

Library Department Program Review

Pine-Richland School District

May 2020

The information contained in this report is provided by the Pine-Richland Library Department for general purposes only. While this report serves as a strategic approach to curriculum planning, recommendations must be considered with respect to all programs provided by Pine-Richland School District.

Library Department Program Review

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Executive Summary

The mission of the Pine-Richland School District is to *Focus on Learning for Every Student Every Day.* Within the PRSD Strategic Plan, long-term and short-term goals outlined in the Teaching and Learning category form the foundation for continuous improvement. One of the short-term goals for 2016 - 2017 was to design and pilot an in-depth program review process for two of our departments (i.e., Science and Health & Physical Education). That initial work led to a final report and set of recommendations for program improvement. The process itself was refined and used in 2017 - 2018 in the areas of Mathematics and Business & Computer Science. For the 2018 - 2019 school year, we reviewed the Social Studies Department and also modified the process for programming related to gifted and highly achieving students. During the 2019-2020 school year, three departments entered the in-depth program review process, including English Language Arts, Library, and Music.

This report outlines the process, findings, and recommendations from that work related to the K-12 Library Program. As an organization, it is understood that the pace of change may be dependent upon the impact of that change on other aspects of the educational program. The committee utilized the action-priority matrix to evaluate each recommendation and established an implementation timeline with associated cost estimates.

One element of the in-depth program review was the establishment of a departmental philosophy and vision (Figure 1). As a result, the vision is captured through the following image and words:



Figure 1
SPARKING CURIOSITY, CREATING CONNECTIONS, EMPOWERING LEARNERS

Recommendation Overview

Recommendation #1: Philosophy and Vision

1. Adopt and widely communicate the Library Department philosophy and vision to internal and external stakeholders while ensuring a practical connection to program design and delivery.

Recommendation #2: Curriculum Update

1. Revise the current PRSD Library curriculum to incorporate The Model Curriculum for Learners in Pennsylvania School Libraries (2019) and align with the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries (2018) including K-12 evaluation of skills and competencies for all grade levels.

Recommendation #3: Role of Librarian and Libraries

1. Establish the librarian's role as a dynamic instructional leader, collaborative teaching partner, resource and curriculum expert, and reinforce the library as a hub of learning in the schools.
2. Develop and execute an advocacy plan to improve communications between the PRSD libraries and stakeholders (students, staff, administration, school board, parents, and community.)

Recommendation #4: Professional Development

1. Lead and participate in professional development related to library resources, programming, and/or technology.

Recommendation #5: Collaboration

1. Collaborate with grade-level or department level teams to design and implement at least one project-based curricular experience that meets and assesses both the library and content area learning goals.
2. Provide leadership and counsel to PRSD staff within the building and district through the participation of librarians in department and grade-level meetings and/or committees.
3. At the primary levels, design a library schedule to allow students and staff flexible access to the librarian and library resources for collaboration and project-based learning opportunities (partially-fixed and partially-flexible).

Recommendation #6: Library Resources

1. Maintain a high-quality, up-to-date, diverse resource collection that supports the content area curriculum and student interests.
2. Evaluate options for clerical support throughout the K-12 library program.
3. Redefine the design and use of the physical library spaces to provide efficient access to resources, flexibility, and accommodations to support the diverse needs of our learners as they think, create, share, and grow.

In-Depth Program Review Process

The process for in-depth program review was developed in the 2016 - 2017 school year, refined throughout the 2017 - 2018 and 2018-2019 school years, and implemented in 2019-2020 for the English Language Arts, Library, and Music program reviews. To help ensure a clear understanding of the process elements, a process diagram was developed and reviewed on a regular basis. Major elements of this image are further described below:

