

Chapter Nine: "Collaboration"

by Judi Moreillon

"Collaboration is THE key to co-creating a values-centered culture of deeper learning."

Dynamic School Cultures

I believe collaboration is the key to influencing the values and changing the priorities of members of every school learning community. Creating a school culture is about connecting values, ideas, and information through relationships among stakeholders. Culture is a way of life composed "of shared beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, language, behaviors, social interactions, and more. Cultures are created by people over time. Cultures are dynamic; they are not fixed. Cultures change as people's needs and norms change" (Moreillon 2018b, 170). School librarians can play a pivotal role in initiating, maintaining, and sustaining transformation in our schools.

When members of a learning community agree to transform their culture, they must revisit and refresh their school's mission and vision. In the process, they will reassess and realign their values. As they move forward, the community will then set about changing their priorities in order to reach their goals. All along the way, stakeholders will collaborate with one another, revise, and enact agreements to ensure that all members receive the benefits of this transformative process. The collaborative conversations and actions taken create the community's transformed culture.

"In a functioning democracy, we must slowly build consensus among diverse individuals around core values in order to transform culture" (Lee and Eisen-Markowitz 2018, 95). School librarians can be essential leaders in transforming school culture because we work alongside administrators and every educator colleague and are charged with serving every student and their families. We can capitalize on our position as educators who colead from the largest classroom in the school—the library. By focusing on and accelerating our collaborative work, school librarians can be leaders in changing values and priorities and moving forward with our colleagues toward school transformation that meets the needs of all students and families.

Collaborating school librarians can also make connections that result in deeper learning. We know the taught curriculum across the grade levels. The literacies, thinking skills, and dispositions students practice through an integrated school library program are transferrable to every discipline and to lifelong learning. If we have done our homework, we have influenced teaching and learning practices throughout the building through coordination, cooperation, collaboration, coteaching, and just-in-time professional development. With these connections and the most diverse and greatest number of resources in multiple formats and reading levels, school librarians can secure our seat at the leadership table.

Mission and Goals

"Leaders maintain an understanding of what the mission and goals of an organization are and how these can be fulfilled" (Riggs 2001). Today's education leaders seek to move their colleagues or organizations forward to embrace and enact education equity, develop responsive and effective instructional strategies, and utilize the diverse resources and digital tools of our times. School librarians are positioned to serve as literacy leaders. As a district superintendent recently noted: "Often times I hear people say librarians support literacy work in classrooms. We need to change the word 'support' to 'lead' " (Doherty 2018).

When a school or district is revisiting their mission and setting new priorities, school librarians, with our global view of our learning communities, have an invaluable perspective. Our contact with all classroom educators and students helps us "read" the school. We know which students are accessing the resources of the library for academic and personal purposes and which are effectively applying digital tools to meet learning outcomes. We know whether or not classroom teachers are promoting independent reading and choice. We know which educators are facilitating student-led inquiry learning and creating opportunities for relevant, differentiated, personalized, equitable access to deeper learning. From the heart of the school—the library—we have our fingers on the pulse of the taught curriculum in our schools.

When it is time to reconsider our school's mission and goals, school librarians know which policies, procedures, and practices are working for all students, educators, and families. Alongside our site administrators and other teacher-leaders, we can colead the change process. By enacting librarian values through the library program, school librarians model the change we want to see. We build trust when we follow through with our commitments to equity, diversity, inclusion, and intellectual freedom. When we are grounded in our values, we can demonstrate courage in the face of adversity.

Change Creates Leadership Opportunities

"If leadership is (a) social influence process of enlisting the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task, a leader is consequently someone whom you would follow where you would not normally go alone, someone who rallies people to a better future" (Haycock 2017, 2). One primary activity of leaders is to inspire and influence the thinking and behaviors of others. When school librarians embrace a leadership role, we have the opportunity to cocreate an equitable, inclusive school culture that truly transforms education. It is a way to enact social justice in our communities.

