Ohio Educational Library Media Association

17 South High Street - Suite 200
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614.228.4733 - Fax: 614.221.1989
Email: kate@assnoffices.com

Organizational information is available on the OELMA Website: www.oelma.org

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Ohio Educational Library Media Association
17 South High Street – Suite 200
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614.228.4733 – Fax: 614.221.1989
Email: kate@assnoffices.com

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Online access to current and archival issues is available for members only through the OELMA Website at www.oelma.org. Members will need to use their OELMA user ID and password.
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From the Keyboard of OELMA President Susan Yutzey

Spectrum 2014 is all about school and public librarians as agents of collaboration. When Mark Tuel, editor of the Spectrum, asked me to write From the Keyboard of… I was excited to do so because I believe in the often-quoted phrase “collaboration divides the task and multiplies the success.” Success in this context is more than a numbers game—it has to do with respect, flexibility, compromise, responsibility, and valuing the individual contributions made by each team member. By emphasizing these skills and dispositions in our professional lives we model them for our students whose futures will be marked by an increasing need for collaboration across continents. As I think back to my career as Director of the Learning Center at Upper Arlington High School, I am reminded of our 50th Anniversary Celebration of To Kill a Mockingbird in which the high school librarians and English/Language Arts teachers collaborated with the Upper Arlington Public Library to create a month-long celebration of Harper Lee’s classic. Our student book club was enriched by the collaboration between the Upper Arlington Public Library youth services librarians, the high school librarians, and our students who showed up once a month at 7:00 A.M. for bagels (provided by the Friends of the Library) and books. In our collaboration we divided the task and we multiplied the success.

Beyond the array of articles about successful school and public library collaborations, you will see the results of a major collaboration – the 2015-2017 OELMA Strategic Plan [see p. 71]. Photos of OELMA current and past board members and INFOhio Executive Director Terri Fredericka capture the spirit of the day-and-a-half meeting in June. The strategic plan documents are the product of intense conversation and deliberation in which participants demonstrated respect, flexibility, compromise, responsibility and valuing the individual contributions of each. As you scan the 2015-2017 OELMA Strategic Plan in preparation for the annual meeting at the 2014 OELMA Conference, note that a number of the initiatives will require collaboration particularly as OELMA looks outward to other associations and stakeholders to advance its mission – “to meet the needs of Ohio’s learners as we advocate for and provide professional development to school librarians.”

Enjoy this issue of the Spectrum. Mark Tuel has done a fabulous job of selecting articles that embrace the strengths of the school and public librarian collaboration.

Susan Yutzey

Discussion at this summer’s OELMA strategic planning meeting.
—Photo by Susan Yutzey
Talking ’bout Collaboration

by Janet Ingraham Dwyer, Library Consultant, State Library of Ohio and
Cherie Pandora, Educational Consultant and Former School Librarian

Abstract
Libraries and librarians derive great value from their collaborations, but they can gain even more by communicating about their collaborations to the wider library, school, and community audiences. By sharing their stories and experiences of collaboration, librarians benefit their advocacy efforts, create positive PR opportunities, and contribute to the library and education professions. This article incorporates a summary of survey responses from Ohio school and public librarians on their collaboration experiences as well as the authors’ assessments and recommendations.

Introduction
What are the advantages to collaborating with a library colleague? From personal experience we know that collaboration benefits librarians. Collaborating can save time and money, and it provides a friend who helps to ease the workload. When librarians collaborate, they build a great relationship with someone who truly understands the wonderful world of libraries and gain a colleague who understands the problems, frustrations, and successes of library work. As state monies have decreased, both school and public libraries have suffered cutbacks in money allocated for staff and resources. Collaboration provides an ally who is used to working with few staff and less money; someone who can act as a sounding board for testing new ideas, promoting common goals, and brainstorming solutions to common problems. The school librarian is frequently the only person in the building – or the district – with responsibility for, knowledge of, and passion for the library program; the advantages of a colleague who understands and cares about libraries cannot be overstated.

Why should school and public librarians work together? The public greatly supports such collaboration according to the 2013 Pew Research Center study “Library Services in the Digital Age” which found that “85% of Americans ages 16 and older say that libraries should ‘definitely’ coordinate services more closely with local schools” (Zickuhr, Rainie, & Purcell, 2013, ¶ 6). While the Pew study surveyed the general public, School Library Journal (SLJ) surveyed the staff of public libraries. Reporting their findings in the May 2012 issue of SLJ, Rebecca T. Miller and Laura Girmscheid reported that “only 30 percent of respondents say their library collaborates with local schools to coordinate book purchases to support the curriculum—leaving 70 percent that don’t” (2012, p. 26). In her editorial for that same issue entitled “We Need Tag-Team Leadership,” Miller discloses that homework assignments are seldom the object of collaboration. In the SLJ survey only 9 percent of public librarians reported working with teachers or school librarians on this essential task (Miller, 2012, p. 11). We were surprised by the statistics collected by both studies and decided to do a survey of our own concentrating on librarians in the state of Ohio.

We created a short, 10-question survey that was sent to both school and public library listerservs in Ohio (OELMA, INFOhio, and Library Youth Services) to learn more about collaborative efforts
in our state. (Please see Appendix A for the survey instrument.) We wanted to learn about experiences from our best sources, those in the field who strive each day to improve services to and resources for their patrons.

Analysis of Survey Results

We received 98 responses to our opt-in survey, including 63 (64%) school librarians and 35 (36%) public librarians. Of these, 79% indicated that they do some form of collaboration while 21% responded that they do not collaborate. Those who did not collaborate were asked to identify the barriers that hindered such collegial work. Many cited multiple barriers to collaboration. Librarians indicated that the lack of time (50%) and lack of staff (55%) were the greatest barriers to collaborative work. Twenty-seven percent said that they had never attempted to collaborate while 14% did not perceive it as necessary. Other responses included lack of capacity for taking on new projects, inability of the counterpart librarian to participate, and mismatched expectations based on differences between the realities of school and public library work.

Those who did collaborate were invited to describe their collaborations. They shared an impressive, encouraging variety of projects and practices, including help with research assignments, sharing online research resources, and working together on recommended reading lists and summer reading lists. Literacy efforts were further enhanced through book clubs, Skype author visits, and storytimes for kindergarten students. Some public libraries lend books via interlibrary loan while others provide Book Looks for teachers or share the 3D printer from their tech center. Movie nights with pizza, creating a teen café, and Lunch in the Library with Wii games were other joint projects. Kate McCartney at Marysville Public Library described participating in book talks in the middle school library, digital access card sign-ups at the middle and high schools, and at the high school, an all-day opportunity for students to “learn about devices and digital offerings from the public library.” Diana Polston described being a mentor for an after-school anime/manga club to which “the public librarian would come, bring new books and discuss anime/manga with the students [who] loved it.”

While the SLJ survey found little evidence of libraries coordinating book purchases, some of our survey respondents noted that the public library helped to fill gaps in the collection. This aspect of collaboration is perhaps especially important given the Common Core demand that schools use more nonfiction books in teaching and assigned reading; many school libraries have to rely on public libraries for added books. Roberta Armstrong at Ripley Union Lewis Huntington SD articulated the benefit of sharing collections: “Because our budget is limited, we sometimes do not have the selection our students prefer, so our public library sends books from their YA section to our middle school and we circulate the books.”

We know that school librarians and librarians from public libraries collaborate. Unfortunately, when we searched for examples to highlight for conference presentations at the OELMA, AASL, and PLA (Public Library Association) conferences, we found little evidence online of the many wonderful programs and partnerships that we know have occurred. Busy librarians would love to be able to learn more about others’ projects and often rely on social media to learn about the creative ideas of others. Besides library and school Websites, they search Facebook, Twitter,
TeacherTube, YouTube, and Pinterest for ideas they can replicate or for the germ of an idea that can be adapted to their own library. Alas, we found very little was posted on library Websites, and even less was published on social media sites. The few videos, photos, and descriptions that we found tended to show elementary students; almost no evidence of programs that were of benefit to teens, faculty, or adult patrons showed up on library Websites or social media sites.

Given the scanty evidence of library collaboration available online, we asked our survey respondents what groups and individuals they communicated with about their collaborations (offering them the opportunity to register multiple answers). Ninety-two percent of those who collaborated told their colleagues at their workplace, and 64% told their direct supervisor about their projects. Forty-five percent of respondents told their school superintendent or library director, and 45% communicated with the wider community (parents and students; library patrons). Far fewer communicated about their collaborations with the school or library board, or with the wider professional community through social media, published articles, or conference sessions. And five or fewer respondents each communicated with local media, local organizations or businesses, current or prospective funders, or elected officials.

The majority of respondents who collaborate did not share the results of their collaborations beyond the network of their immediate coworkers and supervisors. Several respondents perceived the benefits of communication to be limited to receiving praise or a “pat on the back.” But some who did communicate their results more widely reported that they gained numerous benefits by this communication, from increased program attendance by students to enhanced community awareness of the library’s services. Mark Tuel at Mount Vernon High School Library stated that “Communicating provides a greater awareness of the fact that we all work toward some shared goals with shared learners/patrons as well as a greater sense of community.” Annie Ruefle at St. Joseph Montessori School pointed out that “Parents always seem to like [it] when they discover their children are engaging with a wider community, and school administrators love [it] when their school extends beyond the school walls.” According to Becky Sloan at E.H. Greene Intermediate School, sharing the results of collaboration “convinces people that we are making the most of all our resources and informs them as to what is available outside of our school.”

Some collaborations have resulted in significant, high-level notice or even additional funding because the collaborating librarians made sure that high-level stakeholders were made aware of their collaborations. Connie Pottle at Delaware County District Library noted that “The Library Board was surprised and pleased to hear about the ways we work with the schools. The superintendent for the city schools is more aware of what the library offers and thinks of us for grant possibilities.” Kristi J. Hale at Washington-Centerburg Public Library enumerated an array of outcomes from communicating about collaborations: “I was invited to work on an OELMA conference workshop this fall; we have used this close relationship in support of a grant proposal; we have been able to show Ohio legislators that we are working closely together.”

In addition to the benefits they derived from communicating about their own collaborations, survey respondents cited numerous ways they have benefitted from reading or learning about the collaborative efforts of others. Several respondents spoke specifically, or in general, about how they have implemented or adapted ideas for collaboration that they learned from others’
experiences. Melissa Detwiler at McPherson Middle School, Clyde-Green Springs School District stated, "It has been great to hear what other teams have been able to accomplish and to use their ideas as a starting point.” Kristi J. Hale at Washington-Centerville Public Library noted, “There are always new ways to connect and work together. Hearing others’ experiences inspires us to look at what else we can do together.” Elaine Betting at the Lorain Public Library System pointed out, “Reading about how other libraries make [school visits] work with staffing issues and difficult school schedules gives us ideas for new approaches or variations in offered programs.”

Learning about the results of collaboration and discussing these experiences with other librarians can even be the springboard to new collaborations. Bonnie Linerode at Marlington Middle School described how, through collaboration and communication, she and neighboring librarians now know how each approaches research and what ways are best for each. We've discussed shelving by genre or by Dewey and which system is more user-friendly. We share reports from professional development sessions ... and give each other heads-ups when we know of assignments that are imminent.

**Conclusion**

We need to make collaboration stories available to others so that we can learn what worked, what didn’t, and what would work even better with just a little tweaking. We hope to encourage librarians to collaborate with their counterpart librarians and then to share that information. Writing an article for a local newspaper or a professional journal or making presentations at local or regional meetings and conferences are great ways to share expertise with the community and with fellow librarians. Posting visual, online samples or descriptions of projects will help others to benefit from those experiences. We would love to see videos posted on YouTube and TeacherTube and to see social media posts for libraries that highlight librarians at work. It is possible to integrate Twitter and Facebook for posting brief promotional pieces about collaborative projects to both networks simultaneously, saving time. Tweets are limited to 140 characters so not much writing is required to make an impact. Share a note about the school’s book discussion group. Talk about the enthusiastic students who gathered for that pet care seminar.

It doesn’t hurt that sharing success stories works as a great marketing tool for your library and for you. Communities, specifically parents, board members, and managers (directors and superintendents) are always happy to see positive press about programs taking place within their buildings. Promoting the program has many benefits and can be done so that it takes little time. As Miller stated at the end of her editorial, “Strategic collaboration among school and public librarians helps fill the gaps created by budget cuts. It’ll get you tag-teaming, designing programs that take advantage of what each library does best” (2012, p. 11). We will add that strategic communication about collaborations benefits advocacy efforts, creates positive PR opportunities, and contributes to the library and education professions. In addition, it allows you to shine; you deserve to brag about your successes and to reap the rewards of “talking 'bout collaboration.”
For Further Reading


Appendix A

School Library - Public Library Collaboration and Communication Survey

Note: Subscribers to the OELMA, INFOhio, and Library Youth Services listservs were invited to participate in this survey. Email to these three listservs included a link to the survey on SurveyMonkey. Please note that the invitation was issued in June 2014, so we missed some librarians who were on vacation or out of school at the time. We received 98 unique responses to the survey; these formed the backbone of this article.

For an article for the OELMA Spectrum on Ohio school/public library collaboration and communication, we are gathering experiences from the field. The authors may quote from your survey response in the article, but will ONLY identify you and your school/library in doing so if you explicitly give us permission (see final survey question). Thank you for your time and your assistance in helping us learn about and report on the state of collaboration in Ohio.

1. Do you, as a [public/school] librarian, collaborate with your local [school/public] library?

2. If “yes”, please describe your collaboration in a sentence or two (please include your email address if you would like us to follow up for more details).

3. If “no”, please let us know what barriers hinder your collaboration.

4. If you collaborate with your school or public library counterpart, with whom have you communicated about your collaboration? Check all that apply. Choices included: Colleagues at your school/public library; Your immediate supervisor; The library director or school
superintendent; The library or school board; The wider community (e.g. parents and students; library patrons); Local media; Social media (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube…); Professional community (e.g. post to blog or listserv, discussion forum, conference program, published article); Local organizations and/or businesses; Current or prospective funder(s); Elected officials; None of the above; and Other (please describe).

5. How have you benefited from communicating with others about your collaboration? Please describe.

6. How have you benefited from reading/learning about collaborative efforts of others? Please describe.

7. Do you work at a school library or a public library?

8. Your name (will not be used in the article unless you respond "yes" to question #10):

9. Name of your school or public library (will not be used in the article unless you respond "yes" to question #10):

10. May we use your name and school/library name when reporting on the results of this survey for the OELMA Spectrum?

Appendix B

Quantitative Survey Results via SurveyMonkey
Survey Questions 1-7
Pages 11-14, following:
School Library - Public Library Collaboration and Communication

1. Do you, as a [public/school] librarian, collaborate with your local [school/public] library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question | 98
skipped question | 0

2. If “yes”, please describe your collaboration in a sentence or two (please include your email address if you would like us to follow up for more details).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question | 79
skipped question | 19
3. If “no”, please let us know what barriers hinder your collaboration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staffing levels</strong></td>
<td><strong>54.5%</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No capacity for taking on new projects</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried but other librarian could not do so</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never attempted</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not perceived as necessary</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please help us by adding your reasons)</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 22
skipped question 76
4. If you collaborate with your school or public library counterpart, with whom have you communicated about your collaboration? Check all that apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Method</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues at your school/public library</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your immediate supervisor</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library director or school superintendent</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library or school board</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wider community (e.g. parents and students; library patrons)</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local media</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube,...)</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional community (e.g. post to blog or listserv, discussion forum, conference program, published article)</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local organizations and/or businesses</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current or prospective funder(s)</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elected officials</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please describe)</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answered question 83
skipped question 15
5. How have you benefited from communicating with others about your collaboration? Please describe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Count</th>
<th>61</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>answered question</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skipped question</td>
<td>37</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. How have you benefited from reading/learning about collaborative efforts of others? Please describe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Count</th>
<th>51</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>answered question</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skipped question</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Do you work at a school library or a public library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>64.3%</th>
<th>63</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both/Other (please specify)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| answered question | 98 |
| skipped question | 0 |

Janet Ingraham Dwyer has been a library consultant for youth services at the State Library of Ohio since October 2009. She provides support and resources for children’s and teen librarians and support staff in public and school libraries across Ohio; represents the youth services community on regional, statewide, and national committees and workgroups, and coordinates large-scale projects and events to benefit youth services librarians and the young people they serve. Janet previously worked in several capacities at Worthington Libraries, including outreach services and volunteer coordinator. —Photo by Portrait Shoppe
Cherie Pandora worked for 35 years as a school librarian and teacher and for two years as an adjunct instructor teaching a research class. She now works as a library consultant and has made presentations on the subject of collaboration at the Ohio Educational Library Media Association (OELMA), American Association of School Librarians (AASL), and Public Library Association (PLA) conferences. With Reference Librarian Stacey Hayman she co-authored Better Serving Teens through School Library–Public Library Collaborations (Libraries Unlimited, 2013) and was awarded the OELMA Award of Merit in 2013 for contributions to School Librarianship.

