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SLM 501 Administration and Leadership

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Assignment 3- Advocacy Plan

Collaboration with Librarian

Conversations With My Community

As the school librarian at Twin Ridge Elementary School (TRES), I have reflected on ways to best advocate for the school library. After engaging in many conversations with the administration, the classroom teachers, my media supervisor, my mentor librarian, and the music and P.E. teachers, I plan on strengthening the role of the school library at TRES. Previously, the school library was primarily a place to check out books. The former school librarian did an excellent job of curating library resources and maintaining a quality library collection. However, based on conversations with others in the school community, I was left with the impression that the school library was disconnected from the rest of the school and was not a place for vibrant instruction. The school librarian was not sought after to strengthen students' literacy skills or to meet teachers' curriculum needs. Therefore, as the new school librarian, I seek to create an Advocacy Plan that will elevate the school library at Twin Ridge Elementary School by increasing its role in the school community.

Advocacy Ideas

Below is a brainstorming list of library advocacy ideas that could strengthen the role of the school library at Twin Ridge Elementary School. These ideas meet the needs of students, teachers, or the community.

Advocacy Brainstorming List for Twin Ridge Elementary School's School Library

- Increase collaboration with teachers to support classroom content while teaching FCPS library media standards
- Teach students specific literacy skills in the library
- Introduce inquiry-based learning projects for all grade levels
- Use Makerspaces for inquiry-based learning
- Plan library literacy nights and library literacy breakfasts to strengthen the role of the school library in the community
- Have virtual and in-person bookfairs to increase the role of the library in the school community
- Increase reading for enjoyment through book tastings, author visits, book promotions, book scavenger hunts, and student-created book commercials
- Teach professional development sessions on the following subjects: Fair Use and Balanced Copyright; First Amendment Rights; Students' Right to Choose; Intellectual Freedom; Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (including e-resources for students with special needs)

Discussion with a Colleague

To narrow down this list, I spoke with Ms. Carrie Houghton—a fellow elementary school librarian in Frederick County Public Schools. I told her about my frustration with not adequately knowing what my students can do academically during media classes. Often my expectations are too high for what my students can accomplish. Since, I see each class of students only once-a-week, it has taken me a while to get to know what each group can accomplish academically. What takes a classroom teacher days to figure out, takes me months. I told Ms. Houghton that even though I repeat the same lesson for the same grade level, certain classes will respond differently depending on the students or whether or not the teacher has taught the material.

Sometimes I find that the worksheet I have created to guide student research is too difficult. Other times, I will read a book to my kindergarten and first grade students only to find out their teacher just read the book. My expressed frustration highlighted an urgent need—collaboration. To strengthen my role as a teacher and instructional partner in the school, I must know *what* teachers are teaching in their classrooms and *when* they are teaching it. I also must know more about the ability levels of students so that I can create more meaningful tasks to guide student learning.

Since I am a school librarian, my purpose in student instruction is not the same as that of a classroom teacher. Ms. Houghton reminded me that school librarians should not teach the content information in the same way that a classroom teacher would teach it. Even so, we discussed how sometimes re-teaching classroom skills is crucial to be able to teach our library media curriculum. For instance, a school librarian may have to re-teach nonfiction text features before having students compare and contrast how databases incorporate nonfiction text features on their programs.

I informed Ms. Houghton that my desire is to approach the grade-level concepts from an inquiry-based learning perspective. I was inspired to use inquiry-based learning in the library after reading Barbara K. Stripling's article, "Advocating For the 'Why' of School Libraries: Empowering Students Through Inquiry." I believe that if inquiry-based learning is introduced into the school library for the purpose of improving literacy skills and to support classroom curriculum concepts, then both the role of the school library and the role of the school librarian will be elevated and strengthened at Twin Ridge Elementary School. Ms. Houghton advised that when I collaborate with teachers, I must be the one to set the parameters of collaboration. If I do

not create guardrails to guide collaboration teachers will think that I am going to teach their curriculum content the same way that they would but in the library.

Target Audience and Stakeholders

While students will be the ones to benefit from the collaboration between the school librarian and classroom teachers, students are not actually the target audience. Since, I am wanting to use the school librarian as an instructional partner at Twin Ridge Elementary School, my target audience is, in actuality, the classroom teachers. I must convince them that the school librarian can be used in ways that support both their needs and the needs of our students. In order to convince teachers, I must first be willing to listen to their needs.

