The Principal's Guide to a Powerful Library Media Program

Marla W. McGhee and Barbara A. Jansen

Professional Development Resources for K-12
Library Media and Technology Specialists

Special thanks to the authors, editors, and publishers listed below for granting their permission to reprint from the following sources:

Shirley Hord, *Learning Together, Leading Together: Changing Schools Through Professional Learning Communities*, (New York: Teachers College Press, " 2003 by Teachers College Press, Columbia University. All rights reserved), page 23.

Carl D. Glickman, Stephen P. Gordon, and Jovita Ross-Gordon, *SuperVision and Instructional Leadership: A Developmental Approach*, 6e, Published by Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA. Copyright © 2004 by Pearson Education.

Thomas J. Sergiovanni, *The Principalship: A Reflective Practice Perspective, 4e* Published by Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA. Copyright © 2004 by Pearson Education.

Children's Literacy Initiative, Philadelphia, PA,< www.CLIontheweb.org > *A Blueprint for Literacy Leadership* was developed through funding from Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds.

Jean van Deusen, Teacher Librarian: The Journal for School Library Professionals K-12. Vol. 23:1 p. 16-19, September/October 1995.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

McGhee, Marla W.
The principal's guide to a powerful library media program / Marla W. McGhee and Barbara A. Jansen.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 1-58683-193-3 (pbk.)
1. School libraries—United States—Administration. 2. Instructional materials centers—United States—Administration. 3. Information literacy—Study and teaching—United States. 4. Media programs (Education)—Administration. 5. School principals—United States. I. Jansen, Barbara A. II. Title.
Z675.S3M329 2005 025.1'978'0973—dc22

2004030208

"Big6" is © 2001-2005 Big6 Associates, LLC.

Authors: **Marla W. McGhee and Barbara A. Jansen**
Linworth Books:
Carol Simpson, Editorial Director
Judi Repman, Associate Editor

Published by Linworth Publishing, Inc.
480 East Wilson Bridge Road, Suite L
Worthington, Ohio 43085

Copyright © 2005 by Linworth Publishing, Inc.
All rights reserved. Purchasing this book entitles a librarian to reproduce activity sheets for use in the library within a school or entitles a teacher to reproduce activity sheets for single classroom use within a school. Other portions of the book (up to 15 pages) may be copied for staff development purposes within a single school. Standard citation information should appear on each page. The reproduction of any part of this book for an entire school or school system or for commercial use is strictly prohibited. No part of this book may be electronically reproduced, transmitted, or recorded without written permission from the publisher.

ISBN: 1-58683-193-3

5 4 3 2 1

Dedications

To my wonderful family who always provides steadfast and unconditional love for me through all my endeavors, and to Mrs. Lorraine Burns, my favorite teacher, who even today continues to teach me new things.—M.M.

To my mother and friend, Marilyn Pinson, for her unconditional love and support, and to Bob Berkowitz, my good friend and mentor.—B.J.

Acknowledgments

A thank you from Marla…Our collaboration began in 1989 when Barbara stepped into Live Oak as its new librarian. From that point on, learning on our campus was not the same. As a school community, we viewed the library program differently. We viewed collaboration differently. We viewed technology differently. Barbara joyfully and brilliantly worked side by side with teachers and students, facilitating deep thinking, creating meaningful research, and constantly promoting a love of literacy among all. I am so incredibly thankful for the years we worked together and I know I am a better educator today because of Barbara.

I want to extend a sincere thanks to my colleagues at Texas State University—San Marcos for their words of encouragement through this process. And, of course, a most heartfelt thanks to my lovely and supportive family— husband Tim, and daughters Sarah and Paige—for enduring many evenings at home without "Mom."

A thank you from Barbara…Marla took a chance in hiring me, a first-year librarian, for her two-year-old school, Live Oak Elementary. She showed me that a supportive, collaborative principal provides the library media specialist with guidance when necessary, but allows her the autonomy to develop a library media program that supports the intellectual needs of students and faculty. Under her leadership, I learned about best instructional practices and how to integrate them into the library media program. "How does this affect our students?" If the practice did not yield positive results and meaningful learning, then it did not become part of our methodology.

There are many others who are instrumental in my growth as a professional: Mike Eisenberg and Bob Berkowitz, my Big6™ colleagues, for their continued support and friendship, and for giving me opportunities to share effective strategies with others. Also helpful in the making of this book are my brave colleagues at Live Oak Elementary, Forest Creek Elementary, and St. Andrew's Episcopal School, who through the years, have allowed me to collaborate with them to meaningfully integrate the information search process into their courses of study. Most importantly, to my husband Larry, I owe a huge debt of

gratitude for not complaining about being alone all those nights and weekends we worked on this manuscript.

A thank you from Marla and Barbara…There are many people who helped make this work possible. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to: Carlyn Gray, Library Media Director in Round Rock ISD for sharing many excellent library-related resources, some of which appear in this volume; Julie Walker, Executive Director of the American Association of School Librarians and our former colleague for her energy and inspiration to always strive for something better; Hilary Carlson, former head of St. Andrew's Upper School, who graciously read our manuscript from an administrative perspective and provided us with invaluable guidance and suggestions; Carol Klahn, our long time educational colleague and dear friend, for her incredible work as our proofreader and indexer; and Mr. Bob Berkowitz and Dr. Carl Glickman for their powerfully written forewords that set the tone for this text.

About the Authors

Marla W. McGhee worked in the public schools of Texas for 21 years serving as a teacher, an elementary principal, a secondary principal, and a central office curriculum area director. Under her leadership as principal, Live Oak Elementary was named a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School in 1992. She was selected to represent Texas as the National Distinguished Principal in 1994, and was one of three finalists in the nation for the Principal in Residence position at the U.S. Department of Education in 1995.