I Owe It All to Superman
The Story of a Successful Collaboration Between a Teen Librarian and a School District

by Fred Kirchner, Teen Librarian, Dayton Metro Library

Abstract
The author has developed a successful work relationship with middle and high school teachers in his service area, delivering teacher collections, offering book talks, designing classroom presentations in the humanities, and serving as a frequent guest teacher in classrooms. He also coaches a chess team at a local middle school and runs an origami club at another. This article tells the story of the development of that relationship; in addition, specific examples of classroom presentations are cited. Generalizations and suggestions are drawn that can be applied to any potential library/school partnership, enriching collaborations for teachers and librarians.

Background/Experience
I owe it all to Superman . . . well, kinda. Let me back up. It was Halloween 2008, my first week of work as teen librarian at the Wilmington Stroop Branch of the Dayton Metro Library. After three years as a children’s librarian on a bookmobile, I was feeling out of my element in a stationary workplace.

A well-dressed, professional-looking man walked up to the reference desk. He asked me for help gathering a collection of poetry books for his classroom. Poetry…?! I thought: I know something about poetry.

While I was wondering at the bizarre coincidence of being asked about poetry books, and wondering how much to say about my background in poetry, I looked at the button-down oxford and tie the patron was wearing. And I noticed he had chosen a white oxford to make visible the dark blue Superman T-shirt he was wearing underneath. Hah, I thought—it’s a costume he wears to teach in on Halloween. A reversed iteration of Superman as a secret identity, where his teacher persona is the superhero, and the guy behind the teacher—this kind-looking, intelligent gentleman—is a comic book geek. Brilliant, I thought, because I’m a comic book geek too.
Then I asked him what he was doing with the poetry books in his classroom. He was planning a poetry unit for his 7th grade language arts class for which each student had to memorize a poem of his or her choice, and then recite it to the class in a coffee house-type setting. *Whoa, this is too weird, I thought. What do I do?*

I decided to take a risk. I told the patron—Mr. Ryan Lamb, middle school language arts teacher at Kettering Middle School (KMS: the closest school to my new workplace)—that I was a poet whose first book won a national literary contest and that I worked in my spare time with a local arts organization running slam poetry workshops for at-risk teens and had my own microphone and amp that I could bring to his classroom. Luckily, this was all true—and equally luckily, Mr. Lamb was interested.

We set a date and I spent the day in his classroom, working on performance skills at the microphone with his students and promoting my library programs. Then, Mr. Lamb invited me to the students’ presentations. He converted his classroom into a coffee shop for the day with tablecloths and battery-powered candlelight. Every one of his 7th graders used my microphone and amp. I recited a couple of my poems to the classes and got to spend the day eating homemade cookies, listening, visiting with students, and meeting other teachers who dropped by to hear the poetry.

My professional relationship with Ryan Lamb continued to grow. We planned other ways I could support his classroom. I did read-alike book talks based on novels he was teaching, I came and presented about the oral tradition and mythology, and each year, we continued to work together on the poetry event.

One year, his students wrote reports as part of a mythology unit. I volunteered to read the essays and have the library award prizes to the best in each class—gift cards I charged to my program budget. Our collaborative work on this made the local paper, and I displayed the winning essays at my branch in the teen section.

The pinnacle of our teamwork culminated in Mr. Lamb helping me perform a poem of mine about Medusa. The poem ends with the lines: *and then/my jaws loc—*. Each time I performed it, I froze as if turned to stone by the Gorgon. Mr. Lamb then came whistling into the room with a hand truck, loaded me onto it and wheeled me into the hallway as if I’d become a statue.

As the word spread about the success that I was having in Mr. Lamb’s classroom, other teachers began to invite me into their classrooms. Now, six years later, I have a group of 10 teachers with whom I collaborate. Here’s a list of the range of topics and services I’ve offered classrooms:

- Deliver and pick up teacher collections directly to (and from) classrooms.
- Coordinate a weekly chess team that meets after school at a local middle school.
- Facilitate a monthly origami club at another middle school.
- Visit classrooms to offer book talks and promote library services and programs for teens.
- Lead creative writing workshops that include composition of original student work and performance of that work before peers.
Present lecture/discussion presentations in the humanities designed to support, enrich, or introduce curricular topics covered in more depth by the classroom teacher.
Perform dramatic storytelling based on classic literature.
Take part in after-hours events at schools, designed to offer learning activities to students and their families.

Some Generalizations

What generalities can be drawn from this experience? How can this successful story be replicated in other library systems and school districts? Here are some guiding principles that, in retrospect, have helped me build a successful relationship with teachers at the schools I serve:

Do a Presentation Topic Inventory
What can you offer classrooms? First—what did you study in undergraduate school? How can you take that subject knowledge you acquired and build it into something you can share with students?

Do you have avocational interests that translate into areas of the school curriculum? Many library staff at the Dayton Metro Library are musicians, artists, writers, or history buffs—each of these backgrounds has direct applications to middle/high school classrooms.

Deliver Teacher Collections to Classrooms
This is an easy service to offer. Every branch in our library system has a hand truck—maybe yours does as well. Load it up with boxes (or crates) of books and take them to a busy teacher’s classroom. You can even pick them up, too! You’ll get to know the school’s office staff, teachers will see you in the building, and they’ll notice you’re taking that extra step to be of service. Your teen patrons will recognize you. And I promise: it’ll only feel strange the first couple of times. By then kids will be saying hey to you in the hallway and calling you the book dude (or another gender-appropriate nickname).

Take Risks
Each time I start a new collaboration, or design a new presentation for a classroom, I always go through a few moments of abject terror. But once in front of a class it always seems to go well. And the payoff is great: I have a whole file drawer full of thank you notes and poems from students. The best line in them came from a 6th grade boy: You sorta made me like poetry . . . .

Ask Teachers What They’re Teaching About, Then Imagine What You Can Bring to Their Units/Lessons
When I talk to teachers I always try to ask them about their subject. What units are your favorites? What lessons do you enjoy? Once you’ve learned what a teacher is excited about teaching, you can brainstorm how to design a classroom presentation that concerns that topic. I’ve even offered to make a presentation before I had a full idea of what I’d actually do.
Market Yourself to Teachers and Principals
I’ve prepared a flyer that I ask school office staff to put in teachers’ mailboxes at the beginning of the year. I include my name and work email, and describe the services I can offer to support classroom teachers. I try to make it funny and not too wordy.

I’ve also made micro-visits to teachers during staff meetings before the students arrive in August—a short five-minute reminder that I’m available throughout the school year.

Focus on the Folks You Serve (Don’t Worry About Teachers Who Don’t Call)
The middle school I serve has an enrollment of nearly 1,000 students. Its faculty includes several dozen teachers. I only work with a handful of English teachers there. Even though I wonder about folks who don’t call me, I try not to fret about the fact that over 90% of teachers don’t utilize our free library services. And, as a former teacher myself, I know full well how swamped a teacher’s work life can become.

Sample Presentation Structure
My most successful presentation has been the two-period introduction to Greek mythology I created for 7th grade English/language arts classrooms. The school district I serve, Kettering City Schools, lies in Kettering, a suburb of Dayton, Ohio. Most of the classrooms I visit have SmartBoard technology—an interactive, touch-sensitive whiteboard. Besides making your inner A/V geek rejoice, these are wonderful devices for displaying a Microsoft PowerPoint file. (For classrooms without a SmartBoard, I take a laptop and LCD projector that my branch owns.) Here’s a brief outline of the presentation and a description of how it works in the classroom:

1. Presenting a PowerPoint-based lecture that supplies information about topic but also gives kids a chance to show what they know about topic and offer their interpretations of topic elements. My goal is to present this in as dialogic a manner as possible. And if I can make them laugh, well, that’s a bonus.

2. Closing with a demonstration or activity that entertains and/or involves students actively. Whether it’s a few yo-yo tricks or a quick Nerf fencing tournament, I want to offer something unique and energetic, yet framed in school-appropriate behavior.

My mythology presentation—entitled Why You Should Care—is structured around a PowerPoint file. The opening slide just shows a few images—Caravaggio’s Medusa, line drawings of Pegasus and Zeus, and a photograph of a drag racing motorcycle from England, named after Pegasus. Kids identify those, and then I mention the motorcycle, its speed in a quarter mile, and the fact that it’s named after Medusa, which leads naturally into a short conversation of all the references to mythology in contemporary culture.

Then we discuss a family tree of the Greek Pantheon—the second slide. Here I focus on the relationships of the Greek gods—Cronus’ filicide of the Olympians, Zeus’ infidelity, and other outrageous behaviors that are taboo in our culture. We compare their histories to a reality TV show.
Once they’ve demonstrated some interest in the topic, I draw a timeline on the board, situating the era of Pericles and the flowering of Hellenistic culture over 2,400 years ago—which also gives us a chance to mention negative numbers and the historical conventions of BCE (before the common era) and CE (common era).

From there, we discuss the tradition of Western artists depicting mythological subjects, comparing the paintings entitled *Saturn Devours His Son* by Peter Paul Rubens (1636) and Francisco Goya’s much more expressionistic work from the early 19th century. I include images of both paintings in the presentation. Students always have something to say when prompted with questions like—Which painting is grosser? Why? Which is more realistic?

Then we tackle the issue of belief. I ask the students to keep in mind the question—Did Ancient Greeks Really Believe These Stories?—as I provide information about the Delphic Oracle and the building of the Parthenon. While showing slides of each ancient site, I relate the immense expense of the buildings at each site, and the seeming reverence of contemporaries and history for each of these remarkable relics. My point to the students is that I think these stories were believed, or else why would a culture devote its resources to building such marvelous structures and temples. I also remind them that until time travel is invented we have no real way of knowing.

After that we examine briefly the idea promulgated by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, namely that there are similar elements in all the world’s great myths—what Campbell called the monomyth. We take some of these ideas—often referred to colloquially as The Hero’s Journey—and apply them to heroes with whom the students are familiar (Harry Potter; Luke Skywalker; Alex Rider, protagonist of Anthony Horowitz’s teen spy novels; Percy Jackson, from the Rick Riordan books; Superman; and Batman). We talk about the similar patterns of parents with tragic ends or cursed lives, the age when each hero receives the call to adventure, help from mentors or magical objects, and other categories.

Together the students and I create a table on the chalkboard based on what they know about these heroes and the cinematic and literary works in which they appear. My goal here is for students to see the larger similarities between all of these characters; namely, that all of these films, books and comics tell a similar story. Here’s the one-sentence version of that story: a young person—somewhere between the child and adult worlds—with tremendous untapped power and talent is given, through the accident of birth, the opportunity to succeed in life against incredible odds and powerful nemeses. Ultimately, I hope the students can see some of themselves in these stories since they, too, are between the worlds of child and adult; and they, too, have untapped abilities and face a lifetime of challenge. By applying the idea of a hero’s journey to their own lives, maybe students will find some inspiration to fuel their dreams. Then we end the presentation with spirited bouts of Nerf fencing—a game I made up with foam swords, Velcro, and pizza boxes.

**Conclusion**

Whatever form your collaborations with public school teachers, staff, and librarians take, remember that the students you serve, whether you only see them at the school, or whether they
become frequent participants in your programs offered at the branch, will benefit from having another caring, competent adult in their lives. The limits of our work in schools are drawn only by our imaginations and creativity. If we keep our minds open and take risks, teachers and librarians can accomplish great things together that will benefit students and the larger community.

Fred Kirchner works for the Dayton Metro Library as a teen librarian, where his specialties include demonstrating yo-yo tricks, teaching chess, leading Nerf fencing tournaments, and dressing up as characters from Greek myth. He published a chapter entitled “How Not to Blow Up the Library: Planning and Facilitating a Homeschool Science Lab in Your Building” in the 2014 Scarecrow Press title, How To STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Education in Libraries. And his poetry chapbook, Platform of an Unacknowledged World Legislator, won the 2005 Main Street Rag Chapbook Competition. Previous to earning his MLIS from Kent State, and beginning library work, Fred taught public and private school in Central Ohio.

**Collaborative Projects**

*Bringing History to Life*

*School and Public Library Collaboration*

by Katie Porteus, Library Media Specialist, Cardington-Lincoln Local Schools

**Abstract**

During the 2009-2010 school year, Cardington Reads brought together the community with a focus on the history of the Underground Railroad in Central Ohio. Funded by an LSTA grant, the collaboration between the public and school libraries promoted activities in the middle school which included art, music, social studies and language arts, as well as performances by local historians and the 8th grade choir.

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Choose to Read Ohio grant afforded Cardington-Lincoln Public Library (CLPL) and Cardington-Lincoln Junior High School (CLJHS) librarians an opportunity to collaborate on a successful community-wide reading program. The primary objective of the Choose to Read Ohio grant is to encourage community-wide reading of designated titles by Ohio authors. In 2009-2010, Jennifer Reis and Lisa Ebert, youth services and adult services librarians respectively at CLPL, and Katie Porteus, school librarian at CLJHS, created a successful partnership that helped bring history alive for Cardington students as well as for the community.
### Book Selection

The books selected for the grant centered around the Underground Railroad and included: *Beyond the River: A True Story of the Underground Railroad* by Ann Hagedorn; *Copper Sun* by Sharon Draper; and *Trouble Don’t Last* by Shelley Pearsall. Hagedorn is a Dayton-born author of numerous books. *Beyond the River* tells the remarkable story of the participants in the Ripley, Ohio, line of the Underground Railroad and was offered to the adult reading group. Draper, born in Cleveland, is a five-time recipient of the Coretta Scott King Award. *Copper Sun* is an unflinching look at the slave trade in America through the eyes of 15-year old Amari and was selected for the 8th grade social studies classes. Native Ohioan Shelley Pearsall is the recipient of the Scott O’Dell Award for Historical Fiction for *Trouble Don’t Last* (2003). *Trouble Don’t Last* tells the compelling story of Samuel, a runaway slave, from one Underground Railroad stop to the next and was incorporated into the 7th grade reading classes.

### Extending the Theme

The objective of the school and public library collaboration was to involve the entire community. Reis, Ebert, and Porteus began investigating ways in which to extend the theme of the Underground Railroad throughout the school as well as the entire town. Porteus appealed to teachers and administrators in the school district. Three teachers and one administrator volunteered: Sarah Hickman, Kristi Alexander, Patrick Drouhard, and Diana McClure.

Sarah Hickman, junior high and high school music teacher, well-versed in the music of the Underground Railroad, prepared a group of 8th grade singers for a program at the local public library. In addition to the music, Hickman prepared a short narrative about how the songs were used to direct escaping slaves to safe houses and to freedom, as well as information on the community’s role in the Underground Railroad. Although the performance was scheduled on an evening with multiple conflicts within the community, it was standing room only with over forty guests.

Art teacher Kristi Alexander incorporated a quilting unit into the junior high classes. Students learned how the signs and symbols of the quilts were thought to represent codes to escaping slaves. The students’ quilts were featured at the well-attended spring musical and received much positive feedback.

Superintendent Patrick Drouhard, an avid history buff, prepared a carefully researched performance of a local Civil War soldier - “Richard Long: A Soldier’s Story.” Thirty guests attended his performance at the public library.

Eighth-grade social studies teacher, Diana McClure, incorporated Draper’s *Copper Sun* into her students’ required reading. The grant enabled Porteus
and McClure to purchase 100 paperbacks for the students. Although the students complained about having to read a novel for social studies, most became enthralled with the story of a young African woman forced into slavery. Porteus capitalized on the students’ interest and introduced other titles by Draper. As Porteus explained, “It was a terrific opportunity for students in a non-racially diverse rural community to read about young people of color.”

The grant also permitted the purchase of 100 copies of Trouble Don’t Last for the 7th grade reading teachers. At the conclusion of the unit, representatives from the Marion Historical Society presented an overview of local involvement in the Underground Railroad. Specific stations in both Marion and Morrow counties were explored.

Porteus elaborated that the only disappointment was the lack of enthusiasm for the adult selection, Beyond the River: A True Story of the Underground Railroad. She believes that the nonfiction selection may have been too academic for leisure reading. The book discussion at the public library was not well attended.

In retrospect, Porteus regards the school and public library collaboration as a success. The intended outcomes of the project were met as well as some unexpected benefits such as the partnership between school and public library and the cross-curricular nature of the unit. The collaboration brought history to life for Cardington students as well as the community.

Websites of Interest
- www.annhagedorn.com
- www.sharondraper.com
- www.shelleypearsall.com

Choose to Read Ohio – http://library.ohio.gov/ctro

**Katie Porteus** has been a teacher-librarian with the Cardington-Lincoln Local Schools for 12 years and a high school English and reading teacher with Galion City Schools for 14 years. She earned her BS in education from the Ohio State University and her MLS from Kent State University. Katie can be reached at <katie.porteus@cardingtonschools.org>.
Working Together for Student Success
Battle Over Books

by Michelle Callahan, Outreach Services/PR Coordinator, Pickaway County District Public Library; and Cheryl Lorson, Library Media Specialist, Westfall Local Schools

Abstract
Collaboration not only enables school and public librarians to share programs and student patrons in Pickaway County, but it is also fun. The pinnacle is the Battle Over Books, a friendly competition between area schools celebrating reading which culminates in the crowning of an ultimate champion—with bragging rights.

The Library Leadership Consortium of Pickaway County was organized in 2005 by Michelle Callahan, outreach services/public relations coordinator at the Pickaway County District Public Library, and includes the county’s school, college, and public librarians as collaborative partners. Members usually meet twice per year in the late afternoon at alternate sites in order to observe the operation of the other libraries. (Incidentally, the host usually provides refreshments.) Many pertinent topics are discussed at these meetings related to finding ways to help members reach out to their students and communities. One reassuring theme is that the challenges faced are similar.