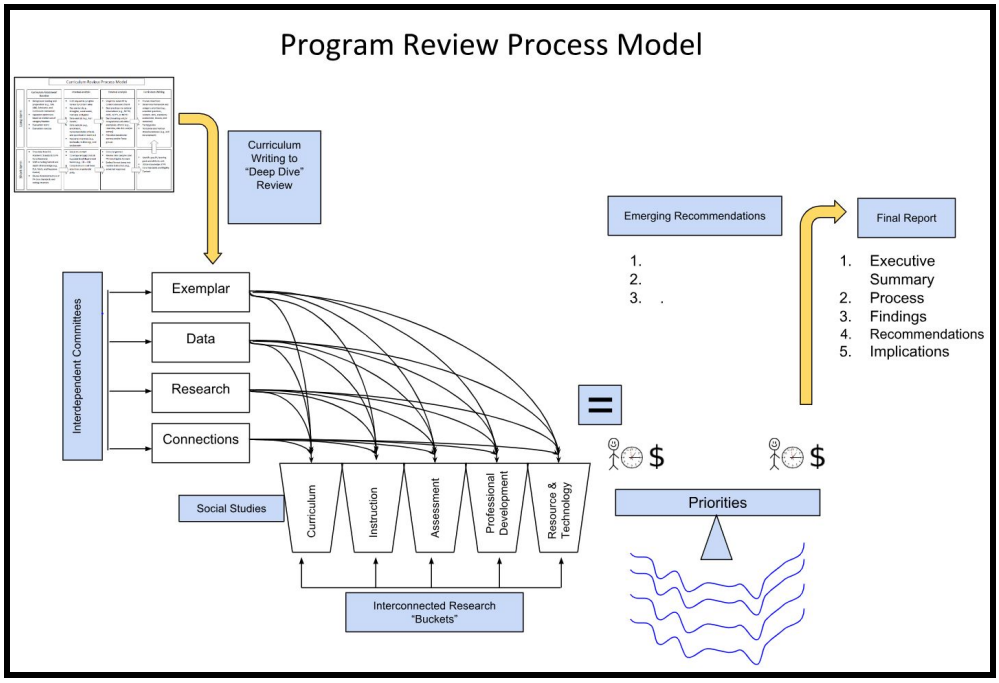

Figure 2

Curriculum Writing to "Deep Dive"

Given the time and effort invested into curriculum writing at Pine-Richland from 2014 - 2016, it is important to understand the relationship of that work to the in-depth program review process. The two-year curriculum writing process was designed to capture the current content in a consistent format through vertical teams (e.g., units, big ideas, and learning goals). That process allowed the department to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. Most of the attention was directed internally at a review of our district's current structure and practices.

The **in-depth program review process has a broader focus** on all elements of the department. Importantly, the process was designed to emphasize a balance of internal needs and a review of best practices from external sources. It asks questions, such as, "Are we doing the right things?" or "Do we need to consider more significant changes in program design?" In the image above, the curriculum writing process is like a "springboard" to "dive" more deeply into the content area. The personnel, structure, and work were organized into four major sub-committees.

Committee Composition and Structure

We strongly believe that meaningful and lasting change requires engagement of all key stakeholders. Within the expanded team, members were then organized by **four main subcommittees**: (1) Research; (2) Exemplar K-12 Schools/Districts/Programs; (3) Connections to Universities, Businesses, and the Community; and (4) Data and Information. The small size of the Library Department required a more flexible approach to the regular sequence

of committee work. Two overarching elements were critical. First, the arrows on the left side of the subcommittees indicate that the groups must collaborate and exchange information (i.e., no silos). Second, the arrows on the right side of the subcommittees demonstrate that key findings/learnings were captured and organized by major research buckets.

It is important to note that the expanded teams also used a systematic approach to listen to students and parents. Student focus groups were organized at the high school, middle school, Eden Hall, and the primary buildings. These groups were representative of the student body and a wide range of academic rigor. In addition, parent and community input was gathered during day and evening town hall sessions. Parents who were unable to attend those face-to-face meetings were able to submit comments electronically.

Research "Buckets"

Within each discipline, four key areas of investigation were identified to guide the work of the subcommittees. **As Library information was gathered by subcommittees, it was organized into four key "buckets": (1) Role of the Librarian; (2) Library Operations; (3) Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; and (4) Resources and Technology.** In the early months of the process, the "buckets" were dynamic, meaning that some initial concepts were removed or combined with other key themes. As the expanded team continued to learn, those titles were then finalized. Importantly, the arrows on the bottom of the buckets also demonstrate the relationship between areas (i.e., no silos). The subcommittees' learning and identification of information for the buckets were interconnected, as information from one area informed others. Based upon the information gathered through the bucket findings, a set of emerging recommendations was developed.

Emerging Recommendations

A systems thinking approach was critical to the in-depth program review process. The transition from "findings" to "emerging recommendations" required skills of synthesis, critical thinking, healthy debate, and communication. The entire expanded team used one set of lenses to review the list of internal strengths and weaknesses. The lenses refer to the four subcommittees. Some emerging recommendations were designed to improve current gaps and weaknesses. Other emerging recommendations were identified in the analysis of exemplary programs, universities, businesses, or in the research literature. The team brainstormed recommendations by identifying recurring themes, ideas, and opportunities for growth. The team then discussed, modified, and edited the recommendations. Emerging recommendations were consolidated into a draft. The expanded team worked with the draft to link the emerging recommendations to data provided by the subcommittees.

Balancing Priorities and Resources

As a system, the "ripple effect" of recommendations was built into the process model. The team then put the emerging recommendations into the action-priority matrix. The action-priority matrix evaluates the impact versus the effort of the emerging recommendations. Examining the use of people, time, and money allows for the identification of which recommendations were quick fixes, major projects, fill-ins, and hard slogs. For example, a hard slog was used to categorize those recommendations that would require much effort but have little impact on student learning. The team then identified the final emerging recommendations.

