

Librarian in the Learning Community

Course

Community Partnerships [3:30]

https://players.brightcove.net/2566261579001/HyuWsfFhb_default/index.html?videoId=6161170978001

About

- Learn to involve community members and their unique experiences to help learning come alive.
- Learn ways to tap into the resources that local businesses can offer to your library.
- Learn how to widen your audience by using the partnerships within your community.

Transcript

In a typical community, people with various experiences and careers are willing to be a part of helping students learn in real-world ways. Businesses may also want to support your school with money or donations. This is a natural fit for developing community partnerships! The challenge, however, is finding the right connections for both your library's needs and your teachers' needs. Before approaching anyone in your community, be sure you get your principal's approval. Creating community partnerships is vital because they broaden students' perspectives, offer resources, and expand opportunities for staff and students.

It is amazing the reaction among students when people from the community are part of their education in some way. Community members and businesses have unique experiences that can make learning come alive for students through guest speaker sessions or authentic learning tasks. For example, consider jobs in your community that relate to what students are creating in your makerspace and invite them to lead a special makerspace session. Ask parents or staff if they have military veterans in their family who would share their experiences with history classes. Contact a local newspaper to see if a journalist could give tips or interviewing skills to your creative writing or school newspaper class. Invite a librarian from the public library or local college to speak with high school students about life after graduation. Ultimately, if there is a topic your students need more engagement with, consider those right in your local community.

Another way community partnerships can benefit the school library is by offering resources. Sometimes, local businesses can contribute to your library with materials or financial support that you are unable to provide with your own budget. For example, a carpet store getting new inventory may donate carpet squares for an elementary library's story time area. A local bookstore hosting an author visit may share the author with your school free of charge. Also, consider soliciting donations for after school or evening events, such as gift cards or products from their company. The popular ice cream shop nearby may give you coupons as a reading incentive prize or for family literacy night. You never know what people in the community will do to support your school until you ask!

Finally, use the partnerships in your community to expand the opportunities available to your staff and students. If you advertise upcoming events for the local public library or bookstore, they benefit from your advertising and promotion when more students attend their programming. You also could work with the public library to register families for library cards at Back to School events, coordinate field trips for students to the public library, or demonstrate for your students how to use their electronic resources. Students might be able to complete service learning at nearby community organizations to make a difference locally. Also, consider contacting new businesses in the area or established business partners of the school. They may be willing to donate to your cause if you acknowledge them on a flyer for an event. Finally, connect with your local media such as a television station or newspaper to highlight exciting events. Having a wider audience for your library's successes may also lead to future community connections.

As a librarian, you have the privilege of serving the students of parents and caregivers who contribute to your community. Working together with those around you helps broaden your students' perspectives, offer additional resources, and support cross promotion of local businesses and services. When everyone in the community works together for the benefit of student learning, everyone succeeds!

Activities

Beginning and Continuing Community Partnerships

Community partnerships are an important part of making your library successful. Use the SLC articles in the Resources section to learn about more creative opportunities to connect your school with its larger community. In this activity, dig deeper into already-established partnerships and explore possibilities for new connections. Reflect on how

these networks can benefit the needs of your library.

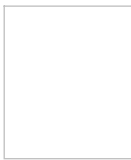
RESOURCES:



Template



Article



Article

REFLECT & PRACTICE:

Ask people in your school about community partnerships the school already has. If there are no current connections, consider visiting places in your community, such as the local museum, to introduce yourself. Use the Beginning and Continuing Community Partnerships worksheet on page 8 of the handout (found in the Resources above) and reflect: Are there needs in your library that could benefit from these partnerships? Reach out to these community organizations to get to know them and share your ideas.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Additional Resources.](#)

MLA CITATION

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