Dr. McGhee teaches in the master's and doctoral programs in Educational Leadership at Texas State University-San Marcos where she is also Graduate Advisor and the Co-director of the National Center for School Improvement. Her interests include instructional supervision, action research as a school improvement tool, and campus leadership for literacy learning. She recently participated in the Program for Teaching and Learning Excellence at Texas State University and was the College of Education nominee for the Presidential Excellence in Teaching Award at the Assistant Professor Rank.

Marla, a trainer for the New Jersey Writing Project in Texas (since 1993), was named to the Principals' A Honor Roll in 1996 and was a 2003 recipient of the Sue German Award for Excellence. She holds two degrees in Education from Texas Tech University and a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Texas at Austin.

Barbara A. Jansen is the Librarian and Technology Coordinator at St. Andrew's Episcopal Upper School in Austin, Texas. She also serves as part-time faculty at the University of Texas at Austin School of Information. Her latest course is "Electronic Resources for Children and Youth." She is a consultant for the Big6 Associates. Before becoming a librarian, she taught at Berkman Elementary in Round Rock, Texas. Barbara specializes in integrating information process skills, content area curriculum, and technology. She has had articles published in *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, *Library Media Connection*, and *Multimedia Schools* magazines and the *Big6 Newsletter* formerly published by Linworth Publishing. Barbara holds B.S., M.Ed., and M.L.I.S. degrees from the University of Texas at Austin. She is active in the Texas Library Association and is a member of Texas Computer

Education Association, American Library Association (ALA), and American Association of School Librarians (AASL).

Barbara is committed to collaborating with teachers to fully integrate information problem-solving, content objectives, and technology into the curriculum. In 1994 she studied the Big6 model of information problem solving with Big6 co-authors Mike Eisenberg and Bob Berkowitz. They published a book titled *Teaching Information & Technology Skills: The Big6™ in Elementary Schools* available through Linworth Publishing Inc. (www.linworth.com). Barbara is often asked to share her ideas at conferences and professional educational training seminars for state conferences, regional service centers, and local school districts and campuses.

Table of Contents

Dedications iii

Acknowledgments v

About the Authors vii

Table of Figures xv

Foreword by Robert E. Berkowitz, School Library Media Specialist and Co-Creator of the Big6™ Skills Approach xvii

Foreword by Carl D. Glickman, President of the Institute for Schools, Education, and Democracy xviii

Introduction xxi
- About Language and Levels of Practice xxii
- What Is Included xxiii

Works Cited xxv

Chapter 1: Overarching Philosophy—Instructional Leadership, Research, and Standards for Best Practice 1
- Guiding Questions 1
- Introduction 1
- Principals and Assistant Principals as Instructional Leaders 2
- The Library Media Specialist, the Library Media Center, and Student Performance 5
- Guidelines and Standards for Library Media Programs 7
- Chapter Summary 10
- Planning for Action and Getting Started 11
- Works Cited 11
- Additional Resources 12
  - Principals as Instructional Leaders 12
  - Research Studies about Library Media Programs and Performance Outcomes 12
  - Rubrics Providing Guidance in Assessing Library Media Program Components 13
  - Examples of State Library Media Standards 13

Chapter 2: Effective Practices in Integrating the
Library Media Program across the School and Curriculum 15
Guiding Questions 15
Introduction 15
Information Search Process 16
Information Search Process Models 17
Big6™ Skills Approach Developed by Michael Eisenberg and Robert Berkowitz 17
Information Search Process Developed by Carol Collier Kuhlthau 18
Inquiry Process Developed by Barbara Stripling 18
Collaboration 19
Reasons for Collaboration 20
Steps to Effective Collaboration 20
Levels of Collaboration 21
Benefits to Students 21
Obstacles to Collaboration 22
Selected Examples of Integration across the Curriculum 23
First Grade Science and Social Studies 23
Fourth Grade Science 24
Fifth Grade Social Studies and Language Arts 25
Sixth Grade Math 26
Eighth Grade Health 26
Tenth Grade Social Studies and Language Arts 27
Eleventh Grade Art History 28
Twelfth Grade Environmental Science and
English Composition 29
Ethical Issues and the Library Media Program 30
Promoting Intellectual Freedom through
the Library Media Program 31
Equal Access to Ideas and Information 31
Copyright and Plagiarism 32
Promoting Reading, Writing, and Visual Literacy 33
Chapter Summary 33
Planning for Action and Getting Started 34
Works Cited 34
Additional Resources 35
Information Search Process 35
Collaboration 36
Curriculum Integration 37
Ethical Issues 37
Promoting Reading, Writing, and Visual Literacy 38

Chapter 3: Understanding the Responsibilities of
the Library Media Specialist 39
Guiding Questions 39
Introduction 39
Instructional Partnership 41
Collection Development and Maintenance 42
Addressing Challenges to Books and Materials 43
Maintaining the Collection 44
Library Programming for the Promotion of Literacy 45
Reader Guidance 46
Cataloging and Circulation of Materials 46
Steps to Effective Cataloging of Materials 47
Circulation of Library Materials 48
Bibliographic Instruction 49
Technology Training, Acquisition, and Support 50
Library Automation 50
Access to In-Library Materials and
Subscription Databases 51
Professional Productivity 51
Audio-Visual Equipment 52
Library Volunteer Program 53
Communicating with Public Libraries that Serve
the School's Attendance Area 54
Focusing on Priorities 55
Chapter Summary 56
Planning for Action and Getting Started 56
Work Cited 57
Additional Resources 57
General Resources 57
Instructional Partnership (Collaboration) 57
Library Programming for the Promotion of Literacy 58
Reader Guidance 58
Collection Development and Maintenance 59
Challenges to Books and Materials 59
Technology 60