Action Priority Matrix

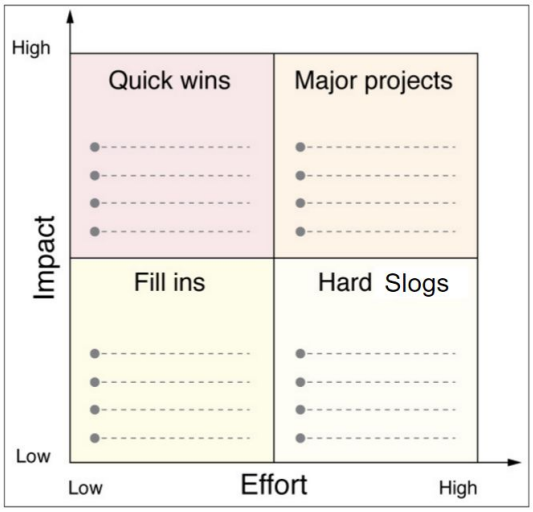

Figure 3: Elmansy, Rafiq. "Time Management Tips for Designers: The Action Priority Matrix."*Designorate*, 14 June 2016, www.designorate.com/time-management-the-action-priority-matrix/. Accessed 14 Mar. 2017.

Continuum of Improvement

Throughout the in-depth program review process, it was important to maintain perspective on the nature of program improvements. Especially when considering effective elements of exemplary schools or programs, the desire to move from the current program ("Point A") to an ideal future ("Point Z") is natural. However, it is more realistic to recognize that meaningful program improvement within an organizational system will often result from a series of smaller steps ("Points B, C, D, etc."). Although depicted as a straight line in the image below (figure 4), the in-depth program review committee recognizes that continuous improvement is not always a linear process.



Figure 4

Emerging Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Philosophy and Vision

Adopt and widely communicate the Library Department philosophy and vision to internal and external stakeholders while ensuring a practical connection to program design and delivery.

SPARKING CURIOSITY, CREATING CONNECTIONS, EMPOWERING LEARNERS



FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- There is no formal, articulated, and shared philosophy or vision statement for the Library Department (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).

External Analysis

- According to the AASL Common Beliefs (AASL Standards, 2018):
  - "The school library is a unique and essential part of a learning community.
  - Qualified school librarians lead effective school libraries.
  - Learners should be prepared for college, career, and life.
  - Reading is the core of personal and academic competency.
  - Intellectual freedom is every learner's right.
  - Information technologies must be appropriately integrated and equitably available."
- Through the AASL's six Shared Foundations (Inquire, Include, Collaborate, Curate, Explore, Engage) and Key Commitments (AASL Standards, 2018), learners that "deepen their own learning skills" will:
  - acquire new knowledge by thinking critically and solving problems;
  - operate in a global society by interacting with and acknowledging the perspectives of others;
  - work with others to achieve common goals;
  - collect organize and share resources;
  - harness curiosity and employ a growth mindset to explore and discover; and
  - follow ethical and legal guidelines while engaging with information" (AASL Standards, 2018).
- "Each Shared Foundations and Key Commitment is realized through competencies that fall into four domains: Think, Create, Share, Grow" (AASL Standards, 2018).

- "SLMSs needed a vision for moving the library media program into the center of the learning community. Along with a vision, they needed a plan of action based on a keen sense of connecting the library media program with what was important to others" (Symposium of the Greats, 2019).
- "[Advocacy] begins with a vision and a plan for the library program that is then matched to the agenda and priorities of stakeholders" (Symposium of the Greats, 2019).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): June 2020 - ongoing

Key Personnel: District librarians, principals, communications director

Major Action Steps: (1) Finalize words and image; (2) Disseminate to all members of the K-12 Library Department (3) Publish on district website; (4) Post in classrooms; (5) Discuss with students and parents at the start of the 2020 - 2021 school year via syllabus and open house/curriculum nights; (6) Incorporate into published K-12 Library curriculum documents; (7) Incorporate into programs of studies; and (8) Reference the vision and philosophy during lesson design

Estimated Budget/Resources: There is a limited cost associated with producing posters. No other costs are anticipated.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long Term): The development, understanding, and communication of a clearly articulated department vision/philosophy should strengthen program delivery for all stakeholders (i.e., staff, students, and parents). It provides a perspective that can be reinforced and considered when making future program decisions.

Recommendation #2: Curriculum Update

1. Revise the current PRSD Library curriculum to incorporate The Model Curriculum for Learners in Pennsylvania School Libraries (2019) and align with the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries (2018) including K-12 evaluation of skills and competencies for all grade levels.