I was fortunate to have a forty-five-minute discussion with Sarah Bellanca—a first grade teacher at Twin Ridge Elementary School— where I listened to her explain the instructional needs the teachers have in our school. She informed me that with the sudden return to full phonics instruction, teachers in grades K-2 have very little time to teach comprehension skills to students. She asked if there was a way I could teach comprehension skills through inquiry-based learning. She also informed me that if I taught comprehension skills in the school library, I would not have to worry about overlapping my lessons with what they are teaching in the classroom. She also showed me how to access the teacher’s pacing guides so I know what teachers are teaching in the classroom. She explained that this resource would be vital for me to access, especially when I am unable to meet with teachers face-to-face.

As a result of our discussion, I began to look for practical resources that will teach comprehension strategies through inquiry-based learning. The ESL teacher, Tracy Entwistle, provided me with a copy of the text, *Comprehension Connections: Bridges to Strategic Reading*

by Tammy McGregor. This text provides excellent hands-on object lessons which build the questioning skills necessary for inquiry-based learning.

I also spent time considering which inquiry-based learning models would be the most effective. Lori E. Donovan in Chapter 2 of *AASL Shared Foundations: Inquire*, provides examples of inquiry-based models including the Guided Inquiry Design, Big6, the Stripling Model of Inquiry, Why? What if? How? and See, Think, Wonder (10-18). While I am eager to one day implement all these inquiry-based models, I believe the Why? What if? How? and the See, Think Wonder models, would be the perfect inquiry-based models to begin inquiry-based learning at Twin Ridge Elementary School (16-18). I look forward to explaining both inquiry-based learning methods to teachers and administration through future emails and collaboration meetings.

For my Advocacy Plan to be effective, I must get the support of stakeholders at Twin Ridge Elementary School. While I am beginning to collaborate with teachers in the building, I know I have a long way to go to accomplish my goal. The administration and other teachers must be on-board with strengthening the role of the library and the school librarian. Without their support, it will be difficult to implement the Advocacy Plan.

Strategies for a Specific Audience

Ms. Houghton reminded me that often collaboration is difficult to put in place due to time restrictions. Teachers do not have time to meet with the school librarian and we do not have time to go to their planning meetings. I suggested that I could navigate this issue by meeting with team leaders (instead of each teacher) and then communicate with individual teachers via email when necessary. We concluded our conversation that if this plan is successful, the relationship

between the library and classroom would be strengthened and students would enjoy learning curriculum content through inquiry-based learning instead of through traditional means.

Advocacy Plan

Goal: To collaborate with teachers and use inquiry-based learning in the school library to improve students' literacy skills and to support classroom instruction.

Objective #1:

- During the fourth quarter of the 2021-2022 school year, the school librarian will meet with a team leader from each grade level to discuss four important literacy skills—one skill for each quarter—that could be targeted in the library through inquiry-based learning during the 2022-2023 school year.

Purpose:

- To demonstrate that the school library will work with classroom teachers to strengthen specific literacy skills.

Expected Positive Results:

- The school librarian will strengthen the role of the library in the school community.
- The school librarian will teach specific literacy skills that will support struggling students.

Objective #2:

- During the 2022-2023 school year, the school librarian will meet quarterly with a team leader from every grade level to discuss which classroom curriculum concepts (i.e., social studies, science, or ELA) could be re-enforced in the school library through inquiry-based learning while teaching FCPS media curriculum standards. The school librarian and grade-level team leader will develop a timeline of when the concept(s) will be taught in the library during the quarter so it will co-ordinate with classroom instruction.

Purpose:

- To demonstrate that the FCPS media curriculum can support classroom curriculum concepts.
- To demonstrate that inquiry-based learning can meet the needs of the classroom curriculum.
- To demonstrate that the school library can meet the needs of teachers and students.

Expected Positive Results:

- The school librarian will strengthen the role of the library in the school community.
- Students will notice a connection between what they learn in the classroom and in the school library.
- Teachers will be supported by the school library.
- Students will have more opportunities to learn specific skills.

- Students will experience inquiry-based learning.

Key Message: Inquiry-based learning in the school library improves students' literacy skills and supports the classroom curriculum.