Chapter 4: The Principal's Role in Supporting
the Library Media Program 61
Guiding Questions 61
Introduction 61

Hiring a Library Media Specialist 62
Hiring a Paraprofessional 64
Appraising the Library Media Staff 66
Budgeting for the Library Media Program 67
Scheduling for an Effective Program 68
Disadvantages of a Fixed Schedule 68
Advantages of a Fixed Schedule 69
Advantages of a Flexible Schedule 69
How Does Flexible Scheduling Work? 69
Moving from Fixed to Flexible Scheduling 71
Optimizing a Fixed Schedule 72
Library Media Center Facilities 72
Lighting and Electrical Outlets 73
Signage 73
Bookshelves 73
Seating Area for Pleasure Reading 74
Instructional Area 74
Story Time and Presentation Area 74
Computer Tables 74
Circulation Desk 75
Décor 75
Book Displays 75
Library Media Specialist's Office and Work Space 75
Work Space for Students 76
Audio-Visual Storage Room 76
Open Space 76
Advocacy for the Library Media Program 76
Chapter Summary 78
Planning for Action and Getting Started 78
Works Cited 78
Additional Resources 79
Sample Librarian Appraisal Instruments and Systems 80
Scheduling for the Library Media Program 80
Budgeting 80
Facilities Planning 80
Advocacy 80

Chapter 5: Continuous Improvement through Professional Development and Action Research 83
Guiding Questions 83

Introduction 83
Characteristics of Effective Professional Development 84
The Principal's Role in Professional Development 85
Providing Support through Supervision 88
Professional Development for the Library Media Specialist 89
Library Media Specialist as a Professional Developer 91
Content of Professional Development
Conducted by the Library Media Specialist 92
Professional Growth for the Paraprofessional 94
Action Research as a Tool for Improvement 94
GEARing Up for Success: An Action Improvement Model for Library Media Specialists 97
Steps of the GEAR Method 97
Successfully Applying the GEAR Method 97
Chapter Summary 98
Planning for Action and Getting Started 99
Works Cited 99
Additional Resources 100
Staff Development 100
Using Data 100
Action Research, School and Classroom-Based Research, and Inquiry 101
Appendix 103
Instructional Unit Planning Guide 103
Evaluating the Information Search Process Plan 105
Guide to Integrating the Information Search Process with the Writing Process 109
Quality Continuum of Instructional Time for Library Media Specialists 113
Interviewing a Library Media Specialist 114
Interviewing a Library Paraprofessional 116
Budget Proposal Worksheet 118
Annual Budget Worksheet 120
Library Walk-About Checklist 122
GEAR Method Planning Guide Worksheet for Concepts in Chapter Two 124
GEAR Method Planning Guide Worksheet for Concepts in Chapter Three 126
GEAR Method Planning Guide Worksheet 128

Index 131

Table of Figures

Figure 2.1 Levels of Collaboration 22

Figure 6.1 Quality Continuum of Instructional Time for Library Media Specialists 113

Figure 6.2 Interviewing a Library Media Specialist 114

Figure 6.3 Interviewing a Library Paraprofessional 116

Figure 6.4 Budget Proposal Worksheet 118

Figure 6.5 Annual Budget Worksheet 120

Figure 6.6 Library Walk-About Checklist 122

Figure 6.7 GEAR Method Planning Guide Worksheet for Concepts in Chapter Two 124

Figure 6.8 GEAR Method Planning Guide Worksheet for Concepts in Chapter Three 126

Figure 6.9 GEAR Method Planning Guide Worksheet 128

Foreword

Those of us who are library media specialists understand the actual and potential impact of library media programs and library media specialists in the teaching-learning process. The problem is that it is not always the case that school administrators do.

This book takes the perspective that principals can make a significant difference in the quality of the library media program in their school through deep understanding and commitment to the importance of the library media program and effective partnership with the school library media specialist. It recognizes that principals can and must be partners in order to make school library media centers work.

The goal of this book is specifically and primarily to help school administrators lead their school community to high quality use of the library media center for teaching and learning. To accomplish this goal, effective principals have to be instructional leaders who understand the importance of quality library media programs; administrators need the skills, ability, and information to:

- Facilitate through design, communication, and implementation, a vision for library media programs that is shared and supported by the school community
- Advocate, foster, and maintain a school climate and instructional program that supports the library media program

This book recognizes that the solution of under-utilized library media centers and under-appreciated library media specialists is deceptively simple. McGhee and Jansen present principles and perspective, and describe strategies that administrators can use to create a climate for successful library media programs. The topic strands addressed in this book: Philosophy, Curriculum Integration and Collaboration, Roles and Responsibilities, and Professional Development are essential vision elements. They provide perspective and direction to improve understanding and advocacy for school library media programs.

This guide can provide principals with a base of understanding about the characteristics of successful library media programs, and successful

library media specialists, so that they can develop the capacity to support quality media programs. Principals must develop an understanding of and value for issues such as integrated information skills instruction, intellectual honesty and copyright, scheduling, program and staff evaluation in order to commit time, talent, and money to ensure that library media program goals are met.

This book should be a highly valuable resource for school principals, at any stage in their professional career, interested in improving their school's library media program. I trust that this text will be greeted with enthusiasm by principals as an important tool to help meet the challenge of creating, supporting or maintaining successful school library media programs. Marla W. McGhee and Barbara A. Jansen have set out to help school leaders develop a shared sense of direction.

That's what this book is all about.

- Robert E. Berkowitz
School Library Media Specialist and
Co-Creator of the Big6™ Skills Approach

While directing a school-university partnership, one campus I worked with for a number of years was a favorite place to visit. The school looked like a high-end wealthy facility with all the right roof angles, generous corridors, sunny classrooms, and richly woven carpets. However its students were not from wealthy homes—they lived in urban trailer parks and low-income housing projects. My pleasure in visiting was to experience the joy of watching these learners being so much a part of their school. They loved to read, to discuss books, and to ask incessant questions of how and why and when and what to each other and every one else who happened by.