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Current library curriculum is aligned to the 2012 AASL standards (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Current library curriculum needs to be reexamined for vertical and horizontal alignment (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- There are very few common assessments included in the K-12 library curriculum (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Timelines for units in the current curriculum are unmanageable (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Current library curriculum is missing standards to show alignment to PA Academic standards and national standards (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Current curriculum does not incorporate k-12 digital citizenship components (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).

External Analysis

- Library curriculum is grounded in standards including the PA Academic standards, AASL Standards, ISTE standards and Future Ready Standards (McClintock Miller, Baltimore County PS, Hempfield SD, Kutztown SD, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, Wilson SD, 2020).
- The Model Curriculum for Learners in Pennsylvania School Libraries provides a curriculum in information and digital literacy that school librarians can use to partner with educators to help learners learn and meet PA Academic Standards" (The Model Curriculum, 2019).
- "With the publication of these...standards from professional associations and the publication of two new sets of PA Academic Standards in the area of career education, it became necessary to update The Model Curriculum to align with these new standards and to determine the concepts learners should understand and the competencies learners should be able to demonstrate" (The Model Curriculum, 2019).
- Libraries (or library curriculum) are integral when: (a) They support state academic standards and school curricula across grade bands and disciplines; (b) Work cross-curricular; and (c) Promote academic and personal reading initiatives (National School Library Standards, 2018).
- Assessment of the impact of the library program should be cumulative and data should be collected every day (Biagini, 2020).
- Use formative and summative assessments to monitor growth, and to measure competencies and the extent of learning (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019).
- "The school librarian utilizes measurable learner outcomes and data sources to improve resources, instruction, and services" (NSLY Rubric, 2018).
- Library curriculum is skills-based and aligned both horizontally and vertically (Abington SD, Hempfield SD, 2020).

- Library curriculum incorporates digital citizenship skills beginning in kindergarten. Many districts follow the skills continuum provided by Common Sense Media (Baltimore County PS, Hempfield SD, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, 2020; Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019).
- Effective library curriculum builds habits of mind and develops critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and communication skills through learner choice, and self-assessment (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019; Biagini, 2020).
- Library curriculum should focus on multiple literacies including information, digital, visual, technological, and transliteracy. Learners apply reading, research and critical thinking to access and manage information, solve problems and create new knowledge (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019).
- Through co-teaching, modeling and coaching, librarians create and promote a culture of learning, curiosity and social responsibility (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019; Biagini, 2020; McClintock Miller, 2020).
- Project or problem based learning allows differentiation and provides opportunities for the librarian to incorporate a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of learners (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019).
- Understanding by Design is used as a model for creating lessons (The Model Curriculum, 2019; Biagini, McClintock Miller, 2020).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): August 2020- Ongoing

Key Personnel: All district librarians, Kelly Gustafson, PRSD Senior Leadership Team

Major Action Steps: (1) Participate in professional development related to the PA Model Library Curriculum; (2) Examine the current Library curriculum to determine strengths and opportunities for alignment with the AASL standards and PA Model Curriculum; (3) Rewrite the current curriculum based on SWOT analysis with an emphasis on standards-aligned learning goals, timelines, digital citizenship and vertical and horizontal alignment; and (4) Create common assessments at each grade level.

Estimated Budget/Resources: Costs would include expenses related to release time for professional development and curricular work (substitute coverage, summer library work days, ancillary pay, designated in-service days.) PSLA provides professional development for librarians at no cost and several district librarians are involved in leadership groups (through PSLA) that are focused on training and implementation of the PA Model Library Curriculum.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long Term): Librarians will need to participate in professional development in order to understand how to incorporate the standards in the curriculum. The new curriculum will ensure horizontal and vertical alignment while also aligning to PA Academic Standards. When fully implemented librarians will be able to assume responsibility for some of the PA Academic Standards. Learners will have a consistent library experience grounded in standards and focused on developing competencies and habits of mind.

Recommendation #3: Role of Librarian and Libraries

1. Establish the librarian's role as a dynamic instructional leader, collaborative teaching partner, resource and curriculum expert, and reinforce the library as a hub of learning in the schools.
2. Develop and execute an advocacy plan to improve communications between the PRSD libraries and stakeholders (students, staff, administration, school board, parents, and community.)

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Stakeholders have a limited view of the role that librarians play in the education of our students. That limited view usually revolves around the perception that the librarian's sole function is to recommend resources whether for personal reading or research (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Several librarians are leaders at the district, regional, state, and national levels (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- "I like that the librarians get to know my kids; the librarians recommend books to my kids," (Town Hall, 2020).
- Students like to build a relationship with the librarian "They know me and they recommend books for me." (Student Voice- 6th Grade, 2020).
- "Librarians exposed my children to a variety of books" (Town Hall, 2020).
- Parents feel disconnected from what is happening in the library (Town Hall, 2020).
- Most librarians communicate with staff through email (Staff Voice, 2020).
- All district libraries maintain websites which provide access to library resources and keep library stakeholders informed (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).