"The three most important words in education are: relationships, relationships, relationships. Without them, we have nothing." —George Couros

Collaboration is an indispensable behavior of school librarian leaders who help all library stakeholders reach their capacity. In order to achieve a high-impact level of service, school librarian leaders nurture, develop, and sustain relationships with all library stakeholders. We build confidence by continuously improving our skill sets, including culturally responsive teaching and technological innovations. School librarians develop our communication skills in order to listen and respond to the ever-evolving needs of learners—students and educators alike. Through relationships and communication, school librarians lead with confidence (Everhart and Johnston 2016). Through leadership and collaboration, school librarians cocreate and colead educational change.

Instructional Partnerships: Creating Advocates

When asked whom they serve, "most [school librarians] would answer students, yet the primary clientele in terms of power, impact, and effect would be teachers" (Haycock 2017, 3). Classroom-library collaboration for instruction is one central strategy that helps school librarians position their work and the library program as the hub of academic and personal learning in the school. As instructional partners, school librarians codesign effective instruction, provide and engage in professional learning opportunities with colleagues, and improve our own teaching practice in the process. By doing so, we engender advocates for the library program. Collaboration with colleagues is a necessity, not an option.

"Collaborate" is one of the American Association of School Librarians (2018) shared foundations and a competency for students. Therefore, school librarians are called on to take the necessary risks to model, practice, and achieve their own level of competence in collaborative work. Collaborating educators believe that their instructional practices develop at a much greater rate with more assured improvements when they collaborate. As centralized instructional partners, school librarians help classroom teachers reach student learning outcome targets based in the classroom curriculum and work to solve instructional challenges with their colleagues (see Berg, Kramer, and Werle 2019).

Vignette: Meaningful Collaboration

Matt King

Five years ago, I transitioned from a first-grade classroom to our school library. When reviewing Missouri library standards and how I was going to be evaluated, collaboration was a focus area. During district library meetings, collaboration was discussed. Often librarians spoke of the importance of collaboration but lacked system-wide supports for such endeavors. In fact, many librarians believed that providing books to classroom teachers on a specific topic was enough and labeled it collaboration. I questioned that. In fact, being a new librarian, I did not understand how providing books on frogs for a second-grade lesson was collaboration. Isn't collaboration more than just providing resources on a specific topic?

Two years ago, I switched school districts and began my education specialist's degree. I wanted to focus my thesis on collaboration because research tells us how impactful collaboration can be. Throughout the course of my research, I found foundational theories about levels of collaboration. These theories were used to guide my view of meaningful collaboration. Montiel-Overall (2005) indicated four levels of collaboration consisting of coordination, cooperation, integrated instruction, and finally integrated curriculum. I believe that meaningful collaboration happens at the higher levels. Meaningful collaboration is when classroom standards and library standards are integrated completely. These standards are taught and evaluated collectively.

Theory into Practice

In order to understand meaningful collaboration, I instituted a collaborative process in my school. Classroom teachers and I developed lessons that incorporated both library and classroom standards using a written collaboration plan. Before this plan, classroom teachers were unaware of library standards. This collaborative process helped educate classroom teachers on the importance of having a highly trained librarian as an instructional partner. We developed a scoring guide to

evaluate student learning that combined both standards. We determined who would be responsible for teaching which objectives. Some lessons were taught by me, others were taught by the classroom teacher, and some were cotaught. In the end, we assessed and evaluated student outcomes together. This ecosystems collaboration plan is taken from my thesis (King 2019, 88).

Lessons Learned

From our collaborative efforts, I have learned valuable lessons about what can make meaningful collaboration happen. Many times, teachers are unaware of what skills and resources a librarian can provide. It is imperative for school librarians to promote and advocate for these skills to ensure that their expertise is used throughout the building. When classroom teachers understand what resources a school librarian can offer, collaboration will happen.

Meaningful collaboration is deliberate; it is a predetermined plan. It is not spontaneous. In schools today, common planning times seldom occur between school librarians and classroom teachers. Teachers and librarians have so much on their plates—and finding time to collaborate seems impossible—but the effort is so worthwhile. By meeting outside of school hours, using digital communication and impromptu conversations, a collaborative plan can be developed. These collaborative plans are imperative to ensure deeper levels of collaboration.

