

Librarian in the Learning Community

Course

School Leaders [3:05]

https://players.brightcove.net/2566261579001/HyuWsfFhb_default/index.html?videoId=6161173026001

About

- Learn the importance of aligning your library program with the priorities of the school's administration.
- Learn ways to convey the value of your library program throughout the school to administrators.
- Learn to connect with school leaders by creating professional development featuring the latest advances in education.

Transcript

Some of the major stakeholders in a library program are the school's leaders—and it is up to you, as a librarian, to educate other leaders about ways your library program can impact the school and community. Let's look at three ways to involve school leaders in your library: aligning priorities, becoming joint advocates for the library program, and taking an active role in your school's professional development.

School administrators are responsible for the entire school and overseeing how everything fits into the big pictures of student learning. They are in charge of implementing new initiatives and focus areas to the school's staff. Like your school's administrators, you also see the big picture of your school, including how the curriculum and skills covered in one class relate to others. Find ways to align yourself and your program with the priorities of your school's administration. Be vocal about ways you can help with these initiatives and get involved on the whole school level to have more impact. Offer to join a schoolwide committee related to leadership, technology, or literacy. By embracing your school's areas of focus, you reinforce your value as a leader in your building both for teachers and for administrators.

Librarians and administrators can be joint advocates for a strong library program. The principal is in charge of allocating funds to create the library's yearly budget, which pays for books and other materials, including bookmarks, prizes for programs, office supplies, and more. When your principal realizes the impact you and your library program have on learning throughout your school, that may influence the budget they allocate for your use. Consider meeting with school leaders regularly to discuss happenings in the library, including collaborations with teachers, upcoming events, and how your budget is being used to impact student reading habits and learning. Finally, invite administrators to participate in library programs and observe innovative lessons with students. If they cannot attend, spotlight these events on your school's social media.

Another way to connect with other school leaders as a librarian is by suggesting, designing, and facilitating professional development for the staff at your school. Librarians stay on the forefront of the latest advances in education and can assist their school's leaders by providing meaningful professional development. Consider identifying a topic or two that would benefit your staff and approach your principal with some ideas for conducting a workshop in those areas during faculty meetings, on a staff development day, or after school.

Librarians are essential to their staff, including their school's administration. As Carl Harvey explains, "It is critical that as school librarians we build strong and solid relationships with our principals so they not only understand, but also support and encourage the school library program as an integral part of the school ecosystem." By aligning your priorities, becoming joint advocates for the library program and assisting with professional development in your building, your principal will realize the value you contribute to maximizing learning in your school.

Activities

Meet with Your Principal

An important part of a librarian's job is to meet with the principal on a frequent basis to discuss a variety of topics. In this activity, gather resources and make a plan for what you want to discuss at your next meeting.

RESOURCES:



"Toolkit for Promoting School Library Programs", American Library Association, June 8, 2015.

<http://www.ala.org/aasl/advocacy/tools/toolkits/promoting> (Accessed September 23, 2020).

REFLECT & PRACTICE:

Template

Analyze your current situation. What's great, and what's not? Using the Meet with Your Principal worksheet on page 4 of the handout found in Resources, identify three positives about your library and 1–2 areas of improvement. Using the template and AASL resources provided, develop an action plan for making your areas of improvement better. Where can your principal help? Make the case for why action is needed. Set up a meeting with your principal to discuss these topics. During this meeting, also ask about his/her areas of focus and suggest ways the library can help.

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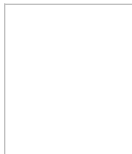
Plan Professional Development

One of the ways to demonstrate leadership in your building is by facilitating professional development for your staff. With the help of other school leaders in your building, use the suggestions in the resources below to complete the Reflect & Practice activity.

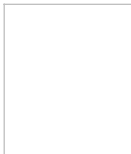
RESOURCES:



Template



Article



Article

REFLECT & PRACTICE:

Using the Plan Professional Development worksheet on page 5 of the handout found in the Resources, brainstorm topics you think your staff could benefit from additional professional learning. Ideas may include copyright, database exploration, or advanced Google searching. Also, think about why this professional development is needed: Is the information new? Does your staff struggle with that particular topic, etc.

You may also consider enlisting the help of the technology teacher or reading specialist to get more ideas. Meet with your principal or other administrator to propose your idea. Will your session be mandatory or optional? He/she may be able to help you select the best timeframe as well, including on a workday, after school, or during planning time. Discuss whether recertification or professional development points will be offered. After you give your professional development session, send a follow up email to staff with resources and your presentation for their reference.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Additional Resources.](#)

MLA CITATION

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