THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARIAN AS A COLLABORATIVE PARTNER IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

by

Michelle R. Stegmaier

An Abstract
of a research paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Library Science and Information Services in the Department of Educational Leadership and Human Development University of Central Missouri

May, 2013
ABSTRACT

by

Michelle R. Stegmaier

Collaboration is not a new term to librarianship. However, for most Library Media Specialists, collaboration is an expectation that has yet to come to fruition or reach its full potential. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) adopted by most states presents a new opportunity for collaboration. Even though librarians are not specifically mentioned in the CCSS, they possess the skillset to become leaders and collaborative partners in education. The CCSS are designed to prepare students for college programs and career opportunities. The competencies listed by the American Association of School Librarians in, “The Standards For The 21st Century Learner,” (AASL) align with the goals of the CCSS. The Library Media Specialist is already equipped to provide resources, knowledge, and any other needed support of the implementation of the CCSS. It is up to Library Media Specialist to embrace this new role and assert themselves as leaders.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The role of the school librarian is like most areas of education; it is constantly changing. Librarians were once seen only as resource providers. Now the expectations for the school librarian include the roles of technology specialist, teacher, collaborative partner, information provider, administrator, and literacy specialist (Hand 22). At the core of these changes is the concern for student achievement and the importance of proving how a school librarian can help students be successful.

Working as a collaborative partner or an instructional partner has been one way for the school librarian to show the school community that they have a positive impact on student achievement. Collaboration allows the school librarian to be an instructional leader as well as a partner. However, collaboration has many challenges, and even though the prospect of collaboration has been around for a long time, few school librarians are using collaboration to its full potential. Reductions in staffing and a lack of time are two of the obstacles to collaboration (Cooper and Bray 48). Some teachers are used to doing things their own way and are not interested in the changes collaboration might bring. These are just a few of the challenges that the school librarian who desires to become a collaborative partner will overcome.

Research indicates that collaboration between the school librarian and teachers has a positive impact on student achievement (Cooper and Bray 48). Cooper and Bray also state that collaboration in itself is not the end goal. The school librarian is careful to not take over or do things in place of the work teachers and students ought to do themselves. The school librarian will work alongside teachers and students to create the highest level of partnership. The goal of collaboration will be measurable student achievement (53). Students’ success in the acquisition of 21st century skills is necessary in order for them to be successful and productive citizens.
These skills include critical thinking, problem solving, and application of new knowledge as well as good communication and collaboration skills. Students’ proficiency in technology and information literacy will prepare them as good digital citizens (AASL).

With the onset of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), teachers are more likely to appreciate the skill set that the school librarian has to offer and administration will have an opportunity to see the value in keeping a certified school librarian on staff. Under the CCSS, the library program and the school librarian become a more integral part of the educational process for students. The Common Core State Standards have been adopted by most states (Morris 8). This has opened up a new opportunity for school librarians to assert themselves as leaders and work as collaborative partners with teachers, students, and administration. The standards are designed to help students be successful in college and in the work place (Morris 8). The school librarian has the information literacy skills needed to help students and teachers meet the CCSS objectives.

**Statement of the Problem**

Most educators have heard of the Common Core State. However, many of those educators cannot define the standards or explain how they will incorporate them into their curriculum. The standards are not a curriculum in and of themselves, and they do not suggest teaching methods (Marcoux 69). Educators are expected to use the standards as the foundation to guide curriculum design. Although the CCSS are similar to other standards, the depth of knowledge and breadth of requirements will be a challenge. School librarians are not mentioned in the standards, though references to information and technology literacy are. The challenge is for school librarians to assert themselves as leaders and collaborate with administration, teachers, and students to implement and embed the CCSS into the curriculum.

**Purpose of the Study**
This research study is a review of literature and research in the areas of collaboration and the Common Core State Standards. The goals of this study are to encourage school librarians to assert themselves as leaders within their school communities, specifically in the areas of collaboration and the implementation of CCSS and to come to a better understanding of the role the school librarian can play in the implementation of those standards. The profession of school librarianship has been under scrutiny for years as to the value of the profession itself and the value of having a certified school librarian. Collaboration is the key to proving the worth and value of the profession. According to Loertscher and Marcoux, the school librarian has the skill set and knowledge to be the driving force behind implementation of the CCSS (2). It is up to the individual school librarian to accept this challenge and forge ahead as education once again begins a new era. Meshing the new standards with the old standards and meeting the needs of students in order for them to succeed in life in school and beyond school is a privilege.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions will be addressed with this study:

1. How can school librarians assert themselves as leaders in their school communities through the adoption of CCSS?

2. What is the correlation between CCSS and 21st century learning?

3. How can the school librarian use CCSS as a bridge to collaboration with teachers?
Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study include a lack of research in reference to the collaboration of school librarians and teachers in the implementation of the CCSS. The CCSS are relatively new and have not yet been embedded in the curriculum of a lot of schools. Therefore, the resources available for the review of literature in this area were not as extensive as the review of literature in the area of collaboration. Since collaboration is not a new subject to librarianship, the researcher narrowed the focus to collaboration in regards to implementation of the CCSS.