Finally, relationships are critical for meaningful collaboration. Classroom teachers and librarians must value the expertise of each other. Taking the time to connect with stakeholders and provide resources allowed teachers in my building to see me as an equal partner with unique areas of expertise, which increased their trust and willingness to collaborate. As a result of our collaborative planning and teaching, all library stakeholders have benefited—students, classroom teachers, administrators, and me, too!

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Making the commitment to meaningful classroom-library collaboration is no small act. It means we will not always have "things" our way as we strive to enact our values and spread those values through collaborative work. We will need to negotiate as we align our library program goals and objectives with those of our classroom teacher colleagues. We will bump up against the status quo. We will be called on to meet others where they are as we move alongside them to a better future for our students. In this process, we will invest time and energy in educating others and provide the necessary evidence of benefits and outcomes that support the changes we seek.

Making a Commitment to Core Values in Practice

In each chapter in this book, we, the contributors, have shared our firsthand experiences as well as other school librarians' stories. We have shared our passion for the four core values—equity, diversity, inclusion, and intellectual freedom. As evidenced by our applications in practice, we know passion is not enough. School librarians must collaborate with members of the learning community in order to reach our capacity to enact the core values of our profession. We must develop pathways to enact these values in the field—through relationships, principal-librarian partnerships, leadership, and advocacy.

Shining a light on these bright spots has given us a great deal to consider as we self-assess our own practice and develop strategies for improving our work. If equity only resides in the heart of the school librarian and in the services of the school library, we will not transform teaching and learning for every student every day. All students, classroom educators, and families must have equitable access to the library's resources and the work of school librarians. The very meaning of equity charges us to diffuse values, beliefs, and opportunities throughout the school community.

At this time in history, both nationally and globally, educators must be laser focused on ensuring equitable access to high-quality learning. The opportunity gap created by the unequal distribution of digital tools and broadband during the pandemic has exposed inequities far too familiar to educators. But access to individual or shared technology devices and high-speed Internet are far from the only inequities that undermine student learning in 2020. Other socioeconomic and family-specific factors that support or hinder a student's ability to succeed include food security, health care access, adults' work schedules or how losing one or more jobs affects a family, and older siblings' or adults' ability to support learning. These and school-specific factors were heightened when schooling went 100 percent online in the spring of 2020.

"When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something."—Representative John Lewis

As this book goes to press, our nation is engaged in a focused conversation about systemic racism. When living through our values, school librarians can serve as

catalysts for deep conversations and structural change. Through words, actions, and advocacy, we can guide our schools and districts toward racial justice. When we speak our truth while remaining grounded in our values, we will practice humility and compassion for the challenges faced by decision makers in our schools. At the same time, we will insist on integrity, empathy, and change that move us forward toward a more just education for all students.

School librarians can plant seeds for transformative social justice. We, who hold dear the values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and intellectual freedom, cannot be silent. We are compelled to advocate and act for equitable access to learning opportunities in our schools, districts, and communities. We can purchase and curate diverse resources, but if those resources are used solely in the library, we are not transforming our learning communities. If the school library is the only space in the school where inclusion is a priority, then we have fallen short of our potential to lead change.

If the school librarian is the only educator in the building who embraces and advocates for intellectual freedom, then there will likely be spaces in students' school days where they do not have a voice. The same will be true for educators and families. When school librarians fully educate our administrators and colleagues about the essential practice of free speech, we can help ensure that everyone in the learning community will be given a voice. We can insist that everyone's ideas and opinions are heard and respected. And we can advocate for decision making that takes all voices into account.

Using Our Values as a Foundation for Courage

The ways school librarians address academic, societal, and political inequities cannot be a neutral stance. The daily decisions we make reflect our shared librarianship values, the values of our communities, and our own personal values as well. School librarians who adhere to our value of "access" seek to be fair rather than equal. A neutral library would simply exist and serve those who come through our library doors. On the other hand, when librarians assess the needs of our community and determine how to best help all stakeholders achieve their potential, we will, of necessity, do more for some than for others.