External Analysis

- "Effective school libraries are dynamic learning environments that bridge the gap between access and opportunity for all K-12 learners" (AASL Standards, 2018).
- "In an effective school library program the school librarian serves as an instructional leader, program administrator, teacher, collaborative partner, and information specialist" (AASL Standards, 2018).
- "Today's school library media specialist is not the one so many adults remember in their school libraries, sitting behind the circulation desk or reading a story to a class of primary-grade pupils and then sending them on their way. Today's school library media specialist must be a leader in the school, an expert in the curriculum and the resources to support it, a co-teacher for students and a model and mentor for teachers" (Turner and White, 2015).
- A future-ready librarian "leads beyond the library." The school librarian "participates in setting the school district's vision and strategic plan for digital learning and fosters a culture of collaboration and innovation to empower teachers and learners" (Future Ready Librarians, 2018).
- Librarians showcase new and innovative resources, plan and publicize special events, and share information that will help stakeholders meet personal and professional goals (Salisbury Township SD, Abington SD, 2020; Guidelines for PA School Libraries 2019).

- Librarians should serve as leaders at the building and district level to set goals and implement curricular and technology initiatives (Salisbury Township SD, 2020; AASL Standards, 2018; Lance and Kachel, 2018).
- “Librarians should be the directors of instructional innovation ... The library can be ground zero to drive change for the entire school” (Behr, 2020).
- “It is essential that school librarians become involved as instructional leaders at all levels ... and within a variety of stakeholder groups" (AASL Standards, 2018).
- Librarians should serve as leaders at the building and district level to set goals and implement curricular and technology initiatives (Salisbury Township SD, 2020; AASL Standards, 2018; Lance and Kachel, 2018).
- A Rutgers University study of school libraries in New Jersey found school librarians "shape how learning takes place by helping teachers push the boundaries and innovate ... Libraries are also credited with helping to shape school culture -- the shared beliefs, customs, and behaviors that define a school and that are seen as key factors in an institution's success" (Kenney, 2011).
- “[Advocacy] begins with a vision and a plan for the library program that is then matched to the agenda and priorities of stakeholders” (Loertscher and Woolls, 2019).
- “Advocacy is every day in every way” (Biagini, 2020).
- “Fosters strong relationships with all learners, and stakeholder groups.” (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019).
- Librarians communicate on a variety of platforms (face to face, phone email, newsletter, website, social media, learning management systems) in order to reach as many stakeholders as possible (Abington SD, Conestoga Valley SD, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, 2020).
- “Initiates timely, professional, open communication pathways between the school library and its stakeholders” (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019).
- “The school librarian shares with the learning community collaboratively developed and up-to-date district policies concerning such issues as materials selection, circulation, reconsideration of materials, copyright, privacy, and responsible use of technology and social media” (AASL Standards, 2018).
- “In an ongoing effort to meet the academic and social needs of all learners, the school library must be an integral and valued part of the learning community.” (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019)

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): June 2020- Ongoing

Key Personnel: All district librarians, Academic Leadership Team members, building principals, content area teachers, Director of Communications

Major Action Steps: (1) Participate in Library Media Matters (Google Classroom) to share innovative ideas and best practices among library department members. (2) Engage in activities designed to build an effective library team. (3) Incorporate new teaching ideas and resources into library instruction and programming; (4) Develop a communication plan that utilizes various platforms to inform internal and external stakeholders of library programming, resources, and policies.

Estimated Budget/Resources: (1) Costs would include on-going professional development (substitutes), access to library-related print and non-print resources, and use of external resources. (2) There may be costs associated

with hard copy materials related to communications with stakeholders.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long Term): Librarians will participate in professional development through attendance at library-related conferences and meetings. With a growth mindset, they will seek out information from various media about new resources, best practices, and emerging technologies. Librarians will be intentional about reflecting on and sharing the information gleaned. Instructional practices will shift toward collaborative, learner-centered programming and instruction. The library program will be embedded into the culture of the school, with librarians 'Focused on learning for every student, every day."

Recommendation #4: Professional Development

1. Lead and participate in professional development related to library resources, programming, and/or technology.

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Several librarians provide training for staff related to library resources including Destiny Library Catalog, electronic databases, eBooks and Audiobooks, copyright, resources, etc. (PR Vertical Team 2020).
- Several librarians are involved with professional organizations as members or leaders at the regional, state and national levels and attend professional conferences (PR Vertical Team, 2020).
- Librarians regularly attend professional development at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (PR Vertical Team, 2020).
- Most librarians use various media (journals, social media, conferences) to seek out information about innovative practices, new resources, emerging technology, and educational trends for their own professional growth (PR Vertical Team, 2020).