After reading this text, I now understand why students and faculty were so drawn to reading, writing, researching, and exploring. A good part of the attraction was the library media center and an exuberant and skilled librarian. She and her aide and parent volunteers were physically located in the hub of the school, in open view of every person. The library was an inviting and attractive place for students to ask questions, listen to advice, find new information, use various forms of informative technology, and present and display their findings. The rapport between librarian, teachers, students, and parents was extraordinary. If you didn't

know who was who, you could easily suspect that everyone and no one was in charge, as the hum of productive activity beckoned all into this place.

Marla McGhee and Barbara Jansen have done the profession a true service in writing this book, full of illustrations and real cases showing school principals how steady school improvement and higher student achievement comes about through integrative curriculum planning with teachers, administrators, and library staff; staff development conducted with and by staff; and open and purposeful flow of communication among library media specialists, teachers, students, and parents over classroom, curriculum, and student needs.

Perhaps many school leaders think as I did as a school principal, that the library is an important place but best to be left alone in the hands of competent professionals. I now understand that the result of such benign neglect is terrible underutilization. The authors explain that the culprits are not the librarians or teachers, as in most schools they respect each other. But they simply don't have the time to make the library media center central to teaching and learning. It takes steadfast and knowledgeable leaders to change this detachment to powerful collaboration. This book will help school principals alter the role of the library media center to be a force for the public purpose of our schools—the advancement of engaged learning of *all students*—so critical to achieving the next generation of educated, resourceful citizens.

- Carl D. Glickman
President of the Institute for Schools, Education, and Democracy

Introduction

The number of students enrolled in schools has never been larger and the challenges facing students, educational professionals, school leaders, and parents have never been greater. Schools today are richly diverse places to learn—an amalgam of cultures and languages and an ideal forum for varied thought and opinion. Moreover, in a time when technologies are escalating, communication is immediate, and communities are globally connected—managing, accessing, and making sense of information should be considered a standard or basic skill in a democratic society. Yet matters such as school funding, safety, campus overcrowding, and policies and pressures associated with increased performance and high impact testing are often shaping the way schools do business.

Considering these issues, there has never been a more appropriate time to enable campus professionals to do what they *can* do best. For the library media specialist, this means:

- Spending time planning and teaching with classroom colleagues across all grade levels and disciplines
- Serving as a member of the school's literacy learning team
- Leading in technology applications and information literacy and management
- Working with students at time and point of instructional need
- Leading professional development while continuing to learn themselves
- Collaborating in resource planning discussions for the school
- Developing a collection based on student interest and the curriculum
- Creating programming to promote literacy and draw others into the library media center

But few administrative preparation programs actually educate future campus leaders and decision-makers about library-related "best practice" (MacNeil and Wilson). "Principals often leave library potential untapped despite 50 years of research evidence that effective library programs—when led by active, involved teacher-librarians—can have a discernible positive impact on student achievement regardless of student, school and

community demographics" (Hartzell 21). Consequently, countless library media specialists in elementary and secondary schools spend time "covering classes" during teacher conference periods or faculty absences; trapped in a fixed library schedule or rotation, forced to teach skills out of context and disconnected from the classroom curriculum; managing electronic reading incentive programs; distributing and inventorying textbooks; and supervising a program with no paraprofessional to assist with facilitation. Because the administrative team is instrumental in shaping the roles, responsibilities, and tasks of their campus personnel, they must be more aware of the *appropriate work* of the library media specialist.

That is where this text comes in. This guide is a balance of best practice philosophy and successful application. The intent of this book is not to cover the waterfront of literature on library media programs, nor is it to comprehensively explore all the professional work related to the principalship. Rather, the goal is a balance of both, providing principals with enough substantive information to help them be effective practitioners who understand the impact a well-rounded library media program can have on the learning lives of students and teachers alike. While the primary audience for this book is practicing campus principals and assistant principals, PK-12, it goes without saying that library media specialists at these levels will also have high interest in this text. A secondary group of interested readers may include those in educational leadership preparation programs at universities and in alternative certification centers, professors planning curriculum for principal preservice programs, curriculum directors and other district-level administrators, and students and faculty in Schools of Library and Information Science.

This book provides school leaders with a working knowledge of how to appropriately support the program so that library professionals and their classroom counterparts can practice their expertise, creating a synergistic effectiveness that far exceeds the capabilities of any one person, department, or program.

About Language and Levels of Practice

In this volume there is no differentiation between secondary and elementary school practices except where there is an obvious or marked difference that will then be noted in the text. Best practice philosophies and concepts can, in general, be implemented and practiced across all schooling levels. Having worked as educators in elementary, middle,

and high schools in diverse communities, this appears to be the most appropriate way to approach the work and to present it here.

The terms *librarian* and *library media specialist*, and *library* and *library media center* are intended to mean the same thing. And, although the title of *principal* is generally used in reference to the lead administrator on the campus, much of what is presented here is also applicable to assistant, associate, or vice principals. Sometimes the term *campus administrator* is used when the topic or concept is appropriate for anyone who assumes a formal school-level leadership role. In reference to gender-specific language, *he* and *she* and *him* and *her* are used interchangeably throughout the text.

What Is Included

Each portion of the text is designed to address a critical component of library media services. Every chapter focuses on different aspects of administrator and librarian work and begins with a set of guiding questions an administrator might ask about the themes in that section. Examples and anecdotes of best practice application and collaboration are included throughout to elaborate and illustrate points. After each chapter summary, a list of suggested action steps is offered in order to help principals and other campus leaders get started with developing a quality library media program. Finally, a comprehensive list of additional resources is provided at the close of every chapter to help extend learning to other sources and texts.