The courage to hold to our values will invariably take school librarians out of our comfort zones. We will be required to stand up for what's fair and equitable rather than what is equal and not necessarily fair. "Our English language learners and their classroom teachers may need more literacy support than our gifted and talented students and their classroom teachers. Youth living in poverty may need access to literacy and technology resources more than our affluent students who have access in their homes or back pockets. Inviting an author from an underrepresented group to provide a literacy event may speak in more personally meaningful and impactful ways to some of our students and families than to others" (Moreillon 2018a).

"The decision to never veer from your cause, to hold yourself accountable to HOW you do things; that's the hardest part."—Simon Sinek

Accountability to Students

Courageous norm breaking may be part of school librarians' contribution to school transformation. Beginning with students, "librarians have unique opportunities to promote choice and voice through a student-centered approach to facility design, instruction, programming, and collection development" (Harper and Deskins 2020, 49). We may ask ourselves questions such as these:

1. How do our facilities meet the needs of students who come to the library to read, study, socialize, and organize?
2. How does our instruction and library programming meet the needs of students from all racial and socioeconomic backgrounds, all gender identities, English language learners, and students with special needs?
3. How do we intentionally involve students in decision making regarding library policies, procedures, and programming as well as in collection development?

Agency is a key component of inquiry learning and reader choice applied to curriculum-based and independent reading. We may have to support students as they grow from compliance-dependent pupils to empowered learners who think critically about ideas and information. When developing students as agents in their own learning process, we will have to disrupt the student-to-educator power differential. We will need to be vocal advocates for our students' intellectual freedom.

School libraries can also be safe spaces for student organizing, another example of youth agency. In any school-based changed movement, educators should follow students' demand: "Ask us—We're the ones in the classroom" (Rojas and Wornum 2018, 27). When students are supported as they use their voices to create change in their lived experience of schooling, they can develop as activists in creating both their present and their future. When young people are at the forefront and center of transforming schools, adults must encourage their leadership.

Not all of our colleagues will be in agreement with these approaches to learning and teaching. Beginning with even one or two like-minded colleagues, we will be able to collect data affirming that student choice and voice is an equity issue as well as a way to improve motivation and academic achievement. Providing students with

equitable access to relevant, engaging, and culturally responsive curriculum, resources, and programming must be essential to our mission. We cannot be quiet; we must stand up and advocate for our students.

Accountability to Colleagues

In our collaborative work with classroom teachers and specialists, we will need to be able to hear the words "no thank you" and not give up. Some of our colleagues, for various reasons, will not initially embrace the diversity in resources and programming or a focus on inclusion and intellectual freedom that are central to exemplary library practice. Some will not be on the same page as we are with regard to seeing us as codesigners of instruction who address those priorities. Some will not welcome our work as coteachers who jointly implement lessons and units of instruction. Others may not recognize us as peer educators who share responsibility for assessing student learning outcomes. We may ask ourselves questions such as these:

1. How do our levels of service interface with colleagues on a continuum from cooperation and coordination to collaboration?
2. How are our core values in school librarianship evidenced in our collaborative work with classroom teachers and specialists?
3. How do we succeed in coleading a change process in which our colleagues' voices are heard, respected, and considered?

We will collaborate with colleagues who are enthusiastic and willing collaborators. We will also strive to work with reluctant instructional partners. To all members of the learning community, we will need to demonstrate the benefits of classroom-library collaboration for students as well as for educators' professional learning. This is especially true when sharing our classroom-library collaborative work with administrators.

Accountability to Administrators

As we infuse our practice with our core values, we can grow in our leadership capacity in collaboration with our principals and site-level leaders. For the most part, school principals determine the availability of leadership opportunities for all teacher leaders, including school librarians. Principals' willingness to delegate leadership tasks, support full staffing and library budgets, and promote collaboration and (flexible) scheduling can create openings (or barriers) to school librarian leadership (Johnston 2015). When considering how to effectively collaborate with our principals, we may ask ourselves questions such as these:

1. How do we support our principals' goals and objectives for our learning community?
2. How do we earn trust and demonstrate reliability in our interactions with our principals?
3. How does our collaborative work with our principals and other decision makers positively impact learning and teaching throughout our school and district?