Definition of Terms

21st century learner – A learner who attends a learning institution after the year 2000 and during the 21st century.

American Association of School Libraries (AASL) – A division of the American Library Association. The AASL is a professional membership organization that serves school librarians.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) – Common standards adopted by 46 states so far. The standards are not a curriculum but a set of goals and objectives that outline what a student needs to know at each grade level in order for them to be successful in the university classroom as well as in the workplace.

Collaboration – In this report this refers to when the school librarian and teacher work together to plan, teach, and assess a unit of study.

Crosswalk – A section of the AASL website that provides alignment between AASL standards and CCSS.

Edmodo – Edmodo is a digital tool where groups can be formed, and participants can become part of groups that are associated with their work. They can then post ideas and read the posts of others. It is similar to Facebook, but it is more appropriate for the workplace.
Google Docs – A digital tool where multiple users can edit and collaborate on the same document from anywhere in the world.

Wiki – A wiki is a digital tool available to the public where an individual or organization can provide information to subscribers. It can be used for collaborative work if the designer of the wiki gives permission for multiple users.

Research Design

This research study presents a review of journal articles and other published information pertaining to collaboration and the Common Core State Standards as well as 21st Century Learning. This is a review of literature rather than an actual research study. This research describes the facts and opinions of experts in the field and is based on research by professionals in the area of standards and librarianship.

Journal articles were collected from databases available through the J.C. Kirkpatrick Library (JCKL) and the University of Central Missouri. Those articles led the researcher to additional online information that would complement the study. For example, one such journal article mentioned website information provided by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) called “Crosswalk,” which aligned AASL standards with the Common Core State Standards. A few of the journal articles came from journals received by the school district. Another way resources were found is through networking with colleagues. Once the topic of collaboration was mentioned, then others had resources they were willing to share. Several journal articles came from this networking.

The Academic Search Complete and Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts databases were used to search for full text academic articles. That search supplied articles in the following journals: Knowledge Quest, Educational Leadership, Library Media Connection, School Library Journal, Teacher Librarian, Tech Trends, Journal of Educational
Keywords used to search the databases were, ‘Common Core State Standards’, ‘librarian and teacher collaboration’ and ‘21st Century learning and skills.’

This study includes three chapters on how the School Library Media Specialist can collaborate with teachers on the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. Chapter one is an introduction. Chapter two is the review of literature, and Chapter three contains information relating to recommendations, answers the research questions posed in chapter 1, and provides a conclusion.
“If school librarians [cannot] prove they make a difference, they may cease to exist” (Todd 39). This is a powerful statement about the condition of the current state of school library programs across the nation. Many schools have either eliminated certified school librarians altogether or have the school librarian working at more than one school. Unfortunately, stakeholders are not seeing the value of a library program. It is up to school librarians to prove their worth. Currently there is an opportunity for school librarians to do this. With the onset of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the school librarians have the opportunity to educate themselves and become key leaders in the implementation of the standards and the training of staff. Collaboration is the key.

The first section of the review of literature focuses on collaboration. This section will define collaboration and outline why it is important, where librarians can begin, challenges, benefits, and how collaboration fits into the implementation of the CCSS. Being a collaborative educational partner with teachers is one way to show the importance of the library program. Increased student achievement will result from effective collaboration between librarians and classroom teachers (Bilyeu 15). Collaboration is a concept that has been around for quite some time. However, this practice is still not being utilized to its full potential.

Collaboration has its challenges. Teachers are used to working and planning alone. Some may not see the value in working with a school librarian for various reasons. For many, time management is an issue. For others, they do not have knowledge of the role of the librarian and how the librarian can be an educational partner. School librarians have the ability to promote their program and educate the school community about the resources, both human and physical,
that they can provide to increase student achievement. Teachers and librarians can work together to make the time to plan, teach, reflect and re-teach lessons.

By measuring student success and tying that data to the library media program, school librarians can show how they have a positive impact on student learning outcomes. An abundance of evidence supports the connection between student achievement and school libraries with certified school librarians (Lamb 27). It is vital that school stakeholders have a thorough understanding of the contributions a certified school librarian and an evidence based library program can have on student achievement and on the school community as a whole. Documentation of student achievement is one way to inform stakeholders.