Chapter one outlines the book's overarching philosophy rooted in instructional leadership, research, and best practice. This chapter focuses on the instructional role of the principal and how that role relates to library media services. Additionally, there is information about a body of research indicating that library media programs impact student performance on a variety of standardized and other learning measures. Furthermore, to assist school leaders in better understanding the critical aspects of sound library media practice, leading national and state standards are also discussed.

Chapter two presents effective practice in library media centers, first with examples given for several information search process models. The importance of collaboration among the library media specialist and teachers is followed by the steps to effective collaboration and obstacles that may impede the process. Several instructional scenarios show how teachers and library media specialists work together to deliver quality instruction that integrates information and technology skills with content

area curriculum using an information search process as the model for learning. Next are issues of copyright and plagiarism, highlighting the librarian's probable role. Offered, too, are strategies the library media specialist may use in promoting reading, writing, and visual literacy across the school and curriculum.

Chapter three targets the varied responsibilities assumed by the library media specialist to ensure access to an effective and efficient library media center. It focuses on the professional roles of the library media specialist—instructional partner, collection developer, and program creator. Further, the chapter describes how an assistant or volunteer can assume some of these responsibilities under the supervision of the library media specialist. This chapter also includes the responsibilities of campus leaders and library media specialists when dealing with challenged books or materials.

Chapter four offers guidance for administrators in facilitating tasks specifically related to library media services. These include items such as recruiting and hiring library media center personnel, planning for and managing funds, building the schedule for effective library media practice, allocating learning space, and advocating for strong programs in and outside the school.

Chapter five explains the dual role of the library media specialist, as designer and leader of professional development sessions for others and as a professional committed to career-long learning. This section also addresses the characteristics of effective professional development and action research, and the role campus administrators play in shaping, supporting, and sustaining adult learning goals and activities. To assist the library media specialist in improving her practice, a developmental cycle is also included. The GEAR Method (***G****ather Information*, ***E****stablish Goals*, ***A****pply Strategies* and ***R****eflect*) can refocus professional practice, help to hone related skills, increase the overall effectiveness of the library media program, and positively impact student performance. The appendix contains a set of planning guide worksheets specific to topics and themes introduced in each chapter.

Works Cited

Hartzell, Gary. "Why Should Principals Support School Libraries?" *Teacher Librarian* 31.2 (2003): 21.

MacNeil, Angus J., and Patricia Potter Wilson. "Preparing Principals for the Leadership Role in Library Media Centers." *Applied Educational Research Journal* 12.2 (2000): 21-27.

Overarching Philosophy

Instructional Leadership, Research, and Standards for Best Practice

Guiding Questions

What is instructional leadership?
How do instructional leaders support the library media program?
Can the library media center and the library media specialist impact student performance?
What are the national and state standards for library media programs that help guide best practice?

Introduction

It was the middle of a hot June day, yet learners filled the school library. A middle school principal, the lone administrator in the room, participated in a two-day training seminar alongside the enthusiastic group of teachers and library media specialists from across the district. Participants eagerly learned about the Big6 Skills approach, adding to their repertoire of strategies for teaching information literacy.

On the second afternoon of training, a team of elementary teachers and their library media specialist asked a question of the instructor. They wanted advice on how to convince their principal to allow the use of this information search process in their classrooms and library media center during the coming school year. Because their administrator did not have first-hand knowledge about the importance of using such a process and had never been trained in library media center best practice, they feared

he would not support the use of such strategies or methods. As the middle school principal listened to the group's comments, she realized just what a significant task it is to hold the title *instructional leader*. How can a principal assist faculty without similar knowledge and training, she thought. Struck by the irony that principals can (and do) impede professional growth and student achievement by discouraging the use of practices unfamiliar to them, she became even more committed to her own career-long learning. Certainly she needed to know what her staff knew if she had any hope of leading a truly effective school.

Practicing instructional leadership is tough, especially in the current atmosphere of increased student testing and accountability. Yet research suggests that instructional leadership is central to creating and maintaining schools that reach and teach all students effectively. A quality library media program supported by strong leadership can enhance teaching and learning for all students on the campus. This chapter focuses on the instructional role of the principal and how that leadership relates to areas such as library media services. Additionally, there is information about how the library media program impacts student performance and the leading national and state standards that guide outstanding library media practice.

Principals and Assistant Principals as Instructional Leaders

There is little doubt that campus administrators are extremely busy people. From making sure buses run on time to managing hundreds of students to communicating with parents to ensuring a safe, productive, and healthy environment, school leaders have a lot on their plates. Managing the school well is essential to the survival of this complex organization.

While much of the professional literature about campus leadership targets managing, organizing, and leading, a critical question remains. What are school leaders managing, organizing, and leading for? Principals and assistant principals face tough decisions about how to spend their time. Just like the principal in the training session mentioned above, campus leaders have to decide what they are going to value and how they are going to behave as instructional leaders. In such a hectic and demanding atmosphere it is challenging to maintain the primary focus of the school—the focus of teaching and learning.

With the introduction of the Effective Schools Correlates by scholars

such as Edmonds and Brookover, it became clear that the presence of particular factors profoundly impacted the learning success of students, regardless of their life situations or the communities in which they live (Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon).