One of the consortium’s best collaborative efforts is the Battle Over Books. This program was developed to provide an opportunity for students to channel their passion for reading by meeting and socializing with students from other schools. This event now includes the four county high schools (Circleville, Logan Elm, Teays Valley, and Westfall) and two additional schools (Logan-Hocking and Hilliard Bradley).

On a Friday morning in April, students from the six high schools gather at the Pickaway County District Public Library in Circleville for the Battle Over Books competition. Each school may have two teams of five members each. The teams compete against each other to see who will answer the most questions, quickly and correctly, about 14 predetermined and previously read books. After each team plays two games containing an alternating question round and a lightning round, the four teams with the highest cumulative totals move on to the semi-final round. The two teams who win this round play the championship game during which the team earning the highest score wins the competition.

Teacher librarians provide a lunch of pizza, chips, and cookies. After lunch, students discuss their favorite books, create a list of suggested book titles for the following year’s competition, and enjoy the beautiful Pickaway County Public Library. The post-lunch time is often the highlight for many of the students.

Plans for the Battle Over Books competition begin when the school year starts. Each teacher librarian suggests two book titles for the competition via e-mail. If there are no objections to the titles, the teacher librarians write 30 questions for each of the books suggested. These questions are formatted in such a way that the answer is the title of the book. Thus, the questions begin
with the words, “In which book ... ?” By the end of January, the teacher librarians send the questions they create to Michelle, who compiles them for the competition.

Meanwhile, teacher librarians are gathering the 10 students who will compete while also sharing the titles of the books that will be featured in the spring competition. Prior to the event, students read from the list of books, which this past year included such titles as *Divergent* by Veronica Roth, *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer, and *Seconds Away* by Harlan Coben. The list of titles changes annually, with no titles repeated for at least five years.

The public library is instrumental in obtaining the event’s volunteer question readers, timekeepers, and scorekeepers, who are usually retired librarians or Friends of the Library members. The public library also sets up the facility and provides access to the titles on the reading list through its affiliation with the Central Library Consortium, a materials-sharing venture with more than 4.5 million offerings. Additionally, the teacher librarians frequently have two or more copies of the listed titles circulating from their individual school library collections.

Cheryl Lorson of Westfall Local Schools coordinates setting the date for the competition. Lisa Campbell of Teays Valley High School coordinates the lunch order. Trent Roberts of Circleville City Schools brings the buzzer systems. Jarod Lloyd of Logan Elm High School pumps his students up to a fever pitch in an effort to win the event (which has happened three of the five years).

The middle school Battle Over Books competition is also held in the spring at the Pickaway County District Public Library and follows a similar format. For the future, there are plans to involve the collegiate library, Ohio Christian University, perhaps as a venue or as the source of reading mentors.

The Battle Over Books competition is a rewarding experience for all involved. Consortium members pitch in to help, and the students enjoy it immensely and are excited to read and discuss books.

**Michelle Callahan** is the outreach services/public relations coordinator for the Pickaway County District Public Library, with locations in Circleville and Ashville and a Bookmobile that visits nine elementary schools and two middle schools every three weeks during the school year. Michelle has worked at the library for 10 years and is a graduate of The Ohio State University where she majored in agricultural communications. Her previous work experience includes news reporting, public relations for a livestock marketing company, and freelance editing for agricultural publications. Michelle especially enjoys the daily variety her career provides.

**Cheryl Lorson** has been a teacher librarian at Westfall Local Schools in Pickaway County for the past 10 years with six years at the high school level and four years at both the middle school and high school. She previously taught middle school language arts while overseeing the elementary and junior high school library in the Jonathan Alder Local School District. Cheryl earned her
bachelor’s degree at Wittenberg University followed by her MLS degree from Kent State University. She has also earned Master Teacher designation and its renewal. Along with the many hats teacher librarians wear, Cheryl has served as an I-Coach and an Ohio Resident Educator. She enjoys seeing students engrossed in reading and discussing books as well as collaborating with the local public library.

OELMA President Susan Yutzey, in attendance at the 2014 Pickaway County Library Battle Over Books competition, reported her observations in a paper entitled Strong School Libraries Help Build Strong Readers. Here is an excerpt from her report:

On Friday, April 11, 2014, over 50 high school students from across three Ohio counties assembled at the Pickaway County Library to compete in the annual Battle Over Books – Hilliard Bradley, Circleville, Logan, Logan Elm, Teays Valley, and Westfall. This year’s Battle required students to read and analyze 14 books from among award-winning fiction such as Khaled Hosseini’s *And the Mountains Echoed* to literary nonfiction such as *Stiff* by Mary Roach to graphic novels such as Derf Backderf’s *My Friend Dahmer*. . . . The buzzer sounds lend authenticity to the Battle as questions and answers are fired back and forth to each competing team in multiple rounds. The lightning round is the most exciting to watch as students ring in with their respective buzzers. In the end it’s not about who wins as much as it is to “get a chance to talk to other students who like to read,” said a number of students. Competition was tough this year. In the final round it was Circleville High School (Team 1) 79 and Logan Elm (Team 1) 70.

Yutzey also spoke with some of the student participants:

**Here’s What Kids Say about Reading and Battle Over Books…**

“I enjoy fantasies that are part of a trilogy. Battle Over Books helps my reading comprehension, helps me read more deeply for the meaning of the book as well as facts.” Blake, 10th grade Circleville HS

“Because I read *Leviathan* (Scott Westerfeld) I knew about World War I before we started studying it in class.” Mariah, 9th grade Circleville HS

“**Battle Over Books gets you interested in different topics that you want to study further.**”

“Through reading you can connect with things that are going on in your life and it helps you with life skills. My favorite book on the Battle Over Books list was *Thin Space* by Jody Casella and I’d like to read more John Green novels.” Charlie, 9th grade Circleville HS
“Battle Over Books encourages reading by making it an enjoyable, interactive experience with many different genres and discussion types. Everyone can find something they like.” Sam, Circleville HS

“Events such as Battle Over Books challenge teens to improve skills such as memory and teamwork because you have to remember what you’ve read as well as work together in a cohesive unit.” Charlee, 10th grade Circleville HS

“Reading and participating in the Battle Over Books helps you communicate and network.”

“Battle Over Books allows teens to challenge themselves and take part in a competition that’s about more than winning or losing. It’s about learning, expanding horizons and teamwork. You meet kids from all over the district or state and no matter which school you’re from, you become like a family – it’s an amazing feeling.” Danielle, Circleville HS

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**Book Clubs**

**Connections**

by Susan Dickes, Children’s Library Assistant and Coordinator of Audiovisuals

Napoleon Public Library

**Abstract**

In 1996 Hillary Rodham Clinton wrote the book *It Takes a Village* in which she wanted readers to know that people outside the family unit can positively impact a child’s life. This is the connection the Napoleon Public Library’s book club seeks to cultivate with participating students by instilling a love of reading for pleasure and learning during its monthly meetings.

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In 2006 the Napoleon Public Library, one of eight libraries and the largest in Henry County, celebrated its 100-year anniversary. The city of Napoleon, situated between Toledo, Bowling Green and Fort Wayne, Indiana, also boasts the largest school district in the county, the Napoleon Area Schools. The district is comprised of K-1st, 2nd-3rd, and 4th-5th buildings along with a middle school and high school.

I have worked as a children's library assistant and coordinator of the audiovisual department at the Napoleon Public Library for almost six years. One of my most important duties is to plan programs to attract more patrons to the library. I design programming, including the primary-age book club that is the subject of this article, that is both educational and enjoyable. Prior to this position, I was a special education teacher for 12 years.
There is a need to ensure that 1st – 3rd grade students continue to use the public library system after their initial kindergarten visit. After this visit the public library seems to lose these primary-age students due to their being involved in so many different activities. Although some of them return as upper elementary or middle school students in order to complete research projects, students in the primary grades should be as comfortable and knowledgeable in the public library as they are in their classrooms and consider the library an extension of the classroom.

After attending a workshop on book clubs for elementary students at an Ohio Library Council (OLC) conference, I decided to start a book club for grades 1–3 at the Napoleon Public Library. What began as a simple program in the spring of 2013, with the support of two second grade teachers who wanted the library connection for their students, has now turned into a successful collaboration between the Napoleon Public Library and the Napoleon Area Schools.

The book club was to accomplish six objectives: (a) instill a love of reading for pleasure and learning; (b) encourage students to think creatively; (c) encourage students to express their own ideas and opinions; (d) offer students an opportunity to socialize with their peers without fear of being made fun of or criticized; (e) provide an activity to help with the comprehension of the story; and (f) focus on a part of the school curriculum which includes the Common Core.

According to the Website Common Core State Standards Initiative (2014), students need to be challenged and asked questions that push them to look carefully at what they have read. They need to develop critical thinking and analytical and problem-solving skills. It is important for students to have opportunities to build their knowledge through reading and to learn independently.

Each month, a particular book, author, illustrator or subject is chosen as that month’s topic. Recommendations are often my choices but have also come from classroom teachers. Planning and research take time and require input from the teacher; many aspects of the topic are researched and explored:

- About the story – Is the story trying to teach something, i.e., values, morals, etc.?
- About the author/illustrator – What other books have been written or illustrated by the author or illustrator?
- About the subject – What are the history, uses, why’s, etc.?

This past year’s topics included learning about perseverance from *The Tortoise and the Jackrabbit* by Susan Lowell; appreciating the silly, wacky poetry of Shel Silverstein; and doing the wild rumpus dance of *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak.

The book club meetings are held during the school day. Schools that are closest to the library have their students walk. I visit the classrooms of schools that are farther away. Each class meets once a month throughout the school year. Every book club is organized (regardless of grade) in the same way.

We begin by having a discussion about the author and illustrator of the book that is to be read. I present any interesting facts that I have discovered in my research. The discussion continues...
when the students determine, by looking at the spine stickers (call #, colored level or genre), where that book would be found in the library. We also discuss if the book is an AR (Accelerated Reader) book. I then read the story with the help of four randomly chosen students. By the end of the school year, every student will have had a chance to read aloud with me. When the story is finished, we discuss what happened or try to decide if the author was trying to make a point, any cause and effect, the purpose of the story (fact or fiction), if there is a problem to be solved, and if the ending was good or bad.

The final session(s) of the book club involve(s) an activity that encourages comprehension. This is not a craft but rather, fun with learning! During one activity student groups worked together to sequence the story just read with a focus on finding the beginning, middle, and end of the story. When discussing Shel Silverstein's poetry the groups of students had to see if they could put together some of his poems that were cut into strips. Did the poem make more sense the way Silverstein wrote it, or could we do it better? After reading “Library Mouse” by Daniel Kirk, the students had to write what they felt would happen next. The students got to be king/queen of the wild things after reading Where the Wild Things Are. Burger King in Napoleon donated the crowns for each student who wrote on the front, “If I were king/queen of the wild things, I would . . . .”

When the book club concludes each month, the students take home a list of 10-12 books, including the one that was read. If an author/illustrator was discussed, the list will have additional books that they have written or illustrated. If a subject was discussed, there will be books listed about that subject. We also talk to the students about having their parents bring them to visit the library to check out more of these books.

Before starting the book clubs at any of the schools, I met with the principals and teachers and told them exactly why I wanted to organize the book clubs (for the connection between the schools and the public library), how they would be organized, what was expected of the administration and staff, and the goals of the program.

The response has been overwhelming. The principal of one school (who is one of the book club’s biggest supporters) and I even did a radio spot with the superintendent of Napoleon Area Schools. We talked about the successful collaboration between the Napoleon Public Library and the Napoleon Area Schools that encouraged students to remain a part of the public library system after their initial kindergarten visit.

The cost of offering the book clubs is very minimal. Resources are either donated, already come from our supplies, or we find them cheaply. Each book club takes time to plan and research, but the delight and satisfaction I receive reward my efforts.

The whole book club takes no more than an hour at most. This past year I had 13 classes for a total of 280 students whom I saw once every month. Every teacher who has participated has indicated that they plan to participate next year, and three additional teachers have asked to be added to the schedule.
What makes the primary-age book club successful? It is not necessarily an increase in public library usage though I have seen more of my students in the library. Rather, I feel its success comes from two different aspects. First, the students enjoy the books and activities with no overwhelming expectations placed upon them other than to learn for the sake of learning. While doing so, they are able to socialize with their peers without the fear of being made fun of for their interest in reading. Secondly, the teachers in the Napoleon Area Schools have welcomed me into their classrooms thus making the collaborative experience possible.

Reference


Susan Dickes received her teaching certificates in Learning Disabilities/Developmentally Handicapped and Elementary Education from Ashland University. She then received a masters of education from Bowling Green State University. After teaching for 14 years, she stayed home to raise her family. Currently, she works at the Napoleon Public Library in the children’s department and coordinates audiovisuals. Susan has been married for 26 years and has three daughters and two grandchildren.

Some Thoughts on a Teen Book Club When High School and Public Librarians Collaborate

by Laura M. Piazza, Library Media Specialist, Upper Arlington High School – Retired
Dena Little, Youth Services Manager, Upper Arlington Public Library
Tracie Steele, Youth Librarian, Upper Arlington Public Library

Abstract
Creating and managing a high school book club for teen readers can be a challenge. This article addresses the collaboration between a high school library media specialist and the librarians from the local public library. Choosing books, organizing students, finding a good time to meet, and adding some related activities can add up to some nice opportunities for busy teens to enjoy a good book and some fellowship with peers.

Having a book club in a high school meets the very real need to promote literacy in young adults. Upper Arlington High School (UAHS) in suburban Columbus, Ohio, has averaged between 1700 - 1900 students over the last 10 years. It has a rigorous academic program and is an International Baccalaureate degree-conferring school. Over 90% of the students go on to college after graduation. Many of them read regularly for pleasure—and not just the popular fiction of the day. They read classics, have favorite books they re-read, and love to talk about
books whenever they get a chance. A book club just made sense. But where to start? And what are the challenges? The mission: make this work!

Because Upper Arlington is a community with a strong public library, our high school students have a history of using the public library. A conversation with Upper Arlington Public Library (UAPL) youth services librarians led to a collaboration to serve our mutual patrons through a book club. Through the years, there were a number of UAPL librarians who worked towards the success of the club, most recently Dena Little and Tracie Steele. Our plans included everything from when to hold meetings to snacks, from what to read to creating fun and interesting activities. There were challenges from the get-go, but there was also enough success to sustain the club. The secret to the collaboration? We had so much fun together being librarians, we laughed a lot, and we brought our years of experience and passion for literature to the service of teens who read.

All of the librarians involved shared three primary goals for the book club. First, we wanted to encourage and share a love of reading with teens. We know teens are busy and pulled in many directions, but we wanted to establish and maintain the link between the public library, the school library, and a lifelong love of reading. Secondly, we wanted teens to get to know and feel comfortable with their school and public libraries and librarians as sources for books and book recommendations and for information. Finally, we wanted to open the door to a solid collaboration between the public library and our schools. While we are two different public entities, our goals are not different in the long run. We each brought aspects to the meetings that strengthened our sessions and allowed us to connect and help the students as well as each other.

Our collaboration has two distinct perspectives, so this article is divided to highlight the main ideas from each library.

From the School Library Media Specialist: What Worked

Getting Started

The book club at UAHS was many years in the making. Until 2013, there were two school library media specialists at the high school, and we began a serious book club in 2008. We made the contacts with the students through word-of-mouth, morning announcements and the occasional poster. We tried a variety of “meeting reminders”: handing out bookmarks, creating brochures with the meetings for the semester, and even creating a cell phone group and a blog. I asked teachers what form of communication they used for their classes to get some ideas of what students are already using to stay connected in other areas of their school life. In short, it takes a lot of trial and error to get started. Don’t be dismayed by the varying degrees of success of your efforts - over time, things begin to work smoothly.

Meeting in Late Summer

When the school eliminated one of the library media specialist (LMS) positions in 2013, I realized that I no longer had the luxury of the professional time that two LMSs could bring to a
high school program. I decided to invite club members to meet in mid-August 2013 before the school year started. A local grocery store has a salad bar and a comfortable eating area, so we decided to meet for lunch. Several students were able to attend, along with one of the public library’s youth services librarians. It was natural for all of us to be enthusiastically sharing our summer reading, but we also discussed ways to make the students more responsible for some of the work, hoping that engagement with the process would help maintain the club. UAPL librarian Tracie Steele joined us and brought a box of ARCs (Advanced Reader Copies), which fueled our reading passion as well as our plans to meet once a month. We decided on a regular time and day to meet at the high school and selected dates. Some of the students volunteered to promote the club and some to organize the meetings. I was relieved that the students now understood that it couldn’t be exclusively my role. I highly recommend a meeting during the week before school starts to recapture the excitement.

Expanding the Meeting Agenda

While we were always prepared to discuss the chosen book, the librarians also jointly determined that there needed to be more than a discussion of whatever we’d read. There also needed to be other book-related topics to spark literary conversations. We attempted to make sure we knew about upcoming books to be made into movies and show the trailer(s); that we had an online, literature-related resource (GoodReads, blogs, audiobooks, etc.) to share at each meeting; and that there were small piles of books by genre at each table that we would book talk for the attendees. Dena and Tracie were wonderful about bringing these books and keeping the students connected to public library resources and opportunities. The students responded positively to each of these activities.