Negative Effects If Goal Is Not Achieved:

- Students will not receive cohesive instruction from the school library and classroom.
- The school library will remain a separate offshoot from the school.
- The school librarian's lessons will not meet the specific academic needs of the class.
- Students will not experience inquiry-based learning which helps to foster a desire to learn for the sake of pursuing knowledge.

Target Audience:

Teachers

Teachers Should Care About the Advocacy Plan because:

- The school librarian can support teachers and students.
- Through collaboration, students' literacy skills will be re-enforced in the library.
- Through collaboration, classroom curriculum content will be re-enforced in the library through inquiry-based learning.

Teachers will:

- Feel supported by the school librarian.
- Be made aware of library resources that can support their instruction.
- Have a better understanding of the role of the school librarian.
- Desire to continue to collaborate with school librarian.
- Think of other ways to foster collaboration between the school library and the classroom.

Strategies:

- Sample lessons of past collaborations. Currently, I am collaborating with 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade teachers to reinforce concepts in the school library. I will share with teachers the successful ways I have collaborated with grade levels during the 2021-2022 school year.
- Examples of inquiry-based learning ideas that could benefit their subject areas.
- Examples of literacy-based lessons that I could teach in the school library.

Timeline:

The school librarian will initiate the Advocacy Plan in the Spring of 2022 and will continue it throughout the 2022-2023 school year. If the Advocacy Plan is successful, the school librarian will meet with one teacher from each grade level in the fourth quarter of the 2022-2023 school year to discuss any changes to the four literacy goals that should be re-enforced in the library for the 2023-2024 school year. The school librarian will then meet quarterly with team leaders during the 2023-2024 school year to discuss curriculum concepts that could be re-enforced through inquiry-based learning in the school library.

Evaluation:

Quantitative:

- In May 2023, the school librarian and teachers will look at assessments to see if there was an increase in student achievement in the literacy skills and curriculum content where there was collaboration.

Qualitative:

- In May 2023, a Google Form, will be sent to teachers inquiring if their students' literacy skills were more supported by the school library than in past years. In the same Google Form teachers will be asked if inquiry-based lessons and projects in the library supported their teaching of curriculum concepts

Campaign Materials

Collaborating with Your Teacher Librarian Video

Below is a promotional video demonstrating how library media specialists can collaborate with teachers to create a more meaningful experience for students. In the video, library media specialists explain how the library should be more than a place to check out books. I am interested in using the video to kick off my advocacy campaign in order to encourage the school community to consider using the library media specialist and the school library in a new and powerful way.

<https://youtu.be/Im7NcPEa2jE>

#Together With the Library

Below are two resources—both of which I created. The presentation and the infographic explain my desire to be an instructional partner at Twin Ridge Elementary School. I plan on emailing a copy of the presentation to all teachers and administrators. I plan on color photocopying the infographic and putting them in the teachers' mailboxes.

[#Together With the Library Presentation](#)

[#Together With the Library Infographic](#)

Advocacy Ideas

To continue collaboration between the school librarian and the classroom for the purposes of fostering inquiry-based learning and strengthening literacy skills I plan on implementing the following advocacy ideas:

Displays in the Media Center

The ALA resource, “Fun and Effective Strategies for Frontline Advocacy,” recommends using displays to promote the learning that has occurred in the school library. I plan to take pictures of students engaged in the inquiry-based learning activities that occurred as a result of collaboration between the classroom and the school library. Any permanent work that can be saved and put in the display cases will be displayed for the school community to view.

Night in the Media Center

Students, staff, and parents will be encouraged to come to the school library (referred to as the media center at Twin Ridge Elementary School) “at night” to see the collaboration projects that resulted from collaboration between teachers and the school librarian.

Media Mornings

Quarterly, students, parents, and teachers will be invited to visit the school library before school begins to experience the learning activities that have occurred in the school library. Parents will be made aware of the literacy skills and curriculum content that have been taught in the classroom and re-enforced in the school library during media classes. Parents will also be introduced to the Makerspace centers in the school library.

Library News and Stakeholders

According to the AASL Advocacy Toolkit, it is important to add stakeholders to all library news information (4). I plan to provide a copy to the administration of all emails, Google Forms, presentations, infographics, and newsletters, so that they develop an awareness of how the role of the school library is becoming integral to educational instruction at Twin Ridge Elementary School.

Works Cited

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