These factors include the following:

1. A clear, focused mission
2. Strong instructional leadership by the principal
3. High expectations for students and staff
4. Frequent monitoring of student progress
5. A positive learning climate
6. Parent and community involvement
7. An emphasis upon student mastery of basic skills

The phrase *strong instructional leadership by the principal* clearly depicts the role of a principal in pursuit of educational excellence, but achieving this goal takes more than an able principal with solid ideas. It requires, instead, a combination of philosophy, knowledge, and action. Practicing instructional leadership means being knowledgeable about and supportive of instructionally sound practices. It means being armed with enough information to fend off gimmicks, fads, or misguided commercial materials in favor of authentic teaching, learning, and assessment. It means empowering others to lead alongside them as part of the educational team. It also means organizing the school so that all faculty, staff, and students can do their best work. Effective instructional leadership is particularly crucial considering the influence of educational accountability systems that require extensive student testing. Such systems can significantly narrow the curriculum and redirect valuable teaching time toward test preparation.

Consider, for instance, the critical area of literacy, the gatekeeper to all other arenas of learning. The principal who is an instructional leader can be a powerful influence in shaping effective literacy learning. In its *A Blueprint for Literacy Leadership*, Children's Literacy Initiative® outlined nine areas of content knowledge of principals in fostering literacy on their campuses. These areas are:

- School culture: Principals need to understand the significance of entrenched philosophical and instructional habits that constitute a culture in a school and his or her own power to change that culture.

- Craft leaders: Principals need to know the thinkers and practitioners in the field of literacy instruction who provide fresh ideas and useful models.
- Children's literature: In order to create a community of readers, principals must actively read not only professional literature, but also quality children's literature.
- Instructional models: As the primary filter for new programs, principals must be familiar with a wide range of current instructional models.
- Curricula: The challenge for the principal is to know his or her district's mandated curriculum and make sure teachers are able to deliver it.
- Options for organizing time and space: As the key decision-maker for the use of time and space, principals must be aware of how the use of time and space affects instruction.
- Assessment/content standards: Principals need to know how best to use assessment data that is based on relevant content standards with teachers, school communities, and parents.
- Special interventions: Principals need to take a close look at how support is delivered to struggling students and how this support is organized.
- Knowledge and research: Principals need to know where to find models, data, and organizations that do useful research and that can serve as allies to answer questions of what works and why.

Principals and assistant principals who model successful instructional leadership, therefore, constantly learn about best practices by reading professional books and articles and from a variety of other sources, such as Web sites or online journals. Likewise, they engage in effective supervision activities by visiting instructional settings often and providing substantive feedback for teachers and other professional staff based on the goals and needs of the individual. They attend professional development sessions and participate alongside teachers and staff. And, they share instructional leadership activities and duties with others including assistant, associate, and vice principals, team leaders, department heads, and other recognized campus leaders.

Translated into terms of the library media specialist and the library media program, principals and assistant principals who successfully model instructional leadership:

- Constantly learn about best instructional practices in information literacy and the information search process by reading professional books and articles or from a variety of other sources, such as Web sites or online journals.
- Practice effective supervision activities by visiting the library media center and observing the library media specialist, providing substantive feedback based on his or her goals and needs.
- Participate in professional development sessions conducted by the library media specialist, host or attend onsite training by outside experts in this field, and occasionally attend a regional, state, or national conference with the librarian.
- Encourage teachers and the library media specialist to collaborate on integrated instruction, providing time and resources for joint planning and teaching activities.
- Educate others about the importance of the library media center in the learning life of the school and share instructional leadership activities and duties with the entire administrative team including assistant, associate, and vice principals, team leaders, department heads, and other recognized campus leaders, such as the library media specialist.

True instructional leaders strive to understand appropriate indicators of practice not only for classroom teachers, but also for other campus professionals such as the librarian, school nurse, counselor, or school psychologist. Understanding the work of these professionals expands the capacity of service on the campus and allows individuals to work more effectively in their trained fields of expertise.

The Library Media Specialist, the Library Media Center, and Student Performance

Educational leaders also need to know how state and local curriculum standards and requirements link to and integrate with library media and information literacy skills. As teachers strive to improve student performance on these and other indicators, there is increasing empirical evidence that students in schools with strong library programs perform better. In the article, "Boosting Test Scores," media specialist and department chair Deb Kachel states, "It takes a partnership of administrators, librarians, teachers, parents, and community to build a library program that will make a difference with kids. In this case, it can

also help improve reading test scores" (Valenza 6).

Beginning in the early 1990s, an emerging body of research, *School Libraries Work!*, clearly indicates the significance of library media programs to student learning. "Whether student achievement is measured by standardized reading achievement tests or by global assessments of learning, research shows that a well-stocked library staffed by a certified library media specialist has a positive impact on student achievement, regardless of the socioeconomic or educational levels of the community" (1).

In 1993 the Colorado State Library released outcomes of a study called *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement*. This first Colorado study provided evidence that quality school libraries lead to increased student performance regardless of demographic or economic makeup of the school community. Based on the original findings, a follow-up study was initiated. *How School Librarians Help Kids Achieve Standards* replicated the first inquiry while adding several new perspectives.

In addition to confirming and updating the findings of the first Colorado study, this project expands the original study's results by measuring the impact on academic achievement of:

- Specific leadership and collaboration activities of library media specialists (LMSs)
- Principal and teacher engagement in LM programs
- Information technology, particularly networked computers offering licensed databases and the Internet/World Wide Web. (Lance, Rodney, and Hamilton-Pennell 13)

Results of the second study show that reading scores increase as quality characteristics of the library media program increase. When factors such as *program development* (staffing, spending, print and digital titles per student), *information technology* (databases and access to the free Web), *collaboration* (library media specialists planning, teaching, and professionally learning alongside teachers), and *library media center visitations* (number of individual visits per student) rise, so do student performance indicators. In an indirect effect, leadership actions and activities of the library media specialist—meeting with administrators, serving on committees, and working with staff at campus-wide meetings—enhance the working relationship among the library media specialist, teachers, and their students.

