all periodicals because of the age of them and the ages of children the school serves. She estimates the book collection to be around 9,000 titles with the collection split near evenly between fiction and nonfiction titles. There are currently 13 shelves dedicated to the collection. The library also holds the instructional student readers in the closet and has one cabinet with drawers that holds DVDs and movies.

## Spatial Considerations

Both the current model and the changed model considered spatial relations. The current model does allow for more free flow space; however, it lacks spaces for multiple uses. The changed model is a bit more crowded but allows for students and classes to still maneuver through the areas. The wheeled tables and relatively lightweight seating allow for accommodations as well.

**Personnel - Certified and Para Professional**

Currently, the librarian is split between two schools.  She is at this school every other week.  The school also has one support staff employee to work some clerical aspects of the library.  The support staff employee assists with resource locating, checkout, shelving, and minor technology issues.  She is also employed to oversee computer lab use.  Lastly, the library has two or three occasional volunteers from the school's Parent-Teacher Organization.  These volunteers checked books in and out and shelved returned books.

**Cost Estimate of One Section of the Library**

The librarian estimates the nonfiction section of the library has about $95,000 invested in it.  These costs include books and shelves.  According to the library's current librarian, the average nonfiction book costs is $20.  The estimated cost of the collection of the books is $90,000, and the cost for the shelves containing the nonfiction titles is approximately $4,500.  The librarian did not have exact numbers, so she provided estimates.

**Record of Visits**

As this library is located in my current workplace, I have visited many times.  The accumulated time would equal over six hours (at least).  I have observed various library activities and tasks including checkout, instruction, book fairs, and times with no set tasks.  I have documented two lessons that I have watched in entirety.

| Grade Level | Time Spent | Lesson Topic / Results of Time In Library | Activities |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-Kindergarten | 30 minutes | Identification of Fairy Tales | librarian lecture, librarian read-aloud, librarian questioning and student answering, students view a video of fairy tale story, addition of fairy tale index card to word wall |
| First Grade | 30 minutes | Identification of Biographies | librarian lecture, librarian read-aloud, librarian questioning and student answering, students' examination of chosen biography, student fill-in-the-blank with biography subjects' name, students draw picture of subject |
| Kindergarten and First Grade | 2.5 hours (accumulative) | Returning and Checking Out Books | students returning books by placing in wagon, students perusing shelves to find books, students using shelf markers when looking for books, students waiting in line with chosen book, librarian, aide, or volunteer greeting children and checking out books, students meandering in library, students conversing in library |
| Book Fair | 1.5 hours (accumulative) | Creating Wish Lists and Purchasing Books | volunteers assisting children in finding books they would like to purchase |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | (volunteers wrote book titles as children found them), teachers creating wish list slips for donors, students and families purchasing books from book fair |
| No Set Task Times | 1+ hours | Various | teachers expressing to the librarian resource needs, shelving books, students occasionally checking out books, librarian speaking to book distributor about needed book fair books, families paying for missing books |

## Summary

The observed library is located in a suburban area about 20 minutes east of Oklahoma City. The school is designated as a Title 1 school. This means at least 40% of the school's students come from low-income families. The district serves a wide-ranging population with wealthy neighborhoods and low-income populations. The majority of the school's population is Caucasian with the next closest ethnicity being Native American.

An overarching philosophy of the school is to teach the whole child. Their mission statement reads, "Provide an atmosphere enriched with opportunities to help each child develop his or her academic, emotional, physical and social potential"

(Harrah Public Schools, 2019).  The school has regular education classrooms serving developmentally delayed pre-kindergarteners through first graders.  They offer special education pullout classes, music, physical education, computers, guidance, and library classes.

As has been noted in previous sections, the district lacks commitment to ensuring libraries are fully staffed and have all the resources and services they need.  This includes the area of personnel.  The district does not have a library coordinator.  They do not have full-time librarians at any of their five school sites.  This makes it difficult to ensure quality instruction, programs, and events as there is a lack of oversight, advocacy, continuity, and time.  The acquisition of certified, full-time librarians at each site would be the first step to quality library services.

The interview with the librarian and observations provide for further evaluation and reflection.  The librarian notes that the most challenging part of her job is having to be the librarian at two schools.  For both schools, she is in charge of instructing classes, circulation, acquisition of books and materials, book fairs, fundraising, and general management.  This does not allow for much collaboration time and more in-depth projects with students.  She is also left out of Professional Learning Community collaboration times as she is part of the rotation to cover classes. Collaboration is an essential part of the librarian's role.  With collaboration s/he can assist teachers in understanding current resources and technology, teaching content standards, helping to incorporate inquiry, and enhancing lessons and activities overall.

The use of technology is also limited. The only technology used during library instruction time is the Apple TV. This limits student interaction. They are not allowed to use the computers for library instruction or inquiry-driven activities because the computers are reserved for computer lab times. The students' information gathering practices within the library only consists of the use of print materials. This does not aide in their accumulation of 21st Century skills.

In the observed library, information was mostly acquired through teacher lecture, read-alouds, book examination, and video. The library did not allow for the creation of knowledge through hands-on making. The librarian noted this was because of the lack of time with 30-minute classes. The construction of information is essential. Abram (2013) notes that the U.S. is regularly described as being "behind" other countries in the areas of thinking critically, problem-solving, and collaboration. He notes makerspaces provide for this creativity, prototyping, exploring, failing, retrying, and collaboration. With the current library setup and scheduling, students lack these opportunities.

The lessons I observed were certainly limited by the 30-minute class times every other week. The librarian did well to incorporate content standards within the lesson and held the students' interests well. Her classroom management strategies were effective. The timeframe does not allow for an in-depth, hands-on activities with the lessons. I did appreciate that the children were allowed to choose the biography to examine. This provided for some student-inquiry and deeper engagement because they chose the person to read about. A flexible schedule would benefit this library because the students could participate in deeper learning activities and longer inquiry-driven projects.

The library portrays both positives and negatives.  The limited personnel and class time create the most challenges.  The librarian seems knowledgeable of best practices but cannot find ways to overcome those challenges.  The students had a positive reaction to coming to the library because it is a positive atmosphere, and many of their reactions to the lessons were engaged and positive.  The library's practice of everyday checkout at most times during the day is also a positive.  While first grade is limited by levels, except on Friday, they are still excited to check out books.  Yes, this library could use many changes to ensure best practice.  The superintendent and Board are going to have to understand the value of libraries and full-time, certified librarians.  Advocacy needs to become a priority, so that those in charge can understand the difference libraries and librarians can make for students and all stakeholders.

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