If our principals or district-level leaders go out on a limb to support our efforts toward change through library programs, they will need to know we can and will deliver on our promises. We will need to ensure that our work helps others meet their needs to increase student learning outcomes and helps all members of the learning community reach their capacity. We must practice integrity and follow-through in our professional work.

Leadership and Innovation

"Whatever the innovation, building and sustaining a culture of collaboration provides the necessary foundation for change" (Moreillon 2018b, 152). Principals are charged with leading the school in developing a vision, setting and achieving goals, and creating the conditions in which students, educators, and families reach their capacity. A collaborative culture is one condition that supports individuals, groups, and whole schools in reaching their potential. In a collaborative school culture, principals "endorse a whole school, 21st-century learning environment where educators model collaboration for students as they collaborate; encourage a culture of innovation, risk taking, and high expectations; and acknowledge the actions school librarians take to shape a school culture of deep learning" (Todd, Gordon, and Lu 2012, xxii).

Principals who empower educators, including librarians, to lead alongside them further the collaborative culture in their schools. Principals and school librarians can colead in a collaborative school culture. If library programs are to reach capacity, school librarians must invest in building mutually beneficial partnerships with principals. Together, school librarians and principals colead a change process that spreads innovation throughout their schools.

Effective school librarians and principals extend their impact beyond the school walls to work with families and other community members. A close working relationship between principals and school librarians helps us share our insights into the various components of the learning community and how to improve outcomes for all. Working as a team to reach out to families and district-level decision makers is a winning strategy for both principals and librarians. When we make our leadership visible to others and invite their feedback and input, we increase the likelihood of success in building a culture of learning.

Cocreating a Culture of Deeper Learning

Leadership in schools, at all instructional levels, has been described "as an essential condition of innovation and change" (Mardis 2013, 41). In order to transform our schools to meet the needs of today's students and address the societal changes in our communities and country, we must engage in respectful, productive conversations. We must work together to identify fresh ideas and strategies for improving teaching and learning. We must take risks, experiment, self-assess, and adjust our practice with the support and encouragement of our colleagues.

If innovation is a process of thinking that involves creating something new and better (George Couros paraphrase), then school librarians, as collaborators and professional developers, will always be seeking improvement. As Senge and his colleagues suggest: schools that learn are "places where everyone, young and old, would continuously develop and grow in each other's company; they would be incubation sites for continuous change and growth. If we want the world to improve, in other words, then we need schools that learn" (Senge et al. 2012, 4-5).

There are no shortcuts to creating, nurturing and sustaining schools that learn. There are no short cuts to culture building. Educators must develop trust and invest in our own and our colleagues' continuous learning. Serving as coleaders and collaborators in schools that learn, school librarians can be the keys that unlock the potential of our school cultures to grow, to change, and to transform.

The core values of school librarianship require that school librarians become activists who spread core librarian values through classroom-library collaboration. It is only when school curricula are examined, reexamined, and transformed through a lens of equity, diversity, inclusion, and intellectual freedom that school librarians will have reached our capacity as change makers in our schools. When school librarians serve as instructional partners to coplan and coimplement learning opportunities and coassess student learning outcomes, we organically and authentically create opportunities to share, enact, and spread our core values. We can be catalysts for values-based culture building.

Vignette: From a Classroom Teacher's Point of View

Jenni Kramer with Kat Berg

My middle school English language arts (ELA) classroom is lovingly named the Literacy Lounge. The climate is soothing and welcoming; we enjoy flexible seating and work areas throughout the space, and books are plentiful, of course. The culture is built on literacy as an important part of becoming reflective learners and lifelong readers. The students and I frequently refer to our driving question, "How can we share our love of literacy with our school and community?" We engage in project-based learning (PBL), Passion Projects/Genius Hour, and make innovative learning a priority. And what better way to enhance our learning experiences than to team up with our Horizon Middle School (HMS) librarian!

The Literacy Lounge Meets the Discovery Den

For some classroom teachers, it is necessary to grow a mind-set that understands how a library and librarian can benefit our students and our own teaching. However, it seems there are some barriers to overcome in this area. My librarian Kat has faced those challenges. I interviewed Kat for this vignette. Here are some excerpts.

Jenni: What feedback have you been given on barriers to collaboration in the library or with a librarian?

Kat: "If you build it, they will come." As our principal Dr. Tabby Rabenberg once told me, "building relationships with teachers (as with students) begins with one simple step: taking each person where they are at." There are those natural coteachers, like you, Jenni! Then, there are those who would love the opportunity but just don't know where to begin. Our district-level library director Misti Werle developed a survey that asked teachers to identify barriers to collaboration. Horizon teachers currently view the following as barriers: needing two librarians (1,200 students, grades 6-8); knowing what I'm willing and able to coteach; and easy access to online resources with how-to tutorials and ideas for integrating technology tools into their curriculum.

Jenni: When I share with colleagues the collaborative projects we coteach, they seem to become more inquisitive about the library and what it has to offer. I think sharing my positive experiences has helped other teachers reach out to you. How do you encourage and provide positive partnerships?

Kat: The foundation of our library, the Horizon Discovery Den, is solid. Our mission and vision statements encompass the North Dakota Library and Technology Content Standards, AASL Library Standards, PBL competencies, and the 4Cs (Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, Collaboration) +1 (Content). The Den's inviting and innovative PAWS (learning spaces that students can reserve online) and tools empower students to personalize learning as they "Discover their PAWSibilities!" To break down teachers' perceived barriers and build relationships, I have designed interactive tools, such as a "Presentation Tools, Tutorials and Templates" slideshow and offer workshops for credit to encourage teachers to include us in the learning process with students.

Effective Instructional Partnerships and Deeper Learning

True instructional partnerships help provide a deeper learning opportunity for students. ELA teachers have a distinct advantage as our ELA standards meld effortlessly with the librarian standards, especially when we are working on research skills and inquiry. Coteaching these lessons has added an aspect of relief by sharing the workload and a bit of fun during the process.

Jenni: When my teaching team plans PBL or I challenge my students with Passion Projects/Genius Hour, I always come to you for coplanning ideas and support during the whole process. How has that helped you understand the classroom structure and teaching strategies, promote voice and choice, engage students, and assess them in their learning?

Kat: I still remember the first time you walked into the Den to collaborate with me. I was fired up by your "let's get down to business" attitude. You spelled out expected student outcomes tied to specific standards and shared some of your previous projects. I was awestruck by your organization and creativity! Then, you asked me what we could do together to make this an engaging and successful learning experience for all students. After catching my breath and asking a few clarifying questions, it was "off to the races"! That was the start of a true instructional partnership.

Jenni: We all have our areas of expertise, but I am of the belief that teachers need to go beyond the walls of their classroom and reach out to their librarian to support the learning outcomes of our students. Librarians have a depth of knowledge that teachers may be unaware of, and the library can be an extension of the classroom. How has the collaborative process changed your vision of what a librarian/library can become?

Kat: Just like Bartholomew Cubbins, librarians wear many hats! My everyday "hat" is to provide the highest level of service and partnership based on student learning outcomes. When collaborating with teachers on project design, implementation, assessment, and reflection, I am faithfully steered by the "Levels of Library Services and Instructional Partnerships" codeveloped by our district library director Misti Werle and Judi Moreillon (Moreillon 2018b, 28). Our library program continues to evolve because of amazing opportunities to train with educational leaders like coteaching consultant Anne Beninghof and coaching guide Steve Barkley.

Jenni: Teachers are challenged with planning for distance learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I think it is imperative to stay connected with kids, continue to promote reading and provide access to the library, however that may look. How can librarians support teachers and students during this time?