EGS Research and Consulting published in April 2001 the results of a study (based on the earlier Colorado works) titled *Texas School Libraries: Standards, Resources, Services, and Students' Performance*. The study had three primary target areas—library resources, services, and use compared to state standards; the impact of school libraries on students' standardized test performance; and library practices common in high performing schools. Findings indicated that staffing; size of collection; library technology and teacher, student, and librarian interaction have a positive association with standardized test performance at all schooling levels. Specifically, results showed that students in schools without librarians performed less well on the reading portion of the standardized state examination than students on campuses with librarians. The study also revealed that in schools where teachers and the librarian plan and teach together, student performance is positively impacted.

Guidelines and Standards for Library Media Programs

National and state standards documents can serve as powerful guides in shaping the work of school library media specialists and in developing and sustaining effective library media programs. *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* prepared by the American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, and published by the American Library Association, is an influential source in best library media center practice. Based on nine information literacy standards, this text targets the work of library media specialists in three primary areas—learning and teaching, information access and delivery, and program administration. "*Information Power* also shows how skills and strategies in collaboration, leadership, and technology support these efforts" (ix).

Information Power can help principals and assistant principals better understand the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist and the impact the library media center can have school-wide. Chapter one—The Vision—describes a philosophical shift around educating students in an information-, image-, and technology-rich world. In this new educational paradigm, the library media specialist, once viewed as a staff member who primarily managed resources, should now be considered an active, indispensable member of the instructional team. This chapter also details the multifaceted nature of the library media specialist's position. As a teacher, an instructional partner, an

information specialist, and a program administrator, the library media specialist works collaboratively across the campus and the curriculum to help students flourish as learners (For detailed information about instructional partnerships, see chapter three of this text.) "Students must become skillful consumers and producers of information in a range of sources and formats to thrive personally and economically in the communication age. Library media programs must be dynamic, enthusiastic, and student-centered to help ensure that all students achieve this status" (2).

Chapter six of *Information Power* is organized around 10 principles and sets of related goals associated with program administration. This section of the text outlines, in specific terms, the leadership role the library media specialist should assume in establishing and maintaining administrative (principal) support for the program. These leadership related tasks include:

- Initiate collaboration with the principal and other appropriate administers to develop the mission, goals, and objectives of the library media program.
- Communicate regularly with the principal and other appropriate administrators about program plans, activities, and accomplishments.
- Participate on the school's administrative team to provide information about financial and other needs of the program.
- Work with the principal and other appropriate administrators to develop assessment criteria and processes for the library media program and personnel.
- Encourage the principal and other appropriate administrators to support the school library media program by communicating to all members of the learning community the program's contribution to student learning. (106)

The *Information Power* companion workbook, *A Planning Guide for Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*, is designed to lead school personnel through the processes related to establishing and maintaining an exemplary library media program. This planning and implementation guide contains a set of tools useful for developing a mission, goals, and objectives as well as action and evaluation plans. Also included is a set of self-assessment rubrics and descriptive scenarios for programs that function at the basic, proficient, and

exemplary levels. Combined with *Information Power*, this book provides a clear path to planning for and achieving a quality school library media program.

Other excellent resources for sound practice are standards and quality indicator documents published by state departments of education, the state library system, or professional library associations. These publications, generally available via the Internet as well as in hard copy, provide clear direction on topics such as staffing, facilities, resource allocation, collection development, roles and responsibilities, access and uses of technologies, and curricular and instructional methods. Below are several selected examples from the many that are currently available.

The Massachusetts School Library Media Association offers a set of rubrics to use for assessing and improving school library media programs. The instrument provides target indicators under the broad themes of teaching and learning, information access and delivery, and program administration. Each indicator has a set of descriptors across a four-point quality scale from *deficient* on the low end to *exemplary* on the high end. Alongside the library media specialist, campus administrators can use this tool to measure current practice, build on recognized strengths, and target areas in need of improvement. (See the additional resources at the end of this chapter for a retrieval address.)

The Texas State Library & Archives Commission adopted updated school library standards and guidelines in March 2004. The resource packet contains six standards of practice with goals, principles, and a descriptive quality continuum for each standard. Outcome measures and evaluation methods for gauging program effectiveness, a comprehensive glossary of terms, and a list of related professional resources are also included. Principals, assistant principals, and library media specialists can use this document to determine whether their patterns of service are *exemplary* or *below standard*. Likewise, this instrument can serve useful in charting a path to improved practice. (See the additional resources section at the end of this chapter for information and retrieval address.)

Other states such as California, Utah, Ohio, Missouri, New Mexico, and Minnesota make their standards documents available in downloadable format from the Internet. These resources, like those mentioned above, are excellent sources of information for school leaders who want to more thoroughly grasp the elements of a model library media program. (See the additional resources section at the end of this chapter for a retrieval address.)

The importance of understanding and applying appropriate standards of service cannot be overstated. A 2003 study revealed that half of the library media centers in a school district were inadequately staffed and eleven lacked the appropriate number of books in their collections. A primary cause cited by district administrators pointed directly to campus leaders. "Part of the problem is the result of site-based management, which gives administrators the authority to allocate their schools' budgets. And with the current emphasis on test scores, schools often cut corners on funding for libraries and the fine arts, district officials told the El Paso Times" ("TX School District" 22).

As informed advocates for best practice, campus leaders can help educate others and use their knowledge to positively guide and shape decision making. An elementary principal in a large, diverse urban school district was called to serve on the district-wide budget council—a representative group of teachers, community members, and campus and district leaders selected to hammer out the district's massive budget and make a recommendation to the school board. In a joint effort with the district's library media director, this principal lobbied for and won a line item in the district budget dedicated specifically to school libraries. In an agreement with upper level administration, this money—more than one million dollars per year for several years—flowed directly from the district office into campus libraries, bypassing site councils and assuring there would be dollars available to library media specialists. This fund was a critical resource in assisting many under-funded school libraries in collection development and in purchasing supplies and needed equipment.