The CCSS will be addressed in the second section of this chapter. The CCSS align with the 21st century skills. Students will be required to acquire 21st century skills under the tutelage of CCSS. According to the “Standards for the 21st Century Learner,” the librarian will play a role in making sure that students are successful in 21st century learning (AASL). Colleges and businesses are expecting students to have the skills outlined in the CCSS. Collaboration is a way for school librarians and teachers to come together and prepare students to attain the skills that are required by the modern day workplace where teamwork, critical thinking, and problem solving are desired (Montiel-Overall 28). The entire school community is needed to accomplish this.

The third section of the paper will present 21st century learning and the skills required by the CCSS, along with the librarian’s role in building these. The library provides a place for students to be inspired to read for enjoyment as well as information. School librarians play an important role in student achievement by teaching the 21st century standards and promoting all areas of literacy. The school librarian does more than just check books in and out. He or she teaches relevant lessons, helps students learn how to navigate a library for resources and is often
at the center of the school community. In addition, he or she provides opportunities for students to use digital resources as well as print materials. With so much to share, the school librarian cannot help but become a collaborative partner.

In the final section, this paper provides ideas and lessons for librarians and teachers. The lessons provide examples of how librarians and teachers can work together to increase student achievement. In the process of preparing students for success, school librarians prove the worth of the modern day library media program.

**Collaboration**

Collaboration is a process school librarians can use to help their schools implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). First, it is vital to understand the definition of collaboration related to the school environment as well as outside of the school environment because students are expected to have mastered these skills as they enter colleges and workplaces. Once collaboration is defined, a look at the different taxonomies and levels of collaboration are outlined by experts in the field. This presents the process of collaboration in more depth and helps demonstrate which levels will promote the highest student achievement. How the teachers, administrators and the school librarian view collaboration is another factor in its success. The opportunities to build relationships and collect data are two additional benefits of the collaborative process discussed. The school librarian has the unique opportunity to be a valued team member in the implementation of the CCSS.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said, “Many ideas grow better when transplanted into another mind than the one where they sprang up” (qtd. in Kilker 40). This is a more elegant way to express the common saying, “Two heads are better than one.” According to Patricia Montiel-Overall, the use of the term “collaboration” has multiple definitions and interpretations inside and outside of education (28). The term “collaboration” has been defined as sharing resources,
expertise, and authority, as well as thinking together as a shared experience (Montiel-Overall 28). This happens inside and outside of schools. Specifically, inside the school environment, collaboration occurs when the school librarian and teacher come together to co-plan, co-teach and co-evaluate lessons in order to increase student achievement (Montiel-Overall 28). It also occurs when students work together on projects. This section explores the kinds of collaboration in which librarians engage.

Collaboration extends beyond the librarian and teacher relationship. According to the guidelines outlined in Empowering Learners, the school librarian is also encouraged to collaborate with parents, members of the community, professional organizations, and private and public organizations, as well as commercial partners (20). The bases for all collaboration are the needs of the students.

One type of collaboration occurs when teachers and the school librarian work together to identify what students need to know about accessing, evaluating, interpreting and applying information, and how they connect it to what they are learning. The collaborating educators plan, co-teach, and assess student progress together (Cooper and Bray 50). When teachers and librarians plan, teach, and assess together, they are using the most desired level of collaboration, according to levels of collaboration identified by researchers.

David Loertscher created a taxonomy showing the various levels of collaboration. Loertscher has identified seven levels of collaboration (qtd. in Levels of Collaboration). The first four levels are the least desirable. According to Loertscher, the levels are as follows: level one does not use the Library Media Center or the school librarian at all. Level two is reached when the teacher uses library resources but does not include the school librarian. Level three is reached when teachers uses the school librarian for assistance enriching lessons. For example teachers might plan their units and then come to the school librarian to tell a story or book talk.
During the fourth level of collaboration the teacher utilizes the school librarian outside of the context of a lesson. No collaborative planning takes place and the school librarian is asked to cover information that does not help the students become information users (Levels of Collaboration).

The next levels are more advanced and desirable. The fifth level is when the school librarian is not involved in pre-planning but is involved in the creation and implementation of the unit. The sixth level involves collaborative planning for instruction, where the school librarian and teacher plan the unit, teach, and assess together. At the seventh level, the school librarian is involved with the staff working on curriculum changes to increase student achievement (“Levels of Collaboration). The sixth and seventh levels are the most desirable levels of collaboration. These levels allow school librarians to use their skill set to their full potential. When the school librarians are used in planning, teaching, and assessing of student achievement, then they are proving the worth of their services and their program.

Patricia Montiel-Overall used Loertscher’s taxonomies of teacher-librarian collaboration and expert opinions on collaboration to design four models of collaboration (30). See figure 1. These four models define levels of collaboration and the types of collaboration that are used in the school environment. Models A and B are the easiest levels of collaboration to achieve; therefore, they are the models most often used. The school librarians can work towards Model D by creating that environment of trust and by committing themselves to collaboration.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model A: Coordination</th>
<th>Model B: Cooperation</th>
<th>Model: C Integrated Instruction</th>
<th>Model: D Integrated Curriculum</th>
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<tr>
<td>Planning is functional</td>
<td>Planning is carried out by the teacher and teacher librarian independently</td>
<td>Joint planning occurs between the teacher and the teacher-librarian.</td>
<td>Joint planning occurs across the school or school district.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers, teacher-librarians, or principals work together to ensure efficient use of time and space</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher and teacher-librarian decide how to incorporate library instruction into the classroom lesson.</td>
<td>Planning time is provided and supported by the administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication is minimal</td>
<td>Communication is moderate</td>
<td>Communication is essential to good Planning and implementation by teacher and teacher-librarian.</td>
<td>Excellent communication, foresight, and problem-solving occurs between administrators and faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordial</td>
<td>Collegial</td>
<td>Confidant</td>
<td>Collaborator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shallow trust</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Deep Trust</td>
<td>Deep trust and commitment</td>
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Fig. 1 Models of Collaboration (Montiel-Overall 28).
It is up to the school librarian to find ways to meet with teachers and administration to go beyond the basic levels.

The ideal level of collaboration is Model D, Integrated Curriculum. This is when the administrator and the entire staff work together to create best practices for the highest level of student achievement. Model D is what the school librarian and teachers strive for. This level will take some time to achieve. It takes time to build trust and commitment, and it takes an administrator that understands the importance of collaboration and wants to be an active participant. This level also requires the school librarian, teachers, and administrator to make the time to meet and make decisions together.

According to Lohmiller, knowing the value of collaboration and actually participating in collaboration are two different things (38). Many administrators and teachers believe that collaboration is a good idea, but they do not know how to best utilize the process. This is an opportunity for school librarians to assert themselves as leaders in order for collaboration to take place. The school librarian has a skill set that can make valuable contributions to teaching and student learning if utilized. They have knowledge of resources and of strategies to employ those resources to improve student learning (Haycock 54). The teacher, on the other hand, has knowledge of the individual students’ abilities, needs, and interests as well as the content areas being covered (Haycock 54). The marriage of the school librarians’ knowledge and the classroom teachers’ knowledge makes for best teaching practices and increased student achievement.

Relationship building is important to successful collaboration. The school librarians may start with a teacher or subject area that they are comfortable with (Panter 34). They can then branch out into other areas. As other teachers see the success of the collaboration process, they
will want to participate as well. “Being valued by one teacher is where collaboration begins” (Lohmiller 40).

An added benefit of collaboration is that it provides an opportunity for school librarians to collect data to show that they make a difference in student achievement (Bacon 36). School librarian and teacher collaboration improves teaching and learning, which leads to improved student achievement. This is especially true when the collaborators are using data to reinforce student learning in areas of deficiency (Buzzeo and Wilson 22). Anecdotal evidence of the success, as well as numerous research studies during the past 10 years, provides evidence that school librarian and teacher collaboration has a positive impact on student learning (Montiel-Overall and Jones 49).

Successful collaboration is not easy to achieve but is worth the effort. Teacher attitude, staff reductions, lack of a common planning time, library standards and administrative views are all challenges that the school librarian must overcome. As the school librarian faces each of these issues, he or she is creating a culture of cooperation and trust that will unify the staff. Positive views of the library program will help the library program excel.

Teacher attitude can be a challenge. Teachers are burdened with yearly shifts in education. They have standards that they have to teach and fit into a self-created curriculum; they also have multiple assessments to administer and data to evaluate and use to increase students achievement. Teachers are busy people. Finding the time to collaborate means seeing the value in it and how it can benefit them as well as their students. Often teachers are not knowledgeable about the role of the school librarian. This provides another opportunity for school librarians to promote themselves, their services, and their resources. Teachers can also be set in their ways and not eager to participate in something new. With the onset of the CCSS, teachers may appreciate having knowledgeable school librarians to turn to for help in the
implementation of the new standards. The school librarian can use the CCSS to create a bridge between the school library program and the classroom.

School librarians will be faced with additional challenges that might be out of their control. One of those challenges is a reduction of library staff. A reduction in staff means that many schools no longer employ a full-time certified school librarian and a para-professional. The goal of any school librarian is to offer a least restrictive environment. A reduction in staff may mean that the library is less accessible. Because of this new dynamic, the school librarian often does not have the time necessary for successful collaboration to take place (Cooper and Bray 48).

A common planning time would be the ideal time to plan for the implementation of the CCSS. A common planning time is important to reach the highest level of collaboration because the process is time consuming. This may be difficult to work out because the library needs to be available for staff and students. This challenge is not so serious that it cannot be overcome with careful planning and cooperation (Cooper and Bray 48). The school librarian and teachers may be creative and make the best use of the time they do have by using less conventional times such as early morning, lunch time breaks, after school, and using digital communication tools such as Edmodo, Google Docs, and Wikis. These three digital communication resources allow staff to communicate as they have time. These resources provide teachers and librarians the opportunity to share documents that can be added to and edited by all members. As the school librarian moves forward with collaboration, creativity will be necessary to insure that their own goals, objectives, and standards are taught.

Perception is reality. The perception of administration and staff in regards to collaboration will have an effect on opportunities to collaborate. An impact study done by the Idaho School Library looked at the perception of collaboration from the perspective of principals and other administrators. The perception of the school administration as well as the classroom
teacher is vital to the success of collaboration (Lance, Rodney and Schwarz 30). The impact study found that the majority of administrators identified collaboration as being essential and desirable (Lance, Rodney and Schwarz 30). Likewise, the study showed that even though collaboration was valued by administrators, both classroom teachers and school librarians indicated that collaboration is rarely taking place (Lance, Rodney, and Schwarz 31). However, the study indicated that advanced scores on standardized tests were more likely when the administrator supported collaboration between the school librarian and the classroom teacher and collaboration took place (Lance, Rodney, and Schwarz 34). Students benefit from school librarians and teachers collaborating. Standardized test scores go up, and overall student learning is positively impacted.

**Librarians and the Common Core State Standards**

The role of the librarian as a collaborative partner in the implementation of the CCSS is a role that will benefit the school community as a whole. Becoming familiar with these standards and understanding the purpose of the standards will fuel the desire of school librarians to become instructional partners in ways they might not have thought possible. The school librarian can be a contributor of not just resources, but also knowledge. School curriculums across the nation that have adopted the standards will shift their curriculum to meet the new standards while still focusing on current standards. It will still be necessary for students to master 21st century skills as defined by the AASL in 2007. Schools are at varying degrees of implementation with the Common Core State Standards. In this new era of education, school librarians can assert themselves as leaders and help to make the transition easier and successful.

The Common Core State Standards are designed to meet the needs of the 21st century world. Organized by grade level, the standards state what each child at each grade level needs to know by the end of that grade. Collaborative partnerships are a part of the standards. While the
school librarian is not mentioned as part of the implementation process, the school librarian has
the opportunity to become an educational partner with teachers and administrators in the
implementation process. The opportunity is there; it is up to the school librarian to find ways to
collaborate in relationship to the CCSS. Not only will the school librarian and teachers be able
to collaborate, but as they do, they will be setting an example of one of the expectations of the
CCSS for students.

One CCSS expectation for students is that they collaborate as early as kindergarten. Students, with the guidance of the school librarians or teachers, are expected to use digital tools, which is a 21st century skill, to produce an end product that they collaborated on with their peers (Tucker 31). Students will also be required to collaborate online and participate in real-time conversations as well as collaborate with a diverse population that builds on the ideas of others (Tucker 30). These experiences mimic real-life situations that happen daily in the workplace as well as on college campuses across the nation.

One example of a workplace using the collaboration process is found at IDEO. David Kelly, the founder of IDEO, a successful global design firm, was interviewed by 60 Minutes on January 6, 2013. His company is proof positive of what successful collaboration looks like in the workforce. The premise for his company is to bring different people from different educational back grounds together and let them brainstorm solutions to problems. Instead of having one person with one idea, he believes in the value of having collaborative groups where participants build on the ideas of one another and create solutions to problems, design new and innovative products, and in the end, improve the world (60 Min.) This is the future of the work place environment, and this is the expectation that employers have for applicants. With instruction from teachers and school librarians, students can learn how to collaborate and be creative problem solvers and thinkers. The school librarian and teachers can model this behavior with one
another and also become collaborative partners with students. According to “Empowering Learners,” collaborative partnerships will be necessary in all teaching and learning of 21st century skills (AASL 20). This is especially true with the adoption of the Common Core State Standards.

The standards are designed to state clear goals of what students should know. In the past, standards provided concepts that needed to be taught. Teachers and school districts were expected to make decisions on content, instruction and the best means for delivering content along with their other responsibilities. The new standards will assist teachers and staff to focus in on specific competencies (Hiebert and Pearson 57). They are meant to ensure that students have the skills necessary to be successful in college and in the workplace (Clifton 9). The CCSS are not a curriculum. They do not dictate curriculum or teaching methods; they represent learning outcomes expected of 21st century learners (Marcoux 69). They are meant to be a jumping off point for educators in designing curriculum. Since the CCSS do not address how the standards will be taught, this leaves the door open for the school librarians to use their knowledge and resources of information and technology to help implement the standards. The school librarian has an opportunity to transform education through technology (Marcoux 69).

The purpose of the CCSS is to provide high-quality standards for districts and to promote equality of learning across the nation (Hiebert and Pearson 57). The students from all 46 states will receive instruction for the same standards. However, the delivery of those standards will vary depending on the teacher and school system. Since the standards call for information fluency, collaboration between the school librarian and teachers will be helpful.

The mention of Common Core State Standards elicits a variety of responses from educators. Some schools are already implementing the standards, some have all but ignored them, and in-between lies various levels of involvement. Schools across this nation are making
curriculum changes in order to meet the standards (Hiebert and Pearson 49). High-quality professional development will be necessary in order to have a smooth transition and lessen confusion about the changes. School librarian participation is possible if librarians are willing to put in the extra effort.

Proponents of the CCSS are hoping that high-quality professional development and improved curriculum will make the CCSS successful (Loveless 61). The school librarian has the opportunity to provide high-quality professional development that helps teachers integrate the CCSS into the curriculum. In addition, sharing successful collaboration experiences with the administrators will encourage them to support further collaboration. Communication with administrators and a willingness to lead professional development activities is a benefit of keeping a certified school librarian on staff. School librarians already have the skill set that includes, but is not limited to using instructional materials, resources, technologies, and assessments, as well as the collaborative knowledge which will be needed to implement the CCSS (Morris 9).

According to Loertscher and Marcoux, teacher-librarians should keep up with the status of all district standards revisions so they can be involved with planning, implementation, and assessment progress (2). These other standards should not be treated as less important. It will be up to the teacher-librarian to figure out how the old standards and the new CCSS fit together (2). The language arts standards are the standards where the school librarian can make the most difference. Language arts standards include reading, writing, speaking, listening and language. The CCSS are centered on language arts and math, but expectations are for the language arts standards to be integrated with science and social studies (Loertscher 2). This shift will require a need for more informational texts.
Uses of more informational texts are required by the CCSS. One purpose of reading instruction is to help students learn. “According to international achievement tests, U.S. students do worse at reading informational text than they do at reading literary text” (Shanahan 14). School reading programs are filled with classes on literary texts and greatly neglect informational texts. Most teacher classroom libraries are filled with fiction texts. According to Goodwin and Miller, nonfiction in classrooms is in short supply (80). A study of 20 first grade classrooms found that only 9.8 percent of the texts in classrooms were non-fiction (Goodwin and Miller 80). This has caused an imbalance in how the students are learning to read (Shanahan 14). The CCSS suggest 50% of texts read at the elementary level to be non-fiction and 70% in the upper grades. The school librarian has the opportunity to provide quality instruction and quality resources in the area of informational texts. School librarians have the opportunity to use their budget and resources taking into consideration the needs of the students and staff. The school librarian can supplement the classroom library with books and resources from the school library.

In addition, the Common Core expectations for a 21st century literate person also include thoughtful engagement with high-quality literary and informational texts (Morris 11). This provides another opportunity for school librarians to become leaders in providing resources and implementation. School librarians are knowledgeable in the area of children’s literature. They have access to the literature, journals to find reviews, and the opinions of the patrons of their library.

The integration of reading and language across subject areas is another area that the school librarian is already familiar with (Morris 10). The school librarian’s role is especially critical in the area of research skills (Morris 10). The AASL website “Crosswalk” has aligned AASL Learning Standards with the Common Core Standards. One example of this is in the area
The first AASL standard requires students to follow an inquiry based process. Twenty-one CCSS align with this one AASL standard, like third grade writing standard number 7, which states the expectation that students are able to research to build and present knowledge and to conduct short research projects (“Crosswalk”). Writing standard number 8 states students need to be able to use print and digital resources and take brief notes (“Crosswalk”). Ten of the CCSS require research skills. These standards build on one another through the grade levels. The school librarian is likely to have access to the resources and have prior knowledge in the area of research to assist in this process. Research requires the use of prior knowledge to build present expertise and is emphasized throughout the standards (“Crosswalk”). Lesson plans may be designed collaboratively to teach these concepts with the depth of knowledge that the CCSS require.

**Lesson Ideas**

The AASL website “Crosswalk” is a table designed to help the school librarian become familiar with the CCSS standards and how they align to current AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner. This crosswalk will help the school librarian in the implementation of the CCSS. The standards’ alignment can be viewed in two different ways. The AASL has a table with standards one through four of the “Standards for the 21st Century Learner” and aligns CCSS with those standards. Another table has similar information presented by grade level. Each grade level CCSS can be viewed and the table aligns the appropriate 21st Century Learner Standard (AASL Crosswalk). The school librarian can become familiar with these alignments and plan accordingly. With school librarian and teacher collaboration, the grade level table would be the most useful because it lists both sets of standards.

The AASL website “Crosswalk” has many CCSS collaborative lessons. School librarians can post successful collaborative lessons for others to use and learn from on the site’s lesson plan
database. Collaborative lesson plan creation is vital to the success of the school librarian and the teacher working together to increase student achievement. Following are examples of lessons that others have used. These examples include cross-curricular activities as well as activities that meet the needs of the AASL standards as well as the CCSS. The lessons address situations for various grade levels and subject areas.

The school librarian can build lesson ideas for collaboration and the Common Core as an expansion of lessons that already call for collaboration. One such example is introduced by Darcy Lohmiller. Lohmiller suggests literature circles (38). According to Lohmiller, this is a jumping off point for school librarians to lead in implementing CCSS. The school librarian is an expert in children’s literature and has access to the resources needed to create literature circles (Lohmiller 38). Teachers are encouraged to work closely with their school librarians to select quality books with varying reading levels and varying interest, which will solicit small group discussions and collaboration amongst students, which is a standard in the CCSS (Lohmiller 38). Literature circles can involve fiction or nonfiction readings. With the goals of the CCSS non-fiction would be preferable.

Steck and Padgett describe one collaborative unit they have done with fifth graders. Their collaborative team designed a unit on ecosystems (36). The objectives were for students to work collaboratively using research skills to produce a presentation tool to share with others on the topic of ecosystems. The students were scheduled to come to the library for three consecutive days for research purposes (Steck and Padgett 36). The teacher introduced the project and the guidelines before students came to the library. They also went over vocabulary words and the rubric (Steck and Padgett 36). Research skills were reviewed by the school librarian. The students were able to choose their own ecosystem to research and were encouraged to use both print and non-print resources for their research (Steck and Padgett 36).
The students worked in groups and were able to devise a presentation tool to share their learning with others (Steck and Padgett 36). The collaboration and presentation portions of this lesson are particularly important to the CCSS. These types of lessons use the expertise of all the staff and encourage the students to think critically and work in collaborative groups.

One example of a collaborative CCSS lesson is from Mark Popovich, a library-media teacher from California. His lesson is on animal research. The content area covers the use of educational technology, language arts, and science. The collaborating teachers are the 7th grade science teacher as well as the language arts teacher. Students are introduced to the Big6 research model. The students will decide which wild animal they would like to research. After visiting the library website, students will find a print resource on their animal. The students will decide on five questions they would like answered. The lesson is designed to show students how to use the Big6 research model, the online catalog, as well as print resources. The students will write a two page paper on their findings and create a PowerPoint to present to the class. Students are required to use MLA format for citations. All three teachers will assess the students during the process and their final product. Nine standards from the Standards for 21st Century Learner and five English and Language Arts Standards from the CCSS are used in the process. The process is described as requiring intensive collaboration between the librarians and teachers (Popovich). This lesson could be modified for any age group and any subject area. Similar lessons in other grade levels, content areas, and or involving research on topics chosen by students could follow a similar pattern (Beckner). This new era of education is an opportunity for school librarians, teachers, and administrators to unite, design, and implement curriculum that not only teaches the appropriate standards, but also motivates and generates excitement for learning.
Matt Vongehr, a teacher-librarian from Tioga Middle School in California, shares an intensive collaborative unit using educational technology as well as social studies curriculum. The content areas are ‘research’ and ‘writing across the curriculum’ (Vongehr). Both librarian and teacher are involved in the planning, teaching, and assessing of the unit. The lesson is for 8th grade but could be modified for other grade levels. The goal of the unit is for students to produce an historical multimedia news story. The learning objective for the lesson is to help students use critical thinking skills and increase reasoning skills using higher level thinking.

Students work in pairs to create a video based on research they have done of a Civil War battle. Prior to student work, the librarian and teacher will show an historical news story. The librarian and teacher will discuss the video with the students. The librarian and teacher will then discuss what makes a good news report, find the 5 W’s and the how, find the emotion and consider the audience. Students will work in pairs and brainstorm historical topics. After the final selection has been made, the teams will work in the computer lab to research and gather information to use in their final product. Librarian and teachers work together in the computer lab with the students. The projects are presented, and a rubric is used to assess learning. After presenting their final product, students will have the opportunity to reflect on their work. Eight of the CCSS will be satisfied by this lesson (Vongehr).

A multitude of lessons are available online to facilitate the process of collaboration with the CCSS. A few of the sites are ReadWorks.org, AASL Lesson Plan Database, and Livebinders.com. These lessons can help spark the fire that will ignite collaboration between the school librarian and the teacher while they boost student achievement. Once librarian confidence
is achieved, then the school librarian can become a leader in his or her school community in the implementation of the CCSS.
CHAPTER 3: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The CCSS ushered in a new era in education. These national standards have been adopted by 46 states thus far. Students across the nation will all learn the same set of standards. The standards were designed to cover a greater depth and breadth of knowledge with the idea that when mastered, students will be ready for the workplace or university classroom. This chapter will answer the following questions: How can school librarians assert themselves as leaders in their school communities through the adoption of CCSS? What is the correlation between CCSS and 21st century learning? How can the school librarian use CCSS as a bridge to collaboration with teachers?

School Librarians and the Implementation of CCSS

With the onset of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), school librarians have a unique opportunity to assert themselves as leaders in their schools. They can do this by working with teachers as collaborative partners and by making resources available to students and teachers. The first step is to become familiar with the CCSS and their expectations for students. The next step is to work with teachers in order to interpret and align them with standards already in place.

The standards are not a curriculum. It will be up to teachers to design curriculum that includes the standards. The school librarian can work collaboratively with teachers and administration in the creation of curriculum that will teach the standards. Collaboration will make the design and implementation process less arduous, as it is easier to develop ideas when there are shared with others. Co-planning, co-teaching, and co-assessing lessons between the school librarian and the teacher will both lighten the load and gain the best results.
Collaboration is not the only area needed for successful implementation of the CCSS. The implementation process will also require resources. School librarians are the resource providers in the school. This will be particularly true with the implementation of the CCSS. For example additional resources will be necessary to meet the expectations of the CCSS in the area of language arts. The standards require the use of more informational texts for reading and writing. Many classroom libraries are filled with fiction. Few classroom libraries will have the amount of informational text required by the CCSS. These include, but are not limited to, nonfiction text, periodicals, database subscriptions, digital resources, as well as human resources. The school librarian may also have a budget to provide resources that the teachers might not otherwise have an opportunity to acquire. Through the provision of resources and by offering to partner with teachers to collaborate on lessons, school librarians assert themselves as leaders in the implementation of the CCSS.

**The AASL Crosswalk**

The correlation between the American Association of School Librarian (AASL) Standards for the 21st Century Learner and the CCSS is outlined in the AASL website in the section titled, “Crosswalk.” The Standards for 21st Century Learners are typically taught by the school librarian. The school librarian is already familiar with the standards and has been teaching the requisite skills since their inception in 2007. He or she will have the skill set to integrate the CCSS and the AASL standards.

AASL standards require critical thinking, problem solving, and application of new knowledge. In addition they recommend that students acquire good communication and collaboration skills. These are skills that are necessary in order to be successful and productive citizens.
The AASL website “Crosswalk” is designed to help the school librarian become familiar with the CCSS and in their implementation. The AASL created tables that align the CCSS with the AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner. The standards’ alignment can be viewed in two different ways. The AASL has a table with standards one through four of the “Standards for the 21st Century Learner” and aligns CCSS with those standards. Another table has similar information presented by grade level. Each grade level CCSS can be viewed and the table aligns the appropriate AASL standard (AASL). The school librarian can become familiar with these alignments and plan accordingly.

**Using CCSS as a Bridge to Collaboration**

School librarian might be able to use the CCSS as a bridge to encourage collaboration with the teachers. Through collaboration, school librarians become instructional partners with teachers to increase student achievement. Where collaboration has been less than stellar in the past, CCSS presents new opportunities. Possibly once successful collaboration has taken place, more teachers will want to participate in projects with the school librarian.

The school librarian has the knowledge, resources and skill set to become an educational partner in the implementation process. The AASL “Crosswalk” provides a multitude of lesson plans to help school librarians and teachers collaborate with the implementation of the CCSS. These lessons outline not only the CCSS being used, but also the standards for the 21st century learner. The integration of these standards encourages collaboration between the school librarian and the teacher.

The only way that successful collaboration with the implementation of the CCSS will take place is if the school librarians assert themselves as partners in education. At this time, little research exists as to the success of collaboration in the implementation of the CCSS. Further
research and data collection is needed to show how collaboration between the school librarian and teachers using CCSS has increased student achievement.
WORKS CITED


Collaboration with the Common Core State Standards


http://www.lmsource.com/evidence/CollLevels.htm