Finding Titles

All three librarians were actively connected to professional organizations and journals, especially ALA. Information from local and national conferences, as well as blogs and national reading lists, are critical to staying on top of what teens are reading.

Communication

To increase visibility of the club, I registered the book club with the administration. I had to fill out some forms naming myself as the advisor, but the payoff was that the club is on the school’s radar for emails about fundraising possibilities, for information on how to plan field trips (Meet the author at a local signing! Read the book, then view the movie together!), and for getting that all-important club photo in the yearbook.

A regular newsletter article keeps the community informed about your teens who read, so I tried to stay on top of the schedule for newsletter deadlines - the school’s newsletter and any promotional newsletters from the public library, as well.

Towards the end of the school year, I purchased a thank you card for the Friends of the Library (FOL) to thank them for their support of providing books and snacks. I put it at the circulation
Desk so students could stop by, sign it, and include a note about how much they enjoyed the FOL support of the book club and the treats during the school year.

**From the Public Librarian: What Worked**

**Who We Are**

First, a bit about our public library and the community we serve. Upper Arlington Public Library (UAPL) is a mid-sized library with three locations: the main location on Tremont and two branches. All together we serve the Upper Arlington population of around 34,000, and then some; in fact, we have over 43,000 registered card holders. All of our UAPL locations are set in residential communities near schools, so we have a high number of visitors—a bit over 30,000 a month.

**Programming for Teens**

While we do see a great amount of foot traffic at each location from the nearby elementary schools, we see few teens since the high school is a bit of a walk from the nearest library location. Because of this, and because the teens in our community are very involved with after-school academic and extracurricular activities, we realized that offering a book club here at the public library wouldn’t pan out. Teen programming is generally a challenge for a variety of reasons: they use the public library mainly for study and social space as well as materials, but they don’t flock to our programs because they are busy, they are dependent upon others for rides, and because they tend to forget about programs. We have a strong desire and responsibility to serve the teens in the community, and collaborating with the school library for book club allowed us to bring a program to the teens that suits their schedules, helps to avoid transportation challenges, and satisfies their desire to talk books. It also allows them to get to know the public librarians as another source for book recommendations and information.

**Financial Support**

The Friends of the Library, a non-profit organization, funds the majority of our programming here at Upper Arlington Public Library. Even though our collaborative book club is held at the high school it is still a public library program, so the Friends financially support it by paying for the books and the food. At each meeting the teens pick the book choice for the following month, and we order 10 copies of the book from the Friends. After the month’s book club is finished we either turn those 10 copies into a “book club in a bag”—10 copies of a duplicate title with discussion questions ready for check out—or enter them into general circulation, depending upon the popularity of the book. Moving forward, we will be able to access multiple copies of a single title since UAPL recently joined a lending consortium, and we will no longer need to purchase the books. For the snack, we’ve had best luck providing cookies, milk and juice, but some libraries may have local grocery stores or restaurants willing to donate snacks in return for promotion.
Expanding the Meeting Agenda

In addition to discussing the book, we added a few elements to the meeting that have kept things moving and satisfies those teens who aren’t as interested in a lively debate. We regularly bring ARCs of soon-to-be-published teen titles to book club and distribute them, encouraging the teens to bring them back to share their comments and pass them along; this is definitely a highlight of book club, as the teens love the idea of reading a book before anyone else. In addition to a wide variety of books to book talk, we also bring a list or two of read-alikes that tie into the month’s book choice. Laura also incorporates a variety of literacy-heavy technology, whether an app, a Website, or a video. We take advantage of having a live teen audience by sharing upcoming library programs as well as “volunteer” (teen volunteer) opportunities. In fact, we currently have a fabulous teen intern whom we met through the book club.

Keeping Track of Books

As for the logistics of how things work, before we bring the books to book club we check them all out on the department library card—this includes the book club choice as well as other books that we plan on book talking. Once the books are at the UAHS library the teens then check them out with Laura using old-fashioned book slips to keep track of who has what. The teens are then either free to bring the books back to the school library, or to return them to me at the public library. We have lost very few books over the years with this system, but it does require a lot of text, email, and verbal reminders.

Administrative Support

Finally, the support of library administration is key. We are fortunate to have a director and assistant director who realize the value of collaboration between the school and public library. They also recognize that this type of program isn’t about big numbers; instead, the value is in the relationships it helps to build between both libraries’ staff and the students.

From the School Librarian: Challenges

When to Meet

For some reason, it took us years to determine a good time to meet. Our school has two lunch periods, so lunch time didn’t work because it would create two different book clubs and tie us up during the school day. We tried before school at 7:00 AM for a few years, but that competed with band/orchestra practice and academics. And our students like to try new things, so play practice took some of our regulars, too. Our most successful meeting time became Fridays after school when there were the fewest conflicts for both students and faculty.

Who Attends

It was also hard to recruit students, especially boys. Even boys who love to read were reluctant to join a meeting.
Even with the promise of food and drinks, we couldn’t really count on the same kids every month. Still, this last year attendance ranged between 5-15 students—some of the best numbers we’ve ever had. We found that, as the school year progressed, new students joined and our best numbers were during the months of March, April, and May.

**Getting Enough Copies**

The books we used were mostly from the public library in the form of book club bags: 10 copies of the same title. Thanks to the quick work of Dena and Tracie, it was incredibly convenient for getting the books in the kids’ hands. Getting them back was challenging, though. I recommend recording the students’ email addresses or other electronic means to manage this and to remind them about upcoming meetings.

**Student Responsibility**

Even excellent high school students drop the ball at times. I recommend that you mark your calendar to remind them about deadlines and otherwise stay on top of things.

**From the Public Librarian: Challenges**

**Scheduling**

The biggest challenge for us was scheduling. We have a lot more freedom to travel than Laura so location isn’t an issue for us, but we have a limited staff so scheduling an afternoon to leave the building without leaving the department short-staffed was sometimes a struggle. Thankfully, Laura was able to meet with us annually in the summer--and communicate with us throughout the year--to coordinate our schedules. The fact that Laura was able to accommodate most of our availability made this a success. Tracie Steele, our youth librarian, and I typically rotate book club throughout the year; however, there have been occasions when we could include staff from library branches as well - ensuring that Laura and her students got to know librarians from the branches (and vice versa!).

**Communication**

For this type of collaboration to be a success, communication is crucial. While we did not have any problems in relation to this program, as Laura was always on top of things, we did experience this challenge while collaborating on projects with other schools. I attended a conference a while back about collaboration between school and public libraries and found that this is a challenge across the board. Book Club worked because Laura, Tracie, and I communicated openly and positively.

**From the School Librarian: What Else Might Work?**

Reflecting on best practice, there’s always something else to try to maintain interest in literacy and challenge teen readers to try something different. Teen book clubs might be well-served to consider graphic works; reading with eReaders; a meeting to bring in “all time favorite” reads
(which would open the door to struggling readers who wouldn’t have to apologize for defending Gary Paulsen or Shel Silverstein); Skyping an author visit; an author-specific book club meeting (everyone reads a different book by the same author); book club blogging to include students who graduate or otherwise move on; book exchanges; arranging to meet occasionally at local restaurants or the public library; and multicultural reads that match the population in the school or community. The new fiction category “New Adult” (NA) might be worth exploring with sophisticated readers, although previewing titles would be mandatory for the librarians. Still NA literature incorporates the lifestyle of new adults (living independently, dating, and work). Perhaps a special meeting for graduating seniors to explain the genre and provide some YA/NA cross-over titles would work.

I would also try to find a way to check the public library books out on the students’ library cards so the focus of overdues and reminders is on the student.

**From the Public Librarian: What Else Might Work?**

The number one thing I see as being a hurdle for many public and school library collaborations is proprietariness. We have been able to make this a successful program simply because we are all in it to bring books to teens. This program isn’t about us—it’s about them. Be flexible about where to meet and what to read.

Overall, our goals have been met. We see the teens from the club at more of our programs and in the library to find books. This past summer two of our interns were students who were members of the book club from the previous year. We now have a colleague at the school who can give us information about the right folks to contact when needed.

**Laura M. Piazza** was a school library media specialist for 24 years, with K-12 experience in both public and private schools. She retired in June and is looking forward to having time to pursue old and new hobbies and, of course, reading. She is about to be exposed as a fraud, since she has always explained her love of YA literature at dinner parties as her “job.” The truth: she is hopelessly hooked and will never give it up! Laura may be reached at lpiazza@columbus.rr.com.

**Dena Little** is the manager of the best youth department in central Ohio (at least she thinks so!). When not at work, she is busy spending time with her family, reading all the latest YA and juvenile fiction, and practicing for her next figure skating competition. Dena may be reached at dlittle@ualibrary.org.

**Tracie Steele** is a youth librarian and loves her job! She also enjoys reading, especially historical fiction, and spending time with her family. She has a very active imaginary craft life via Pinterest.
Forming a Collaborative Team to Win the Summer Reading Game

by Janell McClure, Supervisor of Library Media Education, Cobb County School District
Marietta, Georgia

Abstract
For the second year in a row, the Cobb County School District’s Library Media Education Department and the Cobb County Public Library System collaborated to form complementary summer reading programs. This year, they expanded their collective to include an additional school district and public library. Using reflections from the previous year and research on avoiding the “summer slide,” they worked to create effective programs that reached all children, promoted reading for pleasure, provided opportunities for ownership, and developed transferable reading skills.

The whistle blows, the game is over, and victory is achieved! Players exit the stadium having won the game through hard work and determination. The coaches saunter back to the locker room, celebrate the win with high fives and fist bumps, and for a brief moment, revel in the feeling of accomplishment at completing another successful season.

Fast forward to training camp at the end of summer break – more players arrive than expected, fewer skills emerge during training, and the coaching staff struggles to motivate the apathetic team. Player after player demonstrates a lack of fundamentals necessary to play the game, and suddenly another winning season seems out of reach.

This metaphorical scenario represents the same struggles that teachers face year after year when students return to school having lost foundational reading skills needed to succeed academically. “Researchers have uncovered evidence to suggest that the impact of summer reading loss on students in general and on at-risk students in particular, is significant. . . . In a single academic year, this decline resulted in an estimated three-month achievement gap between more advantaged and less advantaged students” (Mraz & Rasinski, 2007, p. 785). This effect is often referred to as the “summer slide.”

In 2013, to combat this trend, the Cobb County School District’s (CCSD) Library Media Education Department partnered with the Cobb County Public Library System (CCPLS) to develop complementary summer reading programs for students in grades K-5. The programs included suggested reading lists, activity choices in response to reading (see Appendices B and C), reading logs (see Appendix D), joint marketing strategies, and rewards for participation. As a result of our work, we saw a 24% increase in the number of CCSD students who participated in the public library program, and we all concurred that our combined efforts positively impacted participation. Despite our documented success, though, adjustments needed to be made if we wanted to further our success the following year. (For a more extensive article, read “A Community Effort: A School District and Public Library Collaborate on Summer Reading,” by Janell McClure, in the May/June 2014 issue of Library Media Connection.)
Expanding the Coaching Staff

In fall 2013, I published a summary of our success in “Georgia Library Spotlight,” a column sponsored by the Georgia Library Association, which caught the attention of Mary W. Moore, director of the Smyrna Public Library. She contacted me about joining our summer reading collaborative, and we welcomed her and Rebecca Power, youth services librarian, as the newest members of our team. After contacting my former partners at CCPLS, I also learned that Lisa Cleary had been hired as the outreach librarian for CCPLS and would be working with us on future projects. As I solicited between five and eight CCSD media specialists representing all areas of the county to serve on our summer reading design team for 2014, Lisa invited Marietta City School District representatives to join our cooperative as well. Our coaching staff had doubled!

Reviewing Game Footage

Based on our reflections from the previous year, we knew we needed to make some changes. First and foremost, our planning needed to start earlier in the school year, so we held our first meeting in early March as opposed to late April. As representatives from CCSD, CCPLS, and Smyrna Public sat around the table during that initial gathering, we continued to reflect upon the preceding summer. The school media specialists agreed that although offering an assortment of activities as responses to reading was effective practice, the number provided (16 activities) was too high. Also, they mentioned that several students and parents reported difficulty accessing the marketing Website that hosted material links and program directions. The CCPLS branch librarians commented that we needed to further clarify the roles and responsibilities of their staff versus those of the school media specialists, and additional concerns included follow-through with rewards and recognition and accuracy of data collection.

On a positive note, all agreed that providing lists of suggested books (one for the primary and one for the intermediate) created by the summer reading team proved helpful; giving students choices of activities remained essential; and advertising the public and school programs on each other’s Websites further supported our collaborative message. The public libraries asked that the suggested reading lists contain only series and authors as opposed to specific titles to alleviate the need for multiple copies of particular books. We also agreed to once again include Lexile levels where appropriate and to create separate reading and activity lists for primary and intermediate grades. Finally, all decided to use the same program theme to further show the connection between the reading programs. Before adjourning, we designated next steps and agreed on a completion date of May 1st for program materials to ensure timely distribution to CCSD students.

Creating the Playbook

While the public libraries subscribed to the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) for materials and resources, the school district needed to create originals. To address the concern about excessive activity choices, the team decided to offer only six options and that those selections should reflect STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) topics since the 2014 CSLP theme revolved around science: “Fizz. Boom. Read.” Members also decided that one choice should reference an activity at the public library, and one should direct
participants to the CCSD Digital Library for access to eBooks and databases. The previous year, CCSD used a volunteer graphic artist to create the pictures and templates for the program materials, but unfortunately the wait time for completion proved extensive and resulted in a very late distribution schedule. The artwork featured in the CSLP materials was that of well-known illustrator, Matthew Myers, from his recent book, Clink, written by Kelly DiPucchio. We therefore contacted him about using the same graphics, and he generously granted us permission.

In regard to marketing, we created a basic Website page since the Web 2.0 tool used the year before proved unpredictable (http://www.cobble12.org/centraloffice/librarymedia/summerreading2014.aspx). Direct links from the CCSD Website allowed participants to easily download, save, and print the necessary materials, and a team member created a Facebook page to provide additional access. Another successful promotional strategy used the year before consisted of a video that featured students holding books found on the suggested reading lists. School media specialists noted that students loved seeing their peers in the video, and it further enticed them to participate in the program; therefore, we worked to build that medium again. Meanwhile, Lisa at CCPLS created a logo featuring the four entities which we included on all marketing materials to promote our common message. Finally, we all took advantage of opportunities such as 6th grade parent nights, public library kick-off parties, and end-of-year activities to distribute summer reading information to parents and students. Fortunately, the public librarians continued their practice of visiting the schools in May to share their programs, events, and materials which further promoted our collaboration.

With marketing strategies in place, CCSD addressed the confusion among roles and responsibilities by creating a separate reading log from the one used by the public libraries. The year before, students received a reading log from the public libraries only, but this confused participants and librarians alike when schools did not have additional copies or when the time came for submitting the logs. By creating separate logs, we could encourage students to use any log they wanted for any program. The most important message we attempted to communicate was simply that anything completed for one program would count for the other programs as well. The schools would accept a public library log and the libraries would accept those from the schools. This decision was precipitated by the fact that the ultimate goal of summer programs was to promote and celebrate reading; therefore, if accepting logs and providing rewards for both programs meant participants might read more, then the collaboration would be deemed successful.

At this point, we needed to consider tools for data collection and plans for rewards and recognitions. CCPLS generally tracked participation through an online registration form that included a drop-down menu for school identification. The downfall with this measure consisted of the alphabetical listing of schools as the first item on the form. Participants tended to overlook the menu choices and leave the default school name as their selection. This skewed the data for individual schools even though it successfully documented overall participation. Using Google Forms, Lisa created an online form which made the child’s name the first piece of information to enter, and then altered the item which listed the choice of schools so that no one school name appeared as the default. We anticipate these modifications will alleviate the problem faced last year and will provide a more accurate analysis. To help the public libraries with reading log collection, we agreed to collect their branch logs during pre-planning, during the first week of
school, and during open house (typically in August). We also developed an online form for use at
the school level to further document participation in the school and public library programs. As
for rewards, the public libraries’ prizes range from books and restaurant coupons to a drawing for
an iPad. Individual schools agreed to provide some form of recognition to all participants (as
decided at the local level).

Developing a Winning Strategy

In New York State Library’s “The Importance of Summer Reading: Public Library Summer
Reading Programs and Learning,” Balsen and Moore (2011) summarize the research on
successful summer learning into four main categories: (1) impact of summer learning loss on
disadvantaged youth, (2) access to books and time devoted to reading, (3) importance of
successful reading experiences, and (4) the impact of innovative summer reading programs (para.
1). Our collaborative efforts targeted these facets of summer reading programs through multiple
methods. Recognizing the need to further serve the disadvantaged youth of our district, we
partnered with the Must Ministries’ summer lunch program for the second year in a row. This
program provides bag lunches every weekday during the summer months to children who
ordinarily qualify for the free-and-reduced lunch program at the local schools. On Fridays each
week, the Must program sponsors “Lunch and a Book Day,” at which each child is given a book
to keep, choosing from books donated to Must during the school year. In April 2013, however,
we learned that in years past, Must did not have enough books to give to every child, every
Friday. We therefore started a book drive in May 2013 and asked people to donate new or gently
used books to benefit the summer lunch program. We provided collection sites at eight to ten
schools around the county until the end of June. We then collected the books and delivered them
to the Must warehouse for use during the summer lunch program. In one month’s time, we
collected over 10,000 books. This year we wanted to do our part again to ensure that every child
received a book every Friday, and we are pleased to report that eight pallets of boxes were
collected—so many books that we did not have the time or manpower to count them.