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlights key factors related to leadership, learning, and effective schools. First and foremost, school administrators should be leaders for learning on their campuses. Moreover, this leadership role should extend to the library media center, its staff, and programs. When the library media center is well staffed, funded, and supported by an informed instructional leader, student achievement is positively impacted. National and state standards documents provide excellent guidance in developing effective library media programs.

Planning for Action and Getting Started

1. Read chapters one, three, four, and six of *Information Power* and discuss these sections with your library media specialist.
2. Find out if there are library media standards or guidelines in your state or district. Secure a copy and read and discuss this information with your librarian.
3. Have a substantive discussion with your library media specialist about his roles, responsibilities, and vision for the library media program.

Works Cited

American Association of School Librarians. *A Planning Guide for Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning With School Library Media Program Assessment Rubric for the 21st Century*. Chicago: ALA, 1999.

American Association of School Librarians, and Association for Education Communications & Technology. *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning.* Chicago: ALA, 1998.

A Blueprint for Literacy Leadership. Children's Literacy Initiative. 7 July 2004 <http://www.cliontheweb.org/principals_blueprint.html>.

Colorado State Library. *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement*. Denver: CO State Lib., 1993.

EGS Research and Consulting. *Texas School Libraries: Standards, Resources, Services, and Students' Performance.* Austin: EGS Research and Consulting, 2001.

Glickman, Carl D., Stephen P. Gordon, and Jovita Ross-Gordon. *Supervision and Instructional Leadership*. 6th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2004.

Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. *How School Librarians Help Kids Achieve Standards: The Second Colorado Study.* San Jose, CA: Hi Willow Research & Publishing, April 2000.

Massachusetts School Library Media Association. *Model School Rubrics*. Bedford, MA: MSLMA, May 2002.

School Libraries Work! Research Foundation Paper. Scholastic Library Publishing, 2004.

"TX School District Gives Boost to Libraries." SLJ News. *School Library Journal* Month (2003): 22.
Valenza, Joyce Kasman. "Boosting Test Scores." Practically Speaking. *SLJ/Learning Quarterly* Dec. (2003): 6.

Additional Resources

Principals as Instructional Leaders

Barth, Roland, Bobb Darnell, Laura Lipton, and Bruce Wellman. *Guide for Instructional Leaders, Guide 1: An ASCD Action Tool*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2002. ISBN 0871206765.
Fink, Elaine, and Lauren B. Resnick. "Developing Principals as Instructional Leaders." *Phi Delta Kappan* 82.8 (Apr. 2001): 598-606.
Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) *Standards for School Leaders*. <http://www.ccsso.org/content/ pdfs/isllcstd.pdf>.

Research Studies about Library Media Programs and Performance Outcomes

Baumbach, Donna J. *Making the Grade: The Status of School Library Media Centers in the Sunshine State and How They Contribute to Student Achievement.* San Jose, CA: Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 2004. ISBN 093151097X.
Church, Audrey P. *Leverage Your Library Program to Raise Test Scores: A Guide for Library Media Specialists, Principals, Teachers, and Parents*. Worthington, OH: Linworth Publishing, 2003. ISBN 1586831208.
Lance, Keith Curry, and David V. Loertscher. *Powering Achievement: School Library Media Programs Make a Difference: The Evidence*. 2nd ed. San Jose, CA: Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 2002. ISBN 093150848.
Loertscher, David V. *Reinventing Your School's Library in the Age of Technology: A Guide for Principals and Superintendents*. San Jose, CA: Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 2002. ISBN 0931510791.

Loertscher, David V., and Ross J. Todd. *We Boost Achievement: Evidence-Based Practice for School Library Media Specialists*. San Jose, CA: Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 2003. ISBN 0931510937.

Miller, Nancy A. S. *Impact! Documenting the LMC Program for Accountability*. San Jose, CA: Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 2003. ISBN 0931510961.

School Libraries Work! Research Foundation Paper. Scholastic Library Publishing. <http://www.scholasticlibrary.com/download/slw_04.pdf>.

School Library Impact Studies. Library Research Service. <http://www.lrs.org/impact.asp>.

Rubrics Providing Guidance in Assessing Library Media Program Components

Model School Rubrics. Massachusetts School Library Media Association. <http://www.mslma.org/whoweare/ rubrics.html>.

New Haven Public Schools Library Media-Technology Assessment Rubric. New Haven Public Schools. <http://www.nhps.net/curriculum/librarymedia-technology/assessment/assessrubric .asp>.

Examples of State Library Media Standards

Minnesota Standards for Effective School Library Programs. MEMO. <http://www.memoweb.org/htmlfiles/linkseffectiveslmp .html>.

Nebraska Educational Media Association. *Guide for Developing and Evaluating School Library Media Programs*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 2000. ISBN 1563086409.

New Mexico School Library Independent Reading and Information Literacy Standards and Benchmarks. <http://www.nmla.org/links .php>.

Ohio Guidelines for Effective School Library Media Programs. OH Dept. of Educ. <http://www.ode.state.oh.us/ Curriculum-Assessment/school_library/>.

Pennsylvania Guidelines for School Library Information Programs. PA Dept. of Educ. <http://www.statelibrary.state.pa.us/libraries/lib/libraries/guidelines.pdf>.

Standards for Missouri Schools Library Media Centers. MO Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Educ. <http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/curriculum/standards/lmcstand.htm>.

Texas State Library & Archives Commission. *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas*. Austin: TSLAC, 19 Mar. 2004.

Utah School Library Media Programs Standards. UELMA, ULMS, and USOE. <http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/library/pdf/ standards.pdf>.