Kat: "Ask and you shall receive." The day before our district switched to distance learning, our principal stopped by the classroom where I was coteaching. She asked me to touch base with teachers who might need help with online resources like Google Classroom and Meet. The following week, I e-mailed all teachers and based on their numerous replies, I created the following online tools:

- HMS Online Oasis, a choice board of digital books, read-alouds, and other resources offered for free during distance learning.
- HMS Online PAWSibilities ("evolved" version of the slideshow mentioned previously).
- Collections by Destiny, over 275 sets of how-to tutorials, nonfiction and fiction books in all formats, and teams for educators to curate their own collections.
- And I also stayed connected with students, colleagues, and administrators alike via laptop phone, e-mails, virtual meetings, and curbside checkout.

Jenni: Students are comfortable with you because you reinvented the Discovery Den as a student-centered space by creating the PAWS and sharing the possibilities for learning experiences with staff. My "aha moment" took place during one of our cotaught projects when a student was waiting in a line to ask me a question. He got tired of waiting and said, "Never mind. I know Ms. Berg will know what to do." This solidified my belief that students will see the librarian as their "teacher" if you involve the librarian in the whole learning experience.

As library director Misti Werle states, "The school library is a natural vehicle to drive transformation when improving PBL teaching practices and implementing inquiry learning" (Berg, Kramer, and Werle 2019, 34). My advice to teachers and librarians alike: take the first step and just *ask* about a collaborative opportunity. Don't be afraid to start the conversation or invite colleagues to partner in learning. Take the risk. The PAWSibilities are endless between a classroom teacher and their school librarian!

Jenni, twenty-three-year educator, holds a master's of education degree and a bachelor's in elementary education from the University of North Dakota, and is licensed in middle school English/reading and elementary grades K–8. She currently teaches English language arts at Horizon Middle School in Bismarck, North Dakota, where she regularly collaborates with her school librarian Kat Berg.

Kat has twenty-six years of teaching/library experience in grades 5–12. She holds a master's degree in library science from St. Cloud State University and a bachelor of arts degree in elementary education, secondary education, English, and Spanish. She is currently the librarian serving in the Horizon Middle

"Adult learning (and leading) in schools is best implemented at the point of practice" (Moreillon and Ballard 2013, vi). When we coplan, coteach, and coassess student learning, classroom teachers and school librarians provide reciprocal mentorship for one another. Classroom-library coteaching creates a context for job-embedded professional development that is intended to provide educators with instructional and cultural interventions that "help create new norms that foster experimentation, collaboration, and continuous improvement" (Guskey 2000, x). When new norms are developed and practiced, school culture can change. Through instructional partnerships with colleagues, school librarians can colead that change.

Inventing the Future—Together

Whether you are a preservice, newly practicing, or seasoned school librarian, we hope our book has helped you find support for embracing a leadership role in your school. Whether you are responding to school culture crises, meeting administrative or faculty changes, responding to book challenges, and other points in practice that test our shared school librarian values, commitment, and courage, we hope you have found support for meeting these situations head on with confidence. We hope you will join us in the chorus and demonstrate, in your daily practice, the critical importance of school librarians' unique contributions to our school learning communities and by extension to literacy learning at large.

"The best way to predict the future is to invent it."—Alan Kay

As literacy leaders, school librarians must take action to cocreate a more just and equitable educational experience for and with youth. It is, therefore, imperative for us to engage in reflection and continuously improve our practice. Through collaboration with others, we can coinvent a future to meet the deeper learning needs for all students, the instructional needs of our colleagues, and the achievement needs of our administrators. School librarians advocate for deeper learning; we can be leaders in a culture of learning.

We, the contributors, hope we have given you moments of inspiration, prompted your deep thinking and reflection, and shared with you experiences as guides that can help you lead in your learning community. We hope you have gained a few more strategies to serve as role models for school librarian values: equity, diversity, inclusion, and intellectual freedom. We hope you will use your voice to affirm your commitment to library values and have the courage to enact them in collaboration with library stakeholders. We remain in the chorus beside you, school librarian leaders, as you stand up today and tomorrow for the hard things.

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