External Analysis

- "Designs and leads professional development opportunities that reinforce the impact of the school library's resources, services, and programming on learners' academic learning and educators' effectiveness" (National School Library of the Year Rubric, 2018).
- "Serving as an instructional leader, the school librarian contributes to curricular decisions and facilitates professional learning" (AASL Standards, 2018).
- Librarians should be leaders in receiving and delivering professional development both internally and externally (Abington SD, Baltimore County PS, Conestoga Valley SD, Dallastown SD, Hempfield SD, Kutztown SD, Miller, Norman PS, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, Wilson SD, 2020; AASL Standards, 2018)
- "Library personnel remain current and engage in continuing education activities to ensure instruction and activities reflect the most-recent developments in professional practices, information technologies, and educational research" (AASL Standards, 2018).
- "The school librarian provides educators and other staff with learning opportunities related to new technologies, ase, and production of a variety of media, and policies regarding information" (AASL Standards, 2018).
- Professional Development is necessary for librarians to "stay current on professional practices, information technologies, and educational research" (AASL Standards, 2018; Norman PS, North Allegheny SD, Wilson SD, Kutztown SD, 2020).
- Internal training for librarians should include "needs, new curriculum, technology tools, equity, district initiatives, library materials being utilized" (Baltimore County PS, 2020).
- "The library can be ground zero to drive change for the entire school" (Behr, 2020).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): Fall 2020- ongoing

Key Personnel: Librarians, building principals, teachers

Major Action Steps: (1) Prioritize the professional development needs to support the K-12 library program (2) Participate in professional learning communities (3) Attend professional meetings and conferences (4) Develop and execute a plan to educate staff about library topics; (5) Determine which professional development sessions will be managed internally and which will require partnership with outside experts and community partners

Estimated Budget/Resources: Costs would include on-going professional development (internal and external), time for collaboration (substitutes), and curriculum materials.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long Term): In connection to the earlier recommendation related to the role of librarians and libraries, we believe the day-to-day operation of the library program and how it integrates with the overall educational program will continue to evolve. Collaboration and integration are key outcomes of this work. Program evolution will look different depending on the developmental needs of the learners. As outlined in the PR Graduate Portrait, learners will develop knowledge, skill and personal qualities/characteristics that support them now and in post-secondary pursuits. The skills and competencies learned through the sequential library program should complement other courses and content areas.

Recommendation #5: Collaboration

1. Collaborate with grade-level or department-level teams to design and implement at least one project-based curricular experience that meets and assesses both the library and content area learning goals.
2. Provide leadership and counsel to PRSD staff within the building and district through the participation of librarians in department and grade-level meetings and/or committees.
3. At the primary levels, design a library schedule to allow students and staff flexible access to the librarian and library resources for collaboration and project-based learning opportunities (partially-fixed and partially-flexible).

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Limited opportunities for collaborative planning and instruction teaching in primaries. Librarians coordinate with classroom teachers to pull resources for projects (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Staff input indicates that teachers would like to be able to collaborate with the librarians more often (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Staff and students indicate that often there is not a connection between the learning that happens in the classroom and the library (Student Voice- Grade 3, 2020; Staff Voice, 2020).
- At the 4-12 levels, collaborative projects occur, but there is not consistency across grade levels or departments. Students in the same grade may have different experiences, be taught different skills, or have no library instruction at all depending on the classroom (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- At the 4-6 level, content-area teachers are often hesitant or unwilling to plan collaborative projects because of time concerns. Research and project-based learning are considered "extra" rather than integral (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- In general, PRSD librarians are not involved in departmental or grade level meetings at the building or district level (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Many librarians collaborate or coordinate with individual teachers within a grade or department but have yet to be involved with committees, or in meetings, where collaborative planning would result in assured library experiences for all students (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Additional access to libraries, outside of scheduled times, for book checkout or independent research is desired by our students, staff, and families (Staff Voice, 2020; Town Hall, 2020; Student Voice- Grade 3, 2020).
- Staff members desire additional collaboration with the librarian to exchange ideas and consult regarding options for resources to support lessons (Staff Voice, 2020).
- At the primary level, librarians regularly curate and provide resources for curricular projects, but there are few collaboratively designed inquiry-based research projects (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).