As for access to books, our public library partners worked tirelessly to provide fun events,
extended hours, and reading opportunities during the summer; but many children do not have
transportation to the local branches. In the past, a couple of schools offered summer hours as
well but not enough to accommodate the need; therefore, this year, across the district, four
elementary schools and one middle school opened their doors for summer checkout to provide
additional access. The middle school reported hosting approximately 25 students and 10 parents
per week, and one elementary school boasted over 2,000 checkouts by the end of June. We hope
to see similar trends with the other schools as well.

To ensure “successful reading experiences,” the third category in Balsen and Moore’s research,
we provided students the opportunity to choose books from the suggested reading lists and to
choose their accompanying activities. We based this process on research gained from “Bridging
the Summer Gap” by McGill-Franzen and Allington (2003) who noted, “If children have
opportunities to listen to, discuss, and read books on topics that they select, or books about
characters that they love, they develop extensive background knowledge that can scaffold their
independent reading and sustain their engagement” (Summer School Reading section). We
promoted the importance of self-selection and finding that “just right” book by providing
suggested reading lists (as opposed to required) that included popular, current authors and series while also listing Lexile levels where applicable. The activities also varied in nature to include multiple intelligences, such as writing, technology, art, and math, to appeal to all students’ learning styles. Overall, these methods support best practices for building comprehension, improving vocabulary, and interacting with text.

Overall, combining efforts among public and school libraries naturally lends itself to innovative summer reading programs. Working together and marketing our collaboration as a collective effort have proven to positively impact summer reading practices. As of mid-June, CCPLS had already seen an increase of 42% in pre-registration for their summer reading program; and within the first two weeks of launching their program, Smyrna Public featured on their Facebook Page the first participant to complete his reading log. In addition to summer reading programs, we are expanding our collaboration by providing tables for the public libraries during school open houses and conference weeks where families can sign up for library cards, and we are also planning a parent literacy event in the fall.

Vince Lombardi, perhaps best known as head coach of the Green Bay Packers during the 1960s, said, “People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defenses, or the problems of modern society.” We look forward to further building our team and expanding our coaching staff to ensure another victory in the summer reading game.

References


Appendices follow, pp. 41-44.
Appendix A

Summer Reading Program Instruction Sheet


The Cobb County School District’s Library Media Education and English Language Arts Departments have partnered with the Cobb County Public Library System (CCPLS), Marietta City Schools, and Smyrna Public Library (free to City of Smyrna residents) to provide complementary summer reading programs for grades PK-5. The theme for this summer’s reading program is “Fizz. Boom. Read.”*

To participate in the Cobb County School District and/or Public Library programs:

1) Pick up a reading log from Smyrna Public Library, a CCPLS branch, or from the student’s local school media center (before May 21st, the last day of school). The student only needs one log, and it can be submitted to all programs. If a student wishes to participate in a public library and a school program, please make copies of the completed reading log and submit to a public library (either Smyrna or a CCPLS branch) and to the local school media center during the first week of school.

2) READ! Record everything you read over the summer on your reading log. (A suggested reading list is attached, but a student may read any age and level-appropriate book of his/her choice).

3) For at least one of the books read, the student completes an activity from the attached sheet and returns the finished activity, along with the completed reading log, to the local school’s media center during the first week of school to be eligible for rewards! (Please do not return completed activities to the public libraries).

4) Submit one copy of the completed reading log to a CCPLS branch (by July 31) or to Smyrna Public Library (City of Smyrna residents only) to be eligible for prizes!

Research consistently shows a correlation between summer reading participation and student achievement but only when parents, educators, and community members provide access to books and support with comprehension. According to James Kim, assistant professor at Harvard University, “Voluntary summer reading programs can work but they work best when adults and teachers get involved by helping students to choose appropriate books and employ simple techniques to improve skill and understanding.” [http://cyberlearning.org/content/collection/8945DE5-80FF-495F-B393-18ECDF3DF8F8/Research_Brief_05-J_Kim.pdf]

For more information regarding these programs, contact your local school or public librarian or visit http://www.cobbk12.org/centraloffice/librarymedia/summerreading2014.aspx. And, this summer, be sure to “Fizz. Boom. Read.”

*The theme is based on the Collaborative Summer Library Program www.als.org, an organization used by public libraries in all 50 states. Illustration from the book, Chet, and used with permission from the illustrator, Matthew Myers at myheavyheart.com.
Appendix B

Primary Activities Sheet

Cobb County School District, Marietta City School District,
Cobb County Public Library System, and Smyrna Public Library
present
the 2014 Summer Reading Program

\[\text{Grades K-2}\]

Science
Read a nonfiction book about an animal that's new to you. Create an acrostic poem by writing something you learned for every letter in the animal’s name. HINT: Write the animal’s name vertically down the side of the page.

Technology
Using the GALILEO database, Searchasaurus*, read an article about a Science topic of your choice. Create a video or an audio recording of yourself summarizing what you learned.

Math
Read a fiction book of your choice. Write down how many pages and how many pictures are in the book. Now write those numbers as words and use them in a complete sentence.

Kid’s Choice
Prove your imagination and create your own reading and writing assignment!

Fine Arts
Check out and read some books by your favorite illustrator. Look carefully at the illustrations. Create a bookmark in the same style of the illustrator.

Careers
Read a nonfiction book about a career that interests you. Write down your two favorite things about that career or draw a picture of yourself doing that career.

*Access the database through the Smyrna or Cobb County Public Library System websites, through the Marietta City School’s Student Information System, or through the Cobb Digital Library (CCSD students only) with the student number as the username and read as the password.

Artwork © Matthew Myers, used with permission.
Appendix C

Intermediate Activities Sheet

Cobb County School District, Marietta City School District, Cobb County Public Library System, and Smyrna Public Library present

the 2014 Summer Reading Program

FIZZ Boom READ

Grades 3 - 5

Choose an activity to complete for at least one of the books you read this summer.

Science
Read a mystery book of your choice. Pretend you are solving a mystery and complete the footwear impression activity at www.education.com/activity/article/forensic-science-shoe-impressions/. How could the author of a mystery book use this activity in a story? Write one or two sentences on the back of the footprint paper to explain.

Technology
Using the GALILEO database, Searchasaurus*, read an article about a Science topic of your choice. Create a video or an audio recording of yourself summarizing what you learned.

Fine Arts
Read a book of your choice. Uncover the best moments of the book that will make us want to read it and illustrate them by drawing a series of cartoons or by using toondoo.com to create a cartoon online.

Kid’s Choice
Probe your imagination and create your own reading and writing assignment!

Careers
Read a book about a career that interests you. Now research that same career using the Career Planning section of gacollege411.org. How does the information from the two sources compare? How is the information different? Write 2-3 sentences to explain.

Math
Using books on your reading log, record the number of pages in each book and find the median and the mean.

Artwork © Matthew Myers, used with permission.

*Access the database through the Smyrna or Cobb County Public Library System websites, through the Marietta City School’s Student Information System, or through the Cobb Digital Library [CCSD students only] with the student number as the username and read as the password.
## Reading Log

Name____________________ Grade________ School______________________________

**Cobb Digital Library @ mackinvia.com:** Username: ___________________ Password: ____________

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Artwork © Matthew Myers, used with permission.
Janell McClure is the supervisor of library media education for the Cobb County School District (CCSD) in Marietta, Georgia. She began her career in education as a middle school language arts teacher in northern Florida, and after four years, moved to Cobb County, Georgia. Here, she worked one year as a high school English teacher before returning to a middle school position. After 10 years in the classroom, she began her career as a media specialist at Palmer Middle School in Kennesaw, Georgia. During the eight years she served in this role, she earned recognition as Palmer’s Teacher of the Year for 2007-2008, Media Specialist of the Year for Cobb County School District in 2008-2009, and Exemplary Middle School Media Program for the Georgia Department of Education in 2010-2011. In her current supervisory position, she supports 127 media specialists in 110 schools. CCSD is the second largest district in the state, and its schools range from urban to suburban settings, economically disadvantaged to affluent families, and small (330) to large (2500+) student populations. Janell can be reached at janell.mcclure@cobbk12.org.

Dayton Deanery Libraries Consortium Promotes Collaboration

by Christie Sanderman, Library Media Specialist, Archbishop Alter Library Media Center

Abstract
Being the librarian in a Catholic school with a limited budget sometimes makes it difficult to offer students access to cutting-edge technologies like eBooks and interactive online searching. In response to this, nine Dayton area Catholic school libraries have joined forces and created a consortium called the Dayton Deanery Libraries in order to provide students with more resources than they ever imagined possible. This constantly evolving consortium provides an example of collaboration at its best.

Information and technology have played an integral part in changing the perception and role of the traditional school librarian. The days of stamping books and using the card catalog have long since gone, and today’s school librarians and media specialists have now taken on the roles of teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator just to name a few. This feat is sometimes even more of a challenge for private and parochial school librarians as they are usually isolated, being the only librarian in their building. In order to keep up with the new demands of being an effective school librarian and to best meet the needs of students, three Dayton area Catholic school librarians discussed forming a district in Follett’s online catalog system four years ago at a book repair workshop held at Wright State University. KaSandra Feldmann, librarian at Mother Maria Anna Brunner Catholic School, initiated the project and transformed it from an online district collaborative to a consortium of nine Catholic school libraries, the Dayton Deanery Libraries Consortium.

Members of the consortium include Archbishop Alter High School, Ascension Catholic School (K-8), Chaminade Julienne High School, Incarnation Catholic School (K-8), Mother Maria Anna Brunner Catholic School (K-8), St. Albert the Great Catholic School (K-8), St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School (K-8), St. Christopher Catholic School (K-8), and St. Helen Catholic
School (K-8). The consortium strives to provide librarians with the support and collaboration needed to ensure that library programs are teaching students to become ethical and effective users of information and ideas. Librarians are striving to meet this goal through the sharing of lesson plans and activities that cover topics such as copyright, identity fraud, digital citizenship, and social media awareness. Members of the consortium also share ideas about how to help their students become more effective online researchers through shared standards in Website evaluation and source citation. In addition, the consortium allows librarians to reduce duplication of services, help students transition from elementary to high school using the same catalog system, and better support teachers. It does so by integrating a focus on critical thinking and literacy skills within the Common Core standards through a “standards” search feature embedded in the catalog. The “standards” search allows teachers to search through the library’s collection of print and online resources in addition to a plethora of free Web resources to find materials and Websites that directly correlate to a certain set of Common Core standards. Librarians in the Deanery have already begun training their teachers how to use this tool.

Another benefit of the consortium is the opportunity for resource sharing, particularly eBooks, which provides our students with access to more resources than ever before. Through generous donations from parishioners and family members combined with funds from the individual schools, members of the Dayton Deanery Libraries are now able to offer their students access to over 530 eBooks from all reading and interest levels. Students can now read classics like Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein or popular new titles like The Hunger Games online or check them out to their electronic devices remotely. There are many wonderful selections for students in the younger grades as well, ranging from Curious George to the “My America” series to the “Percy Jackson” series. By providing students from grades K-12 with access to free eBooks, libraries in the Deanery Consortium are helping to not only teach students to be lifelong readers but to also prepare them to be tech-savvy digital citizens.

Consortium members meet at least once a month as a professional learning community to discuss best practices, program alignment, and strategies to promote a collaborative and professional working relationship among the schools. Schools take turns hosting the meetings, and topics range from book fairs to lesson plans to collaboration ideas. In order to keep everyone organized between meetings, members of the consortium utilize a shared Gmail address and Google Drive to store all files and other pertinent information. Kasandra Feldmann, district coordinator for the consortium, has begun to disperse some duties among the individual schools, and each librarian is taking on a specific job or responsibility such as timekeeper, cataloger, etc.

So far, the consortium has had a tremendous impact upon the students at member schools. This change has been the most exciting for younger students who had never used an online catalog before the formation of the consortium, but students at all nine schools are pleased that they are able to check out books from the comfort of home. Most beneficial, however, is how the collaboration among the librarians makes it possible for all students to learn the same library standards in elementary school so that they will have a common background when they get to high school. This allows the high school librarians to ensure that students are prepared to be successful both in college and the world beyond. Rather than covering basic skills like locating books, by the time these students are in high school they will be ready to tackle more challenging feats like college-level online research. Although the consortium will continue to change and
grow throughout the years, there is no doubt that it is truly an example of collaboration at its best.

Christie Sanderman has been the library media specialist at Archbishop Alter High School for three years. She received her master of education and library media licensure from Wright State University in 2011. She lives in Bellbrook, Ohio, with her husband and one-year-old daughter.

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**Collaboration of School and Public Libraries**  
*Finding Common Ground with the Common Core to Serve Students with Special Needs*

by Dr. Meghan Harper, Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Science  
Kent State University

**Abstract**

From a historical perspective to modern examples, this article describes common goals and opportunities for collaboration between school and public librarians around the areas of the Common Core State Standards and especially focuses on serving children with special needs. Examples of collaboration from around three core areas of service include facility-based services that make use of both the expertise and resources provided in the library; outreach services; and specialized services and programming to meet the needs of individuals with specific learning or developmental needs.

The need for collaboration of school and public libraries has never been greater. The common collaboration ground of school and public librarians has historically been based on a shared interest in providing specialized services for children such as assignment assistance, readers’ advisory services, and informational resources. All of these services both in school and public libraries have largely occurred in physical settings designed with their student audience in mind. School and public librarians have historically focused on providing quality resources, programming, and instruction and providing the “space” for these services to occur. Today, these remain as common ground for collaboration to occur between school and public libraries. Additionally, the adoption of Common Core standards is another common element for public and school library collaboration.

Emphasis on meeting the specific developmental and learning needs of students was and continues to be an impetus for collaboration. The following brief review of history suggests that librarians realized the benefits of collaboration between school and public libraries to best serve children as early as the mid-1800s. The following is a brief timeline of collaboration initiatives between school and public libraries:
• 1865: The Public School Library Society was founded in St. Louis for the purpose of establishing school libraries that “co-operated” with public libraries. This Library Society later became the St. Louis Public Library (Rees, 1924).

• 1876: William Isaac Fletcher wrote “Public Libraries and Youth” in the Bureau of Education’s Public Libraries in the United States of America, raising the issue of age restrictions and special facilities for children (Jenkins, 2000).

• 1879: Public and school library cooperation was discussed at the American Library Association conference. A landmark paper was presented, “The School and the Library: Their Mutual Relation” by W.E. Foster, which urged cooperation between school and public libraries (Rees, 1924, p. 87).

• 1897: A joint committee of teachers and librarians was formed to support the increased collaboration and cooperation between public and school libraries (Rees, 1924).

In the early 1900s, the first standards for school librarians were published, and they encouraged collaboration between school and public libraries. Public library records from the 1920s noted that teachers provided advance notice of assignments to public libraries, and resources were made available to visiting school children. School library standards published in succeeding decades suggested that public and school librarians collaborate in areas of collection development, literacy, and providing specialized services for children.

Now more than ever, school and public libraries should collaborate and establish mutually beneficial strategies. School and public libraries continue to have much mutual interest in serving their significant shared patron base of students. Both libraries are accountable to their communities and must advocate for their importance and continued sustainability. Fiscally, libraries must also do more with less and be vigilant in demonstrating their due diligence in providing high quality service and resources while keeping up with an ever-changing kaleidoscope of emerging technologies and national agendas such as the Common Core. Certainly, recent headlines emphasize the need for collaboration in addressing the Common Core standards. One such headline, “Common Core Thrusts Librarians into Leadership Role,” appeared in Education Week. School librarian Kristen Hearne, who also blogs as the Librarian in the Middle, was enthusiastic when interviewed about the opportunities the Common Core has provided. Gewertz explains:

She's working to build not only students' skills in writing, reading, research, and analysis, but also teachers' skills in teaching them. She and other librarians say they view the Common Core, with its emphasis on explanation, complex text, and cross-disciplinary synthesis, as an unprecedented opportunity for them to really strut their stuff. (Hearne, as cited in Gewertz, 2012, para. 2)

Gewertz further elaborates on Hearne’s description of teacher and librarian training that prepared her for this opportunity:

… [her] training as a teacher and a librarian . . . is perfectly suited to helping students and teachers as the Common Core State Standards presses them into inquiry-based modes of learning and teaching. She helps them find a range of reading materials in printed or online form and collaborates to develop challenging cross-disciplinary projects. And like
colleagues around the country, Ms. Hearne also plays important instructional roles often unrecognized by the public: as co-instructor alongside classroom teachers, and as professional-development provider for those teachers (Gewertz, 2012, para. 4).

The need for collaboration and recognition by both school and public librarians is emphasized in the following article, “The Public Library Connection: The New Standards Require that Public and School Librarians Pull Together | On Common Core” (Nesi, 2012). This article supports the idea that school and public libraries must collaborate as they work to provide services to their shared patron base as described in the following quotation: “The extent to which school libraries can contribute to the creation of lifelong public library patrons should not be underestimated. Nor should we ever underestimate the extent to which public librarians can reinforce and support our work and our kids’ learning well beyond the school day” (Nesi, 2012, para.2). The last headline appeared in reference to a live Webcast entitled, “The Common Core and the Public Librarian,” sponsored by School Library Journal. Excerpts from the live Webcast with commentary provided substance for an interview published in School Library Journal entitled “A School and Public Librarian Find Common Ground on the Common Core” (Lindsay, Nesi & Grabarek, 2013).

These headlines reflect an awareness of school and public librarians’ roles in supporting students and teachers as they incorporate Common Core standards as well as recognition of the specialized knowledge and skills of librarians. During the Webcast, Olga Nesi, regional coordinator for the New York City Department of Education, Division of Library Services, stated the following line of reasoning for public librarians’ interest in the Common Core:

[The] primary reason that they [public librarians] believe Common Core State Standards [CCSS] matter is because students are one of their larger patron bases. They’re going to have to help kids with some very different types of assignments, and without clarity about the standards, they’re feeling ill-equipped to deal with their needs.

The line of accountability is not direct, but as their patrons’ needs change, one might argue that public librarians are indirectly responsible to the CCSS and will need to make changes in the ways they serve these patrons.

Finally, the CCSS matter because they reflect a national agenda—one that appears to have some staying power. Because it’s such a major shift, it’s opening up an opportunity for school and public librarians to develop mutually beneficial strategies for contending with this new landscape. (Lindsay, Nesi & Grabarek, 2013, para. 4 and 5)

Another emphasis of the Common Core is the accessibility of the standards for those students with disabilities as noted in the document, “Application to Students with Disabilities” (2014), published on the Common Core Website:

Students with disabilities—students eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—must be challenged to excel within the general curriculum and be prepared for success in their post-school lives, including college and/or careers. These common standards provide an historic opportunity to improve access to rigorous
academic content standards for students with disabilities. The continued development of understanding about research based instructional practices and a focus on their effective implementation will help improve access to mathematics and English language arts (ELA) standards for all students, including those with disabilities.

School librarians, likewise, should acknowledge and be aware of the many ways in which public libraries can support their efforts and be another “go-to” source for educators, parents, and students. Maximizing and supporting the efforts of one another create a mutually respectful foundation for planning future collaborations in addition to advocating the value of all libraries. The following provisions may be provided in both school and public libraries and can serve as an impetus for collaboration between the two:

- Resources and opportunities for hands-on learning, with a recommendation of graduated resources that enhance learning of content concepts;
- Opportunities for different types of collaborative work, including noisy, quiet, small group, large group;
- Opportunities to use a variety of “formats” to meet differentiated and developmental needs;
- Opportunities for creation, exploration, and documenting learning.

In a recent interview with Portage Lakes Branch Library manager Chery Luck, of the Akron Summit County Public Library System, many of the suggested principles are already in place at her branch library. Ms. Luck stated that while some collaboration does occur with local schools she would like to see more. One district in particular has been difficult to work with because there are no licensed librarians in the district, and its frequent reorganization because of fiscal issues has compounded the situation. Our conversation centered on four topics: current collaborative activities with school libraries; Akron’s system-wide initiatives; library services for special needs students; and future activities that could increase collaboration with local schools at the Portage Lakes Branch Library.

Increasingly, public libraries have become aware of the need for providing services to students with special needs. This is evident in the activities and services provided by public libraries as well as the call for public librarians (described in job postings on professional listservs) that have specialized training or experience in serving those with special needs. The Portage Lakes Branch Library includes three main categories of library service: (1) facility-based services that make use of both the expertise and resources provided in the library; (2) outreach services; and (3) specialized services and programming to meet the needs of individuals with specific learning or developmental needs.

Facility-based services and programs include “Tales and Tails” dog therapy sessions where certified therapy dogs visit the library. Children are encouraged to practice reading to their dog. Another benefit of this program is that children who have a fear of dogs could attend to help them get over their fear in a controlled environment.

Another facility-based program is the use of the children’s role-playing playtime center for area speech therapists to work with pre-K children with disabilities. A magazine swap is set up
specifically to address the need for children and adults who may not be able to check out materials or have a library card but want to have something in hand as they leave the library. Ms. Luck emphasizes that flexibility is key! Luck also emphasizes that the library’s vast collection of multimedia resources is often requested to assist students with assigned reading or projects to enable them to more easily access curricular content.

A new initiative that has met with resounding success is a sensory garden that has paved the way for sensory-based programming. Sensory gardens are specifically set up to stimulate the senses of sight, touch, and smell of visitors who may or may not be disabled. This summer, basil, tomatoes, green beans, and sunflowers were grown in the Portage Lakes Branch Library. Harvested vegetables were shared via a paper plate eliciting much comment from children. Summer reading activities included treasure hunts that challenged children to find the pepper in the tomato plants, a bird’s nest, or a specific flower. All activities were designed to entice children to stop and smell the flowers and enjoy the garden via their senses. In winter, children were asked to make predictions about an amaryllis bulb, incorporating math and stimulating interest and enthusiasm for the growing plant. Sensory gardens are a virtual smorgasbord of opportunities for school and public library collaboration for the purpose of studying plant life and incorporating comparisons, predictions, and dialogue about the natural environment.

A collaboration success story with this library involves an outreach program with a local school. The children’s librarian is working closely with administrators and teachers to support the school’s curriculum in the after-school program held at the school location. The school is enthusiastically collaborating with the library to provide services to children in the after-school program that focus on a multi-level, international, and performing arts theme involving multiple subject areas. Initial meetings have led to a year-long plan of after-school programming provided by the library at the school and a celebratory culminating event at the library for students, parents, care-givers, and educators.

Two collaborations initiated by the library with outside social service agencies that have elicited positive community engagement are play and sensory story times. Both examples could easily be replicated in the school library. Playtime events are held once a month in collaboration with the United Disabilities Center and the use of their toy library. Stations are set up around the library that feature different types of toys such as blocks, bubbles, and musical instruments. The goal of this playtime experience is to encourage social interaction while at play for differently-abled students. The advantage of this service is that the libraries can rotate their collection of materials and select toys that fit with storytime themes or specific patron preferences. The center also maintains the toys including sanitizing and repair. School libraries may find this type of service exceptionally useful for developing hands-on learning stations to accompany thematic units.

Sensory storytimes provided throughout the Akron system target whole-family engagement for students on the autism spectrum. Librarians received training from the Autism Society of Greater Akron to offer sensory storytimes. The storytimes are generally quieter, more contained, and follow a set pattern with consistent opening and closing activities. Librarians may choose their own book and activity but are encouraged to work with a set theme; thus no matter where families may attend the sensory storytime, the experience will be predictable (C. Luck, personal communication, August 4, 2014).
School and public librarians have many opportunities to collaborate to meet the needs of their respective patron bases, share resources, and advocate for each other. Becoming knowledgeable and aware of the services provided by each, establishing systematic and effective communication about new initiatives and programming, and supporting the efforts of one another to provide quality services and resources to students is a good first step to developing a mutually beneficial collaborative relationship. Gaining knowledge about the Common Core, students with special needs, and keeping abreast of trends and issues facing school and public libraries will facilitate dialogue, communication, and collaborative activities.

**Resources**

The following resources are comprehensive informational resources for school and public librarians to recommend to educators and parents or to access for their own professional growth and knowledge.

![Preparing America's students for success](http://www.corestandards.org/)

Figure 1: Common Core State Standards Initiative, [http://www.corestandards.org/](http://www.corestandards.org/)

This online resource also has an accompanying app that can be downloaded to mobile devices.
Figure 2: About the Common Core State Standards
http://educore.ascd.org/channels/02d1bb32-0584-4323-908e-df822f4fc68f

This online resource from the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development has a wealth of information for both educators and librarians.
50 Common Core Resources For Teachers

11/28/2012, TeachThought Staff, 9 Comments

Figure 3: Common Core Resources Portal Site
http://www.teachthought.com/teaching/50-common-core-resources-for-teachers/

This site provides annotated links to many online resources. The resources are categorized by type, e.g., Groups and Organizations, Curriculum Development, State Tools, Blogs, and Further Reading under Articles and Presentations. School and public librarians will find this site immensely useful and will want to bookmark it for further reference.

These sites are excellent online resources for learning about how to incorporate Universal Design for Learning principles in your library or classroom.

...  

The Application to Students with Disabilities document retrieved from [http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSonSWD-AT.pdf](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSonSWD-AT.pdf) describes a rationale for how the Common Core applies to students with disabilities. Recommendations include integrating Universal Design for Learning principles.

**References**


Dr. Meghan Harper is associate professor in the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) at Kent State University. She has been a SLIS faculty member since 2001 and currently leads the school library media specialization, overseeing curriculum in that area and advising all K-12 library media licensure students. Harper earned a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction, a master of library science, and a bachelor of science in elementary education from Kent State. Prior to joining the SLIS faculty, she was coordinator of libraries and technology, and assistant curriculum director for Wooster City Schools; coordinator of media services, elementary library coordinator, high school and middle school librarian, network systems operator, and University of Akron School of Business and Technology liaison for Coventry Local Schools; and elementary librarian for Cleveland City Schools, Cleveland.

Want to Connect with Advocates and Visionaries Who Care About Your Students?
Take 5!

by Janet Ingraham Dwyer, Library Consultant, State Library of Ohio
Event photos by Sharon Leali, Youth Service Director, Jackson City Library

Abstract
Take 5 is a grassroots, cross-disciplinary professional dialogue first held in the spring of 2012. Take 5 brings together public and school librarians, arts and museum educators, and other youth advocates to consider large concepts in services to youth and teens, such as collaboration, technology, empowerment, and re-creating our approach to user services for the 21st century. The centerpiece of this project is an annual day of networking, learning, creativity, and fun,
attended in 2014 by over 110 Ohio librarians and educators. This article describes the Take 5 project and the annual event, and offers advice for school librarians to reach out to others who are invested in the success of their students to establish a sharing circle in their community or geographic region.

•••

Taken down to basics, collaboration has three necessary components: a partner – someone to collaborate with; an idea – something to collaborate on; and a plan – a way to get it done. It's simple but not easy. Librarians might have big ideas but lack the time or capacity to make them real. Librarians’ days are very busy, and their networking time is limited. It is particularly challenging to find the time to meet and build relationships with prospective partners outside the education system.

A group of collaboration-minded Ohio librarians came together in early 2012 around the vision of creating a network of youth advocates – school librarians, public librarians, arts and museum educators, and other more informal education professionals who support our young people. These librarians were excited about teens and libraries and had big ideas about networking, reinventing the library user experience, empowering their teens, and connecting with allies in other learning environments.

Whenever they had an opportunity to sit down and talk with one or two colleagues, they found themselves lamenting that they rarely have the opportunity to hold a professional conversation that is not task-oriented. They recognized that their peers must feel equally busy and in need of an outlet for discussion and idea sharing. So they created a supportive environment in which to have big conversations. It took the form, initially, of a one-day event and an invitation to ongoing dialogue called “Take Five! An Ohio Youth Services Day of Dialogue on Challenges, Solutions, and Emerging Best Practices.”

The librarians who created Take 5 value the learning opportunities at traditional conferences and other professional development events but noticed that some of the best learning and most exciting connections occur in hallway conversations between breakout sessions, over lunch, and in the carpool on the way home. The librarians' thoughts centered around two questions: how to turn hallway conversations into their own event, and how to attract attendees from different settings, in geographically and culturally disparate communities.

The Take 5 planning team, an informal group representing public and school libraries, the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science, and the State Library of Ohio, developed a vision for an event that emphasized

- Informal conversation, idea sharing, and serendipity over formal, structured instruction;
- Meaningful connection with professionals from formal and informal educational settings, including museums, libraries, schools, and arts organizations, i.e., people who are also invested in the education and creative welfare of young people, but who rarely—if ever—have the opportunity to meet;
- Ongoing dialogue and networking to support attendees long after the event ends, and to attract additional participants over time. A Facebook page (open to anyone at
https://www.facebook.com/Take5YouthServices) and an attendee contact information list distributed at the event promote participation and networking at any time.

The name “Take 5” was meaningful: attendees would be challenged and supported to take five new contacts, five new ideas, and five action steps away by the end of the day. Notice that these are exactly the three necessary components of collaboration – times five each!

The first Take 5 event was a day of dialogue and creativity at the Columbus Museum of Art in the spring of 2012. It combined expert talks on high-level concepts with small-group, roundtable discussions on hot topics such as advocacy, trends in teen culture, digital content, and Common Core. Seventy librarians and museum educators attended, made new contacts, shared their dreams, and even figured out how to collaborate to realize some of those dreams.

It was a big success, so the planning team reconvened and did it again in the spring of 2013 at the Allen County Museum and Lima Public Library. The site was selected, in part, to demonstrate that a large urban center is not a requirement for such an event. The 100 attendees (a 30% increase over 2012) proved this point. New to the second iteration of Take 5 was an attendee-driven poster session/display area, “Windows to Our World,” to which any attendee could bring a display of programming or other successful practices to share. This all-day poster session along with museum and library tours rounded out a day of lively small-group discussions and inspirational talks from speakers representing museums, schools, and public libraries.

The most recent Take 5 event was held at the Akron-Summit County Public Library and Akron Art Museum in May 2014. This event focused on dreaming big and asking, “What if ... ?” Speakers from fields as diverse as media production and minor league baseball ownership inspired the 110 attendees with short-format talks in the style of TEDx. Speakers included a team from the Akron Art Museum with a very engaging and funny but provocative discussion of rule-breaking; and the Director of Human Capital Development at COSI who asked, “What if we served our employees as well as we serve our customers?”

If this all seems far removed from the day-to-day experience of managing a school library, that isn’t a bad thing. We have journals, listservs, and professional development opportunities devoted to the successful operation of the library and practical participation in student learning. What Take 5 is teaching us is the importance of feeling excitement, creativity, and even joy on the job and being able to share these feelings with others. Take 5 is promoting and demonstrating the power of enthusiastic collaboration. Take 5 is mixing traditional and worthy library concerns with non-traditional ideas and partnerships, and not shying away from big ideas.

Take 5 also shows that by harnessing the grassroots collaborative spirit, everyone can pitch in to make something big happen. The events have been very inexpensive to put on, thanks to the generosity of the host sites, speakers, and planning team members who have donated their time, space, and expertise. The events have been supported in part by federal Institute of Museum and Library Services funds, granted through the State Library of Ohio; and by support from the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science (2012), the Lima-Allen County Convention and Visitors Bureau (2013), and the Akron/Summit Convention and Visitors Bureau (2014).
Take 5 encourages the creation of ongoing collaborative groups – communities of practice or sharing circles or networks – call them what you will. To start a group in your area, first identify your potential collaborators. Who provides services and support for your students when they are not in school? Do you have after-school programs, a community center, arts education institution, clubs, athletic organizations? Involve your counterpart at the public library, and reach out to the more informal educators and youth advocates you have identified. Through email or a phone call, explain that you would like to meet to share ideas and get to know each other. Perhaps there is a hot issue or new development in your community that could be the catalyst for starting the conversation. Or simply make the pitch that there is strength in numbers, and by talking together, you will all gain insights on how best to engage and serve your students. Everyone needs to eat, so you might propose an initial meeting over lunch or coffee. As the sharing circle takes off, maintain the momentum in a sustainable way through a monthly, quarterly, or semiannual lunch meeting; or, to accommodate incompatible schedules, simply exchange email addresses and send a group email when you have an idea or question.

Take 5 builds new relationships, collaborations, and conversations among professionals who support young people. You can participate in this energizing network or establish your own, or both. To learn more about Take 5, see the Take 5 Webpage at http://library.ohio.gov/youth-services/take5 and the Take 5 Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/Take5YouthServices. If you are interested in joining the planning team for the 2015 Take 5 event, or if you would like more information or advice on creating your own sharing circle, please email jdwyer@library.ohio.gov.

Attendees at the Take 5 event held at the Akron-Summit County Public Library and Akron Art Museum in May 2014. In the first photo, participants head from the library to the art museum to enjoy lunch and a museum tour; in the second, attendees take part in one of several opportunities for small-group discussion.

Janet Ingraham Dwyer is youth services library consultant at the State Library of Ohio. She provides resources for librarians and support staff, manages Ohio’s participation in the nationwide Collaborative Summer Library Program, and collaborates with the Ohio Library Council on Ohio Ready to Read, a statewide resource network supporting early literacy initiatives in libraries. Janet also represents the youth services library community on several national, state, and regional committees and task forces. She is devoted to collaboration across libraries, schools, literacy organizations, social service agencies, and others to support youth and families. Separately we are beneficial; together we are transformative. —Photo by Portrait Shoppe
Managing and Evaluating Your Collaboration Without Stress

by Cherie Pandora, Educational Consultant and Former School Librarian and
Stacey Hayman, Librarian, Rocky River Public Library

Abstract
Before you start your collaborative efforts it is helpful to determine how you will evaluate the effectiveness of your programs. You will want to measure what worked, what didn’t work as well, and what should be repeated with a few tweaks. You will also want to think about how to keep the funding rolling in so that you can repeat successful programs while starting new initiatives. The authors of this article discuss some easy ways to manage your collaborations without spending a great deal of time on recordkeeping.

Cherie Pandora and Stacey Hayman met during monthly meetings of the school and public library staffs in Rocky River, a suburb of Cleveland. Cherie was the high school librarian and coordinator of K-12 libraries while Stacey worked as the teen librarian for Rocky River Public Library; their collaborations began in the late 1990s. Our school district is small, consisting of only four schools and, at that time, around 2,000 students. Through these meetings we shared information about our libraries, coordinated calendars, and planned joint activities. We collaborated on grants, some successful, some not. We were happy to discover how easy it was to collaborate and reap the benefits for both the school and public libraries involved. At a very basic level, our goals were the same: we wanted to offer a wide range of resources, for work and for leisure, to as many teens as possible. Our goal in this article is to help you to easily evaluate your collaborative efforts without extra work or stress by providing tools that can help you promote your libraries, highlight the positive effects such work has on students, assist you in securing future funding, and create a new group of advocates for your libraries.

Cherie’s first opportunity to collaborate with a colleague from the public library came out of her need for assistance doing book talks for high school fiction. After discovering that Stacey was also passionate about teenagers and reading, and happy to lend a helping hand, a long-time relationship began, one that lasted for more than 25 years and through more than one staffing change at the public library. Cherie would call on her colleagues from the Rocky River Public Library for help; in return they would let her know when help was needed. Collaborative projects reached a peak during Stacey’s tenure as teen librarian. Together they wrote grants to fund cross-training teens on public and school library online resources and recommended lists of non-fiction books for publication in the Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA), a nationally known journal for professionals who work with teens.

Other opportunities for collaboration included their tradition of sharing information during monthly meetings, cross-promoting library activities, sending program or assignment alerts, and providing needed materials (sending teen patrons to the public library or loaning materials to the school library to augment the curriculum) to support a variety of programs. Supporting each other’s grant and award applications by drafting letters of support for each other was another easy collaboration.
Managing the Collaboration

The first step once you know your counterpart at the library is to decide what kind of project to try and what goal to work toward. Start with a small project with a short time frame. Determine how long the project will last; how many people need to be involved; and what kinds of materials are required. Ensure that joint projects meet the needs of both libraries. Create a list of responsibilities and a timeline; this can be done informally via discussion or more formally with a chart that explains which librarian manages each part of the plan. Add deadlines to help keep on task and serve as a checklist to mark progress. Don’t duplicate efforts; remember the goal is to lessen the workload while still providing benefit for your patrons.

To measure your success, create an easy formula to determine if the defined goals have been achieved. A willingness to be flexible and make changes as needed is a real asset as you may have to consider how, and when, to move on if the program no longer meets the needs of your students. Discuss also how to continue funding if the program is declared a success. Knowing if a project is successful, a dud, or just needs tweaking will depend on the end results you're attempting to achieve. For example:

(1) If your goal is to train teens on public library databases, schedule classes into the school’s computer center at a time the public librarian can also be available, and select one or two databases to demonstrate research on actual school assignments. Evaluate the project based on database usage statistics or database citations provided on bibliographies turned in to teachers. Decide if one semester, one quarter, or one school year will be the time frame and which database statistics or student citations you will need in order to declare the project a success.

(2) If your goal is to pair public library non-fiction titles with the school fiction collection (to meet Common Core standards) you need to select the school department or grade level to work with and plan discussions with those teachers. Identify the fiction that will be used by classroom teachers and the subject areas for which the school library needs additional non-fiction support. Check to see if your public library already has a teacher loan service in place and if teachers may borrow additional books through inter-library loan. Your metric can be based on the number of titles loaned to the school, the grade levels/departments served, the number of students who were helped, and/or comments from student and teacher participants.

Are You Meeting Their Needs?

Before the collaborative project begins, take a few minutes to determine how frequently you need to communicate with your partner. Consider informal emails for ease of communication. Email provides the added bonus of creating a written document that can be incorporated into a final report and can be shared with administrators who may be curious about your progress. Draft a plan to evaluate your success. If your project will meet district, state or national standards then you want a measurement that illustrates student learning. Note that your evaluation tools can be modified as your plans progress; not all projects work as planned on the first attempt. “Measure what is important to stakeholders. In the case of school libraries, one of the primary things to be measured is student learning and the impact on student achievement” (ALA, 2014).
Easy Evaluation Techniques

Start by tracking simple quantitative measures such as a list of expenses; a listing of classes served, teachers assisted, students attending, or the number of “hits” from databases you’ve taught. You can measure any growth in skills, or conversely, a decline in students using sources such as Wikipedia in favor of research databases. Don’t worry if you don’t have a good background in statistics; in any school or public library you have experts who can be tapped for help. A spreadsheet program will create professional-looking budgets, financial reports, and graphs. Consider trying the two-minute tutorials and helpful instruction on the free Goodwill Community Foundation Website for expert assistance (http://www.gcflearnfree.org/office). Since data-driven decision-making is a watchword for administrators, all of this quantitative evidence will be a wonderful addition to your progress reports.

Qualitative measurements and anecdotes are especially useful for reporting your progress to administrators, the community, and to any grant sources that have provided funding. This measure should include the voice of your patrons, such as quotes from students and teachers as well as your own thoughts. Ask students to create a journal entry or use a tool called a one minute reflection which asks two to five open-ended questions that students can complete quickly at the end of the program. (See Figure 1.) Satisfaction surveys, focus groups, one-on-one interviews with your patrons, their teachers, or parents are other means of gaining qualitative measurements that help you to gauge success and determine if the program should be replicated.

Figure 1

One Minute Reflection

1. What was your favorite part of the activity/lesson?
2. What would you change?
3. How will this help you with your research or assignments?
4. What other activity would you like us to plan?
5. For book discussions/summer reading discussions: Would you recommend this book to others? If not, what would you substitute in its place?

Think also of the ways in which you can record your experience visually. Take photographs and make short videos of your collaboration. These can be added to social media, TeacherTube, and Websites if you have parent permission. (See Figure 2.) All of these measurements will form the basis of a narrative report that can be used to measure success and identify any difficulties encountered. This helps in making decisions about whether or not to continue an activity, and if so, to make any changes to the current format. At a recent workshop it was suggested that self-evaluation consist of a single question: What would I do differently next time?

Communicating with Colleagues

After your collaborative project comes to a close, follow up with a short article or a presentation at a conference such as OELMA to share your experience with colleagues. Don’t leave out mistakes or missteps either as these can be immensely helpful for others. Too often we keep our
great ideas, programs, and events to ourselves if they don't measure up to our high expectations. Realize that so many of us are just waiting to learn from others; remember the librarian motto, “Never re-invent the wheel.” Instead we need to be inspired by each other’s ideas to create meaningful experiences and learning for our own patrons.

Conclusion

Our aim through this article was twofold: to encourage you to try a collaborative project with your counterpart at another library and to help you manage the process, from brainstorming to evaluating the results. We recommend starting with a smaller project first, something with appeal to both libraries’ management; then, decide what communication methods to employ and how often to communicate with each other. During the planning stage, divide the responsibilities, create a timeline, and set the criteria by which you will measure your project’s success. We’ve offered examples of simple quantitative and qualitative measures that can be used to evaluate any project. Remember, flexibility and patience are key attributes as projects don’t always go as planned; sometimes even better results come from unexpected events. Lastly, share your experiences so that we can all continue to learn from each other.

Figure 2

Tips for Managing Online Publicity

1. Check the policies of your library.
2. Follow procedures, particularly if minors will be pictured. Get the proper approval from parents.
3. Brainstorm ways that can show the activity without requiring permission, such as:
   a. Take large group shots where it is difficult to identify people
   b. Show only the hands working on projects or computers
   c. Showcase students’ journal writing, omitting names
   d. Use students’ own words to describe the project and why they enjoyed it
   e. Show finished projects

For Further Reading


Cherie Pandora worked for 35 years as a school librarian and teacher and for two years as an adjunct instructor teaching a research class. She now works as a library consultant and has made presentations on the subject of collaboration at the Ohio Educational Library Media Association (OELMA), American Association of School Librarians (AASL), and Public Library Association (PLA) conferences. With reference librarian Stacey Hayman she co-authored *Better Serving Teens through School Library-Public Library Collaborations* (Libraries Unlimited, 2013). She was awarded the OELMA Award of Merit in 2013 for her contributions to school librarianship.

Stacey Hayman, MLS, has been working at Rocky River Public Library for over 15 years. No longer directly responsible for teens, Stacey continues to enjoy their irrepressible energy. Reviewing for *Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)* and *Library Journal*, starting an online author interview column for *VOYA*, and being recently selected to participate on ALA’s Notable Books Council are keeping her quite busy.

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**Have you visited the OELMA Website lately?**

You can find relevant and useful resources there. Click on the Professional Resources tab for links to Ohio School Library Media Specialist Rubric, Evidence-based Practice, OELMA Webits (You Tube videos), White Papers, Ohio Research Study, Professional Partnerships, and State Standards.

Click Additional Resources to find information about AASL Standards Checklist, Cyber-etiquette and Bullying, eBooks & iPads in the Library, Library Jobs, Media Literacy, and Plagiarism.

The OELMA Blog, Wiki, and Listserv are also available to members, and various listserv discussions are archived for your convenience. Make the resources that OELMA offers part of your personal learning network. Visit the OELMA Website often at [www.oelma.org](http://www.oelma.org).
New & Noteworthy Resources

Compiled and designed by Sheila Campbell, OELMA Secretary

Why do some low-income schools succeed while others fail? That’s one of the questions that authors Sonia Caus Gleason and Nancy Gerzon set out to answer in their book, Growing Into Equity: Professional Learning and Personalization in High-Achieving Schools.

The education experts focused in on Title I schools, which receive federal funding to close the achievement gap in low-income areas. They profile four schools that are performing at high levels by personalizing learning, focusing on professional development, and creating outstanding school leadership.

NPR’s Here & Now’s Robin Young speaks with Gleason about the shared traits of high-achieving Title I schools in the U.S. She also speaks with two remarkable educators: Jose Navarro, founding principal of the Social Justice Humanitas Academy in Los Angeles; and Stacy King, a school coach at the Tusculum View Elementary School in Greeneville, Tennessee.

Navarro and King are two of the educators featured in the book. They weigh in on the challenge of achieving academic excellence in low-income communities.

You can listen to the interview on NPR: Here and Now: 3.12.2014. http://hereandnow.wbur.org/2014/03/12/low-income-schools

Leading in and Beyond the Library is a publication from the Alliance of Excellence in Education. This report explains the key role that school librarians and libraries should play in state- and district-wide efforts to transition to digital learning, or the effective use of technology to improve teaching and learning. The report calls for district and school leaders, policymakers, and boards of education to support, encourage, and fund the evolving role of librarians and libraries as facilitators of content creation, personalized learning, and professional development. The report can be downloaded from the Alliance for Excellent Education Website at http://all4ed.org/reports-factsheets/leading-in-and-beyond-the-library.

Paige Jaeger is the Coordinator of School Library Services at Washington/Saratoga/Warren/Hamilton/Essex Board of Cooperative Educational Services (WSWHE BOCES) in New York. Her book, RX for the Common Core, offers clear explanations of inquiry-based learning in light of the Common Core. This book is a practical and graphical guide that will serve as a much-needed primer for librarians and educators. In it, the author

• Presents essential questions and key concepts as the framework for efficient, effective change
• Provides readers with an understanding of the basics of inquiry learning and preparation to use methods and tools to implement inquiry learning
• Explains the rationale for the need to redesign instruction in the context of 21st century education
• Examines the Common Core and its relationship to inquiry learning
• Prepares readers to use a toolkit for implementation of the skills called for in the CCSS, such as synthesis and evaluation, and in order to train others in the implementation of inquiry-based learning and the CCSS

Sample Topics
Assessment
Backwards Design
Common Core State Standards
Defining Inquiry
Engaging Learners
Generation Y
Rigor and Relevance
Self Assessment
Synthesis


In addition, you can tune into Ms. Jaeger’s blog Librarydoor: Libraries, an Open Door to the World. http://librarydoor.blogspot.com
Makerspace.com. “Makerspace” is the latest buzzword. The free Makerspace Playbook is a guide to starting a Makerspace at your school or community. You need to submit your name and email to be sent the free Makerspace Playbook PDF.


Peter Mendelsund, associate art director of Alfred A. Knopf, offers a fully illustrated exploration of the phenomenology of reading—how we visualize images from reading works of literature, from one of our very best book jacket designers, himself a passionate reader.

Kirkus calls the book a “meditation on the miraculous act of reading” where Mendelsund “combines his profession, as an award-winning designer; his first career, as a classically trained pianist; and his first love, literature—he considers himself first and foremost as a reader—into a provocative and unusual investigation into how we understand the act of reading.” A Kirkus starred review.

*Publishers Weekly* calls this book a “highly accessible exploration through one of our most perplexing processes.” Award-winning science reporter Benedict Carey sifts through decades of education research and landmark studies to uncover the truth about how our brains absorb and retain information, using “biology and cognitive science to structure and inform his work.”


Dana Goldstein, a journalist with expertise in public education, inequality, social science, and gender issues, gives what *Publishers Weekly* calls an “immersive and well-researched history” of 175 years of teaching in America that shows that teachers have always borne the brunt of shifting, often impossible expectations. Goldstein “discusses educational fads, the battle for federal funding, the vilification of teachers’ unions, and the nation’s almost pathological obsession with data and statistics” and “closes with recommendations for the future, including: better pay; more perspective on test scores; and the expansion of teachers’ purviews in the classroom.”

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) has released a study that reports that just 17% of college programs "prepare students to teach reading using fundamental components of reading instruction." The study raises questions about whether teaching colleges are too lenient in their admissions criteria. Are they graduating teachers ill-prepared to teach subjects like reading, math, and science? Read about the study on the NPR Education blog. The article entitled "Study Delivers Failing Grades for Many Programs Training Teachers" by Claudio Sanchez and Juana Summers can be found at [http://www.npr.org/blogs/ed/2014/06/17/323032745/study-delivers-failing-grades-for-many-programs-training-teachers](http://www.npr.org/blogs/ed/2014/06/17/323032745/study-delivers-failing-grades-for-many-programs-training-teachers). The Teacher Prep Review 2014 is the second edition of NCTQ's annual assessment of the nation's 2,400 teacher prep programs and can be viewed and/or downloaded at [http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/Teacher_Prep_Review_2014_Report](http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/Teacher_Prep_Review_2014_Report)
**MINDSHIFT: How We Will Learn** (Blog). Launched in 2010 by KQED and NPR, MindShift explores the future of learning in all of its dimensions, covering cultural and technology trends, innovations in education, groundbreaking research, education policy, and more. The editor is Tina Barseghian. Get in touch by sending an email to MindShift@KQED.org.

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Psychologists Henry L. “Roddy” Roediger III and Mark A. McDaniel are leading experts on human learning and memory at Washington University in St. Louis; nonfiction writer and novelist, Peter C. Brown, “interviewed many people whose personal stories are woven into the narrative to illustrate and explain the underlying science.” The authors explain new insights into learning, in non-technical language, that are emerging from cognitive psychology research that indicate that educators have been going about learning and memorization in all the wrong ways. The book offers concrete techniques for becoming more productive learners. “One of our main points is that students need to practice retrieving information as a regular part of studying.” For more detailed information, visit the Washington University Website at [http://news.wustl.edu/news/Pages/26829.aspx](http://news.wustl.edu/news/Pages/26829.aspx).

Elizabeth Green focuses on the questions that really matter: How do we prepare teachers, and what should they know before they enter the classroom? How does one get young minds to reason, conjecture, prove, and understand? What are the keys to good discipline? She explores teaching as a craft and shows how complicated that craft can be.

Green studied teaching methods in both American and Japanese classrooms over the span of six years. Reporting on the efforts, based on research, to improve teaching in American schools, she explores data about student success and examines ways the data was collected. She also writes about her visits with professionals at multiple levels (administrative, support, frontline teachers). Kirkus called the book “A powerful, rational guidebook to creating genuinely effective education, written in a manner useful not just for schoolteachers, but everyone involved in the care of children.”

Elizabeth Green is cofounder, CEO, and editor-in-chief of Chalkbeat, a nonprofit education news organization. A former Spencer Fellow at the Columbia School of Journalism, she has written for New York Times Magazine and other publications.


Daniel J. Levitin is a cognitive neuroscientist at McGill University and also the author of This Is Your Brain on Music (which explained how to better play and appreciate music through an understanding of how the brain works). In The Organized Mind, Levitin focuses on the daily challenges of professionals, managers, and knowledge workers, using the latest brain science to demonstrate how some people excel at managing information flow. He discusses the information overload we are currently experiencing and that humans are attempting to organize and use as much of as they can. Levitin looks at implications of information overload and considers the future, both in terms of how to raise our children in an age of information overload as well as what organizing information could look like as we continue to evolve. He stresses that a vital part of our education should be to learn how to sift through and organize information in such a way that allows us to make decisions (a job in which school librarians play a vital role!).
The 2015-2017 OELMA Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan Goals and Strategies

- Make OELMA fiscally sound and relevant to Ohio’s school librarians
- Reach out to foster a broad and more active base of awareness and support
- Foster innovative solutions to help Ohio’s school librarians meet the needs of Ohio’s learners and promote student achievement

Strategic Plan Objectives Supporting Strategies

Make OELMA fiscally sound and relevant to Ohio’s school librarians
- Create a SGM to reach outside of traditional stakeholders
- Restructure management to decrease costs
- Increase membership - provide the value to make membership attractive
- Continue to look at partnerships and collaborations

Reach out to foster a broad and more active base of awareness and support
- Public relations role - reach out beyond traditional stakeholders
- Social and networking component - make members feel wanted
- Recognize and teach best strategies
- Assign mentors to each participant in the first time attendee breakfasts

Foster innovative solutions to help Ohio’s school librarians meet the needs of Ohio’s learners and promote student achievement
- Develop an innovative solution to overhaul oelma.org
- Offerings beyond the norm: EduConferences, LibCon, Pecha Kucha, PD for students and parents
- Online learning - make PD accessible no matter where you are
- Work toward an updated state library curriculum in conjunction with OELMA’s current evaluation tool
Congratulations to the
2014 OELMA Award Honorees

Outstanding Administrator Award

Dan Girard, Principal
Brookside Elementary
Worthington City Schools

Outstanding Contributor Award

Krista Taracuk, School Library Representative
State Library of Ohio Board
Head Library Media Specialist—Retired
Thomas Worthington High School
Worthington City Schools

Literacy Leader Award

Morgen Wade
Columbus Housing Partnership, Homeport
Bright Ideas Book Bank, Columbus

OELMA/Follett Library Resources

Outstanding School Librarian Award

Cheryl Cartwright, Library Media Specialist
District Library Coordinator
Greensview Elementary School
Upper Arlington City Schools

Emerging Leader Award

Jessica Klinker, Library Media Specialist
Franklin Heights High School
South-Western City Schools

OELMA Scholarship

Michelle Lombardi, Library Media Specialist
Columbus North International School
Columbus City Schools

J. Allen Oakum Scholarship

Michelle Lombardi & Vicky Schmarr, Co-chairs

Leadership-in-Action Award

Sarah Thornberry, Library Media Specialist
Springboro Middle School
Springboro Community City Schools

Karen Mosing, Library Media Specialist
Southeastern Junior/Senior High School
Southeastern Local Schools

Christina Dorr, Library Media Specialist
Horizon and Alton Darby Elementary Schools
Hilliard City Schools

J. Allen Oakum Scholarship

Laurie Katusin Swallen, Teacher/Librarian
Tuslaw High School
Tuslaw Local Schools

2014 Scholarship & Awards Committee

Betty Dangel, Central
Andrew Robitaille, East
Betsey Lee, Northeast
Cynthia VanWey, Northwest
Lisa Campbell, South
Sue Subel, Immediate Past President
Michelle Lombardi & Vicky Schmarr, Co-chairs

OELMA annually presents awards to members who reflect the excellence of the organization and the profession. Nomination forms are available from the OELMA office or Webpage. Nomination forms must be returned to the OELMA office no later than 5:00 P.M. on April 15th.
The 2014 OELMA Conference has been planned around the theme of *Ohio School Libraries: Taking Charge of Change*. More than 55 sessions led by teacher-librarians will demonstrate how Ohio school librarians are taking charge and leading the change in their schools. All sessions will focus on one or more of the following four educational strands:

- Literature—We are literacy experts!
- Research—We provide students with the skills needed to succeed!
- Technology—We are 24/7 librarians!
- Change—We are engaged in and champions of change!

New to this year’s conference will be a SPEED DATING session with authors from 1:00-3:00 on Saturday afternoon. Attendees will receive a “dating card” entitling them to 12 minutes of timed interaction with each of the following authors:
Robin Yocum, Michele Jakubowski, Jason Tharp, Mindy McGinnis, Colleen Clayton, Jody Casella, and Chris Crutcher.

For detailed information on conference pricing, schedule, and apps, please visit http://oelma.org/events/conference. Registration closes Wednesday, October 15 at 4:30 P.M.

Pre-conference

- Thursday, 23 October @ 5:00 PM
- Speaker: Ryan Cairney, the Ohio Historical Society
- Dinner @ 6:30 PM (included in the Pre-conference fee)

The Changing Nature of Ohio’s New Learning Standards

Ryan Cairney from the Department of Educational Partnerships and Outreach at the Ohio Historical Society will be leading the Pre-conference workshop this year. His focus will be upon the changes in Ohio’s learning standards, in particular the shift towards skill-based educational models we are experiencing in our schools. This will be a hands-on, active workshop for attendees and will include collaborative activities to help educators better meet the demands of skill-based lessons and activities within research projects.

- Meet & Greet reception for all conference registrants @ 7:30 PM

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Steven L. Layne
Professor of Literacy Education
Judson University
Author of Igniting a Passion for Reading
Keynote Address on Friday, 24 October: “Confessions of a Reading Arsonist”
Sponsored by Cengage Learning
www.stevelayne.com
With his trademark combination of humor and heart, multiple award-winning educator, researcher, and author Steven Layne tackles one of the most significant issues in reading instruction today: Teaching the skill of reading is viewed by many educators as a major objective; teaching the will of Dr. Layne's charismatic blend of anecdotes and practical suggestions for the classroom are sure to fan the flame of literacy and inspire teachers as well as their students to keep the bedside lamp on just a bit later into the night. —Adapted from the speaker's Website

Conference Authors/Illustrators

Featuring Ohio Authors/Illustrators

Rachele Alpine

Rachele Alpine is a lover of sushi, busting a move on the dance floor, and Michael Jackson. One of her first jobs was at a library, but it didn’t last long, because all she did was hide in the third-floor stacks and read. Now she’s a little more careful about when and where she indulges her reading habit. By day she’s a high school English teacher, and by night she writes with the companionship of the world’s cutest dog, Radley, a big cup of coffee, and a full bag of gummy peaches. Rachele lives with her husband in Cleveland.

—from the author’s Website, www.rachelealpine.com

Rachele’s novels include Canary and Operation Pucker Up.

Emma Carlson Berne

As a teenager, Emma Carlson Berne spent most her time reading Edith Wharton and Somerset Maugham. Occasionally, she would take a break for some Thomas Hardy. She was not voted prom queen.

Emma grew up in Ohio in a house with a creepy little closet in the attic. She went to a small high school, made a lot of unfortunate fashion choices, and escaped to the University of Wisconsin as soon as possible. She now lives in Cincinnati, where she reads the
Berenstain Bears aloud daily and sometimes writes.

In addition to YA thrillers and romance novels, Emma also writes educational fiction and nonfiction for children and young adults. —from the author’s Website, www.emmacarlsonberne.com

Her books include Never Let You Go, Still Waters, Impact Books series, several biographies, and several Cengage (formerly Greenhaven) anthologies.

Barbara (B.A.) Binns

B.A. Binns grew up the oldest lives in a Chicago suburb where church and community. After programming, B.A., an novels and stories with “real boys growing into real love them.” B.A. has won many novel Pull was nominated for She also makes presentations conferences, including the she presented “Attracting Teen school visits in person and by Trying (stories), Being God, and Website for more information: www.babinns.com.

Jeanette & Christopher Canyon

Ohio natives Jeanette and Christopher Canyon met as students at the Columbus College of Art and Design. Both are highly acclaimed children’s book illustrators who each find great enjoyment in learning more about the world around them as they complete their research for
their various book projects. Jeanette creates relief sculptures with polymer clay to make her illustrations while Christopher uses a variety of artistic approaches. Jeanette’s books include *Over in the Ocean, City Beats*, and *Over in the Jungle*. Christopher’s include *The Ever-Living Tree, Grand Canyon*, and a series of adaptations of the songs of John Denver. Discover more at their Website, [www.jeanetteandchristophercanyon.com](http://www.jeanetteandchristophercanyon.com).

### Mary Kay Carson

Mary Kay Carson is a nonfiction children’s book author. She’s written more than 50 books for kids about wildlife, space, weather, nature, and other science and history topics. —from the author’s Website, [www.marykaycarson.com](http://www.marykaycarson.com)

Some of her newer titles are *Park Scientists: Gila Monsters . . .* (SLJ Starred Review), *Beyond the Solar System: Exploring Galaxies . . .* (BL Starred Review), and *What Sank the World’s Biggest Ship?*

### Jody Casella

Jody Casella is a former high school English teacher with a degree in creative writing from Rhodes College and a master’s in English from the University of Memphis. Her first novel, *Thin Space*, a paranormal YA mystery published by Beyond Words/Simon & Schuster, received a Starred Review from *Kirkus*. She lives with her husband and two teenagers in Columbus, Ohio. She also writes stories, several of which have been published in *Cicada* magazine. —from the author’s Website, [www.jodycasella.com](http://www.jodycasella.com)

### Colleen Clayton

Colleen Clayton grew up in a small, suburban town just outside of Cleveland. After graduating from Kent State University, she worked as a social worker in residential treatment centers for troubled teens and as Program Supervisor for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mahoning Valley. She currently lives in Ohio with her family and recently received her MFA in fiction writing from the Northeast Ohio Consortium (NEOMFA).
teaches fiction writing and composition at Youngstown State University. Her debut novel, *What Happens Next*, a *Kirkus* Starred Review, was an Ohioana Book Award Finalist for 2013. —from the author’s Website, [www.colleenclayton.com](http://www.colleenclayton.com)

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**Chris Crutcher**

Born in Dayton and raised in an isolated rural town in Idaho where he was active in athletics, Chris Crutcher has written a plethora of award-winning young adult novels that draw upon his childhood years as a teacher and a therapist. On his Website, [www.chriscrutcher.com](http://www.chriscrutcher.com), for additional information.

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**Margaret Peterson Haddix**

Margaret Peterson Haddix grew up on a farm near Washington Court House, Ohio. She graduated from Miami University (of Ohio) with degrees in English/journalism, English/creative writing, and history.

She has since written more than 30 books for kids and teens, including *Running Out of Time; Just Ella; Turnabout; Takeoffs and Landings; The Girl with 500 Middle Names; the Shadow Children series; and the Missing series*. Her books have been honored with *New York Times* bestseller status, the IRA’s Children’s Book Award; ALA’s Best Book and Quick Pick for Reluctant Young Adult Readers notations; and numerous state readers’ choice awards.

Haddix and her husband, Doug, now live in Columbus, Ohio, and are the parents of two college-aged kids. —adapted from the author’s Website, [www.haddixbooks.com](http://www.haddixbooks.com)
Michele Jakubowski

Raised in the Chicago suburb of Hoffman Estates, Michele Jakubowski has the teachers in her life to thank for her love of reading and writing. ... it all started in the fourth grade when her teacher read the class Judy Blume’s *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*. Michele was so entranced, in fact, that when a class assignment that same year had her writing a letter to someone important, she chose to contact Ms. Blume; she couldn’t wait to tell her of her plans to become an author someday as well. ... Michele was introduced to the classics by her seventh grade English teacher (Ernest Hemingway’s *Old Man and the Sea* was a favorite.) Two exceptional high school teachers motivated Michele to keep reading and *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Catcher in the Rye* were the books that inspired her to write. ... Michele lives in Powell, Ohio with her husband John and their children Jack and Mia. —from the author’s Website, [www.michelejakubowski.com](http://www.michelejakubowski.com)

The author’s books include the **Perfectly Poppy** series, the **Sidney & Sydney** series, and *Sometimes You Can Go Home*.

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Susan Levine

Susan Levine grew up in Cincinnati, attended Miami University and started her career in packaged goods marketing with Procter and Gamble. She then moved on to become VP of Marketing and Environmental Affairs with SIG, an international packaging company. A wildlife enthusiast, Susan has traveled extensively to learn and study about endangered species. After the birth of her two children, Susan focused her energy on being a Brownie and Cub Scout leader, volunteering at the Childhood League Center, a preschool for children with special needs, and serving as an enrichment specialist at her children’s schools. It was in this role that she identified the need for children’s picture books about the major cities in Ohio. Always on the go with her children, Susan has a thorough knowledge of all that Columbus and Cincinnati have to offer families. In *Packard Takes Flight, A Bird’s-Eye View of Columbus* and *Harriett’s Homecoming, A High-Flying Tour of Cincinnati*, Susan blends her interest in wildlife with her knowledge of Ohio to create books that entertain and teach young children, while being a great resource for teachers and parents. —from the author’s Website, [www.susanlevinebooks.com](http://www.susanlevinebooks.com)
Mindy McGinnis

Mindy McGinnis is an assistant YA librarian who lives in Ohio and cans her own food. She graduated magna cum laude with a BA in English Literature from Otterbein University and a BA in English Literature magna cum laude with a minor in Religion. She runs a blog for aspiring writers at “Writer, Writer Pants on Fire,” which features interviews with agents, established authors, and debut authors. Learn how they landed their agents, what the submission process is really like, and how it feels when you see your cover for the first time.

—from the author’s Website, www.mindymcginnis.com

Mindy has written Not a Drop to Drink and a companion novel, In a Handful of Dust, to be released this month. Several of her stories have also been anthologized. —Photo by Amy Parrish

Paul Orshoski

Paul Orshoski is a former teacher, coach, and administrator who lives in Sandusky, Ohio and writes humorous poetry for children. Many of his poems, with titles such as “Bigfoot’s Bottom,” “It’s Finally Friday,” and “What’d You Learn at School Today?” have been anthologized. He also writes books such as Where Is My Frog? and My Sitter Is a T-Rex for the We Read Phonics and We Both Read series. Three of his We Read Phonics books were selected as Mom’s Choice Awards Gold Honor Winners in 2011. Visit the author’s Website, www.paulorshoski.com, to learn more and sample his poetry.

Jason Tharp

Jason Tharp and his wife Becky, small town Ohio natives who now live in Columbus, are the founders and owners of Wonderville Studios. Creating illustrations in the studio is a dream-come-true for Jason who thinks of himself as “nothing more than a big kid who loves to provide levity and provoke
laughter.” Tharp’s work has been featured in numerous print and online publications (for example, he illustrates the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 7 Foundation books) as well as in the graphics, packaging, and development of characters for major U.S. retailers. Tharp has won multiple awards for his work, including the Maggie Award. His wife Becky manages the business end of the studio. Visit their Website at www.wondervillestudios.com for more information and samples of his work.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Robin Yocum}
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Robin Yocum was born in 1955 in Steubenville, Ohio, and grew up in the Eastern Ohio village of Brilliant ... Robin received a bachelor’s degree in journalism from Bowling Green State University in 1978. After two years at the Lancaster \textit{Eagle-Gazette} and the Martins Ferry \textit{Times Leader}, Robin spent eleven years as a crime and investigative reporter with the \textit{Columbus Dispatch}. He received numerous writing awards, including those from the Associated Press and the Press Club of Ohio ... He and his fiancée Melissa live in Westerville, Ohio. \textit{The Essay} is Robin’s second novel. His first novel, \textit{Favorite Sons}, was named the 2011 USA Book News Book of the Year for Mystery/Suspense, and was a Choose to Read Ohio selection for 2013-14. He is also the author of two nonfiction books: \textit{Dead Before Deadline}, and \textit{Insured for Murder}, which he co-authored with \textit{Dispatch} reporter Cathy Candisky.

—\textit{from the author’s Website, www.robinyocum.com}
2014-15 Dates to Remember

OCIRA Conference, Columbus          October 4, 2014
AASL Fall Forum, St. Louis          October 17-18, 2014
OELMA Conference, Columbus          October 23-25, 2014
ALA MidWinter, Chicago               January 30-February 3, 2015
Dublin Literacy Conference, Dublin, OH February 21, 2015
OETC Conference, Columbus           February 10-12, 2015
OCTELA Conference, Worthington, OH   February 27-28, 2015
OELMA EduCon, BioMed (East Region)  March 14, 2015
Innovative Learning Spaces*
Virginia Hamilton Conference, Kent State April 9-10, 2015
ALA Annual Conference, San Francisco June 25-30, 2015
ISTE Conference, Philadelphia        June 28-July 1, 2015
OELMA EduCon, TBA                   September 2015
Blended Learning
AASL National Conference, Columbus   November 5-8, 2015

*OELMA EduConferences (in lieu of state conference in 2015) will be held between March 2015 and April 2016. The EduConferences will be held in various locations around the state. Planning is underway for a Literature EduCon in April 2016.

A Note from the Editor

I wish to thank the contributors to the Fall 2014 issue of the Ohio Media Spectrum and the peer reviewers, as well as the OELMA leadership for welcoming me to this appointment. I especially want to thank Susan Yutzey, president; Angela Wojtecki, vice president; and Sheila Campbell, secretary and immediate past editor of the Spectrum, for their encouragement and invaluable assistance in completing this issue.

Sincerely,
Mark Tuel

OELMA was created in 1976 when the Ohio Association of School Librarians and the Educational Media Council of Ohio joined as one organization. It quickly became and remains the premier Ohio organization for school library media personnel. Members include Pre-K-12 teachers and library media specialists, educational aides, college students, university professors, technology specialists, vendors, authors, and literary specialists throughout Ohio and other states. Our mission is “to meet the needs of Ohio’s learners as we advocate for and provide professional development to school librarians.” For more information about OELMA, visit the OELMA Website at www.oelma.org.