

Collection Development Basics

Course

Develop a Collection Plan [7:33]

https://players.brightcove.net/2566261579001/HyuWsfFhb_default/index.html?videoId=5478149458001

About

You need a collection development plan to remind yourself and others why your school has a library and to articulate your process for ensuring your library remains an important part of your school.

Transcript

What exactly is meant by creating a collection development plan? Well you know your collection is all the resources that you've gathered to serve all of your patrons. It can include books, eBooks, audio visual materials like DVDs, as well as hardware like projectors and document cameras. It can also include realia like models, maps, globes, logos, little bits, 3-D printers, iPads, much more.

If you have a makerspace in your library all of that furniture, software, hardware, any materials that you need for your students to create, all are part of your collection. Makerspaces are a way to extend your library beyond traditional books and magazines. Suddenly kids you've never seen before are engaged and not only enjoying your makerspace area, but looking around at books and other resources. It's a great way to get more student into the library, and to find out what their needs are so that you can meet those needs.

But if you know what you want to buy and where to buy it, why do you need a collection development plan? Well you really need a plan to remind yourself and others why your school has a library, and to articulate your process for keeping your library an important part of your school. In fact, your library should be the heart of the school, and your collection development plan explains how you're going to keep it that way.

A collection development plan is used to maintain and manage your collection, to show that you have a plan for the future, and to determine how you'll become accountable for all the resources that you have. Your district may choose to write a plan for all its schools—well, that makes your life easier, but you still have to personalize the plan to your school. Your students, parents, and entire community are unique and you want to recognize that.

Starting out with a mission statement is a great idea. A mission statement very simply articulates why your library exists. You might even include your vision for the future including short term and long term goals. This is the part of the plan that changes a little more often, but looking at this part of the plan at the end of each year gives you a good focus for the next year.

Like at my school, we were changing the science progression one year, so I had to improve my collection in some areas. When we opened my school we purchased lots of books in earth sciences, and then suddenly they didn't teach that anymore at my school, they implemented a huge physical science program. So I purchased resources in that area. Then they decided most students wouldn't take physical science anymore, they would be taking biology to start out with. So we increased materials in that content area. This is where short term goals come in, you have to change those. When you look at your short term goals, you can see if you've met your goals and decide if you want to update those or just erase them and move on to new ones.

Then you should include a description of your stakeholders. Who are your students? What's your school population? Do you have a big school, do you have a small school? How many are on free and reduced lunch? What are the ages of your students? What grade levels do you serve? How often do they come to the library and for what reasons? Are you on a fixed schedule where students come to your library on a previously determined schedule, or a flexible schedule, where they come in when they need books for a specific topic or report? When I was a school librarian in middle school, I had combination of both. All the language arts classes came in every two weeks to check out books for independent reading. When they came in, I did short book talks and in this way I really got to know all the students in my school. Really for us there is really not another way to know every student. And then other classes came in for one or two or three days together, in order to use books and computers for research for a specific report, and also to create their finished report.

Other questions you might ask, do you have any special needs students? You might need special readers for them like listening centers, audio books, books in brail or large

print. Lower look-up stations if you have maybe even one kid in a wheelchair you should get a lower look up station. And a lot of other things that you have to think about. Do you have different languages spoken at your school, a wide array of ethnic diversity? Do you have a special program such as magnet programs? I know one school in our district has a medical magnet program; gosh they're going to need way different books than I do.

Do you live in a rural or urban area? Do you have anything special in your area that will influence your collection? We have Disney World and Urban Studios near us, I mean Universal Studio sorry, Universal Studios near us in Orlando where I live and we love it. But it means that we need a lot of biographies for Walt Disney and lots of copies of Kingdom Keepers by Ridley Pearson. Where you live you might need some other unique items.

Within your collection development plan, you should include your selection policy. Now this policy identifies criteria that you use to decide what to purchase. You have to consider how accurate and how current and how significant the information is. This is especially important when you're considering online databases. You're looking for materials that have received favorable reviews from reliable sources and that meet the needs of your patrons. You want to make sure that books and websites and models—really any resource—is appealing and that it's easy to use and understand for your students, no matter what grade level they are.

Considering the viewpoints of each resource and making sure that all viewpoints are supported in your collection is important. Make sure your collection has a variety of formats too to appeal to all your learners. In order to accommodate all of your students, you may need resources in several languages, you may need multiple copies of books including multi-user subscriptions of eBooks depending on what your teachers are planning.

The collection development plan should articulate where you plan to get the funding for all your purchases, and the procedures for ordering and then processing the purchases. Talk about how you'll maintain your collection, like systematic reading and an annual inventory. Also address issues that occur because of your collection. What will you do if some of the materials you have carefully selected are challenged? What will you do with gifts that well-meaning community members wish to donate to your collection?

Really, all of the questions any of your stakeholders ask you can be answered in your collection development plan. It's really a back-up for all your purchases and it articulates the vision as to the direction you're planning to take your library. It's a changing document; you don't need to spend a lot of time on it, once it's written and easily accessible you can update it as needed.

Activities

Review Your Plan

Context:

The collection development plan establishes guidelines and policies for maintaining and managing the school library collection. Your plan should address these key elements:

- library mission statement,
- vision statement with short-term and long-term goals (e.g., curriculum-driven needs to fulfill),
- description of stakeholders (including community demographics and schedules/practices for library usage),
- special needs of students,
- selection policy (which is distinct from the collection development plan),
- funding sources,
- purchase and processing procedures,
- collection maintenance, and
- protocol for challenges to materials and donated or gift materials.

As Franklin emphasizes, the collection development plan should be a dynamic document, responsive to changing needs of the school library and school.

Instructions:

Franklin recommends librarians not spend excessive time writing a collection development plan. Instead, updates and additions can be made to a basic document. For this exercise, review your library's collection development plan. If you don't have a plan, view samples from colleagues' school libraries or online examples (see Resources below).

Resources:

Berland, Linda. "Collection Development Policies and Procedures in School Libraries." Resources for School Librarians.

<http://www.sldirectory.com/libsf/resf/coldev2.html>.

This site offers online examples of collection development plans.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Additional Reading.](#)

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