External Analysis

- "Research on how we learn strongly supports integration as a means of helping students construct knowledge and make connections to prior knowledge, thus increasing the amount of learning that occurs. ... When the school library program is fully integrated into the instructional program of the school, students, teachers and teacher-librarians become partners in learning and the library program becomes an

extension of the classroom. … Collaboration between teachers and the teacher-librarian is the key to integration" (Needham, 2003).

- The school library needs to be integral to the culture of the school and district. Librarians help build a culture of collaboration through instructional coaching and co-teaching. Strong collaborative relationships are essential to the school library program (Biagini, McClintock Miller, Abington SD, Hempfield SD, Kutztown SD, Norman PS, Salisbury Township SD, 2020).
- "Guided Inquiry is all 'collaborative' between teachers and librarians" (Norman PS, 2020)
- To build collaborative relationships, the librarians need to know the content area curriculum, partner with departments, and find the connection between the library and content-area curricula. Library skills should not be taught in isolation (Biagini, McClintock Miller, Baltimore County PS, Hempfield SD, Norman PS, 2020).
- "[Librarians] have to know the curriculum, know what's being taught. Not just on paper but what's happening in the classroom" (Biagini, McClintock Miller, Baltimore County PS, Hempfield SD, Norman PS, 2020).
- Librarians collaborate during department time, and grade level meetings. Librarians can be proactive by inserting themselves into grade-level teams and offering to "take [teaching library skills] off of their plate" (McClintock Miller, Abington SD, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, 2020).
- "The school librarian collaborates with teachers to design and teach engaging inquiry-based learning experiences as well as assessments that incorporate multiple literacies and foster critical thinking" (McClintock Miller, Abington SD, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, 2020).
- Building administration can support collaborative partnerships by facilitating opportunities for content-area teachers to collaborate with librarians on projects (McClintock Miller, Hempfield SD, Conestoga Valley SD, Norman PS, 2020; Lance and Kachel, 2018).
- "Assists teachers to integrate technology into the curriculum" (AASL Standards, 2018)
- "The fully integrated library philosophy is best achieved through an open schedule that encourages school librarians to collaborate as full partners with classroom educators to design, implement, assess, and evaluate inquiry lessons. This practice cultivates high-level educational experiences for learners and is the catalyst that makes the integrated library work. The educator brings to the planning process knowledge of subject content and pedagogy. The school librarian also contributes a broad knowledge of pedagogy, as well as culturally relevant and diverse resources, and current and emerging technologies to meet the inquiry and instructional needs of all learners. As instructional partners, the classroom educator and school librarian are able to provide differentiated and adaptable learning experiences to meet the requirements of the curriculum. … The practice of scheduling classes in the school library on a set schedule to provide educator release or preparation time inhibits best practice by limiting collaboration and co-teaching opportunities between the school librarian and classroom educator" (AASL Position Statement on School Library Scheduling, 2019).
- "A flexible schedule is necessary to meet the needs of both students and teachers. Flexibility in the library schedule means student needs dictate the schedule … The flexible schedule also plays an important role in collaboration. Because teachers' schedules in most schools are very inflexible, the flexibility of the library schedule provides the time and opportunity for the teacher and teacher-librarian to plan for integrated instruction" (Needham, 2003).

- "... research shows that circulation actually increases when librarians implement a flexible schedule" (Moreillon, 2014).
- "With flexible scheduling, all students are about four times more likely to earn 'Advanced' writing scores, and Hispanic students are almost seven times more likely to earn 'Advanced' scores with flexible scheduling. Writing scores are more positively impacted than reading scores. Since 21st-century learners must be effective knowledge producers as well as information consumers, examining the relationship between writing scores and quality school library programs was essential" (Kachel & Lance, 2013).
- "A learner's access to a certified school librarian, library staff, resources, services, technology, and tools at the point of need is essential to academic success" (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019; NSLY Rubric, 2018; Biagini, 2020; School Library Scheduling, 2019).
- A hybrid schedule for elementary school librarians allows them to meet the instructional needs of the students but also time "to collaborate as full instructional partners who co-plan, co-teach, and co-assess" with educators, ultimately leading back to meeting the needs of the student (Keith Curry Lance, 2019; School Library Scheduling, 2019; McClintock Miller, 2020; Biagini, 2020; Abington SD, 2020).
- "Best collaboration happens with flexible scheduling at the elementary and middle levels … [though] a 2011 study found that elementary librarians collaborated less than 1 hour a week with teachers (Biagini, 2020).
- Exemplar school districts use various means to provide flexible time for collaboration such as no lunch duty, a 6-day rotation to allow for 2 flexible schedule days, two librarians (one fixed and one flexible), or dedicated planning time during their schedule (Hempfield SD; Kutztown SD; Norman PS; North Allegheny SD; Salisbury Township SD; Wilson SD, 2020; McClintock Miller, 2020).
- Exemplar school districts have at least one full-time certified school librarian in every building (Abington SD, Baltimore County PS, Conestoga Valley SD, Hempfield SD, Norman PS, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury, Wilson SD, 2020; McClintock Miller 2020).
- "The responsibility for an open, flexible library schedule that is responsive to the learning community's needs must be shared by the entire school community" (AASL Position Statement on School Library Scheduling 2019).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): June 2020- Ongoing

Key Personnel: Librarians, Department Leaders, Building Principals and Administrative Staff

Major Action Steps: (1) Audit PRSD curricula to develop a database of cross-curricular learning goals and activities to identify opportunities for collaboration and integration with grade levels or departments; (2) Analyze all library staffing schedules; (3) Consider alternative scheduling models or other options to allow for collaboration (6-day rotation, alternating weeks of library instruction with week of flexible library class/book exchange, etc.); (4) Participate in professional development related to collaborative planning. (5) Identify common times the librarian and classroom teachers are available for collaboration, planning and implementation; (6) Implement and assess inquiry-based projects across departments or grade spans as applicable.

Estimated Budget/Resources: No cost for the creation of a partially-fixed, partially-flexible library schedule; Time allotted for librarians to create curricular crosswalks to identify areas where library integration can occur. Potential costs related to professional development for librarians and teachers.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long Term): Librarians will develop an understanding of content-area curricula and seek out opportunities for collaboration. In the short term, implementing this change may push both librarians and content area teachers out of their comfort zone. All involved may need some level of support or professional development in order to implement this change. In some buildings there will be scheduling implications. Creating opportunities for project-based learning will develop synergy between the library and the content areas leading to elevated student learning and deeper understanding. Through assured experiences at each grade level, learners will develop habits of mind that will empower future success.

Recommendation #6: Library Resources

1. Maintain a high-quality, up-to-date, diverse resource collection that supports the content-area curricula and student interests.
2. Evaluate options for clerical support throughout the K-12 library program.
3. Redefine the design and use of the physical library spaces to provide efficient access to resources, flexibility, and accommodations to support the diverse needs of our learners as they think, create, share, and grow.

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Collections across the district are managed autonomously with each librarian determining need for weeding and collection evaluation (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Primary resource budgets are inconsistent across buildings (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Collections across the district are aged, with the average collection age ranging from 1997- 2007 (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- No district process is in place to evaluate and report on the status of the collection (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- No district process is in place for deliberate and systematic weeding of the library collection (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- The current weeding policy does not take into consideration best practices for weeding (i.e. Continuous Review Evaluation and Weeding (CREW) (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- No standardization of digital resources to provide vertical and horizontal (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- No buildings have conducted diversity audits of their collections to assess the need for more diverse books written by, or involving characters from, traditionally underrepresented populations (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- At all primary buildings and PRMS, the library is closed when the librarian is teaching classes or out of the library for assigned cafeteria and recess duties, and during the librarian's lunch and plan periods daily (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- PRMS Library has support for two periods a day from teachers who are assigned “library duty” (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- In the past, we had a librarian aide, who could sign out books for individuals when the librarian was not there (i.e. teaching, planning, lunch) (Staff Voice, 2020).
- Libraries are quiet spaces with comfortable seating and cozy reading spaces. Students would like to see more books and better signage, labeling or organization to help them find books. In some cases, the shelves were too high and the students asked for “ladders” to reach the books. Students also indicated the shelves were crowded, making books hard to find (Student Voice- Grade 3, 2020; Student Voice Grade 8, 2020).
- Students enjoy the bright and open space and comfy seating. Some students like that the library is a quiet place to read and study, but others enjoy that there are other things to do such as the ThinkTank. Students would like to see the space used in even more different ways, with flexible furniture and spaces, and areas for group meetings (Student Voice- Grade 6, 2020).

- Students use the library at lunch, before school, academic support time. A great meeting place. Library layout works well (computer section, STEAM lab, classroom). Students are interested in being able to participate in library operations through "library helpers, library group or library projects" (i.e. the mural at EHUE) (Student Voice- Grade 8, 2020).
- The library space is quiet with readily available resources and technology. The space is accessible outside of the normal school, and the connection with Northern Tier Library is convenient. Students would like to see more comfortable furniture and flexible spaces designated for certain uses (group work, quiet study, etc.) (Student Voice- Grade 8, 2020).
- All district libraries would benefit from various physical improvements to the space. Within the larger library space, smaller spaces with designated uses could be established. Flexible furniture options that would allow the spaces to be redesigned for different purposes are needed in all buildings. Shelves at Richland are too high for students to reach the books. Eden Hall has very limited comfortable seating, and the arrangement of the library limits visibility. At PRMS, supervision of the lobby is limited due to sight lines. