Collaborative Instruction

Course

Collaboration & Flexible Library Scheduling [6:07]

https://players.brightcove.net/2566261579001/HyuWsfFhb_default/index.html?videoId=4674601639001

About

Library collaboration and a flexible library schedule complement each other very well when used together, but they have distinct differences.

Transcript

Collaboration and flexible library scheduling are terms that are often used interchangeably. However, they are not the same thing. Library collaboration and a flexible library schedule do complement each other very well when used together, but they have distinct differences.

Collaboration is the team approach to teaching using all resources, personnel, and materials, to work together to increase student achievement. Teaching teams can include: classroom teachers, the librarian, special education staff, teaching assistants, and other specialists. Teaching teams can also use data to inform teaching plans. Data driven collaboration is when the team uses data from standardized testing, formal and informal assessments, and benchmark testing to inform the teaching teams' decisions during the planning, implementation, and assessment phases of collaboratively taught lessons and units. Collaboration can happen in libraries with the fixed library schedule or in libraries that have a flexible version of a library schedule.

Flexible library scheduling is when the library schedule is created to suit the particular needs of the students, the curriculum, and the teachers. Every school's flexible library schedule will look differently. In fact, the schedule could look entirely differently every day in just one library week, depending upon the needs of the school. Different factors that could influence the library schedule would be: the amount of time per lesson, the number of lessons per week needed for any particular class, the types of resources needed, the type of lessons implemented, and whether or not collaboration is in place. A class could stay for a 30 minute lesson or leave whenever the class finished the research that is needed to be completed. A class could return to the library several times during a week if the material being taught needs repeated lessons in one weekso that momentum is not lost in furthering the project.

There are many different types of lessons that could be taught in a library. Some examples would be: exploratory science experiments leading into a research project, fraction and decimal math lessons, research small group re-teach lessons, enrichment activities, language arts mini lessons, and the list could go on and on.

A flexible schedule could happen with or without collaboration. The most efficient and effective use of library collaboration and a flexible schedule is when they are used in conjunction with each other because it meets the needs of the students and the staff while supporting student achievement. When collaboration happens with the flexible schedule, the teaching team is able to meet the needs of all students without having to end the lesson just because the time is up. Students can either continue to work until they are finished or come back in another time as a whole class or individually, to finish their work. With more personnel resources available, all students will be able to have the assistance that is needed.

A blended library schedule contains elements of a fixed schedule, a flexible schedule, and staff collaboration. Even the fixed part of a library schedule often becomes accidentally flexible when there are interruptions to the classroom schedule but a teacher still needs her students to complete a research project in a library. Having a mostly flexible schedule allows for the times when even the most rigidly scheduled teacher has a desperate need for the library.

In my library, preschool and kindergarten are on a fixed story-time schedule. First grade is on a mostly fixed schedule for story-time but several times per year we make their times very flexible because they want to do animal and habitat research in a library. Second through fifth grades are on a totally flexible schedule with all lessons being planned, taught, and assessed collaboratively. Often there are two classes in a library at the same time.

There are three pieces of research that I have found invaluable in convincing my library stakeholders of the importance of collaboration and a flexible library schedule on student achievement.

First, *School Libraries Work* by Beth Fitzsimmons from the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, summarizes a study that has been replicated

in 19 states and one province of Canada. Many of the individual state studies show that when teachers and librarians collaborate, the students have higher scores on the State Standardized Assessments, particularly in the areas of reading and writing.

Second, Debra Kachel studied the effects of students having flexible access to libraries and how it affected their test scores in her study *The Pennsylvania School Library Project: Creating 21st Century Learners: A Report on Pennsylvania's Public School Libraries.*

Third, *Mansfield University, School Library Research Summarized: A Graduate Class Project* shares the impact of teacher and librarian collaboration on student achievement and the achievement gap.

If a librarian wants to move forth with the model of collaboration and a flexible library schedule, he or she must become knowledgeable about what the research says and how it impacts student achievement in order to be able to explain it to the library stakeholders.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Annotated Biblography.

MLA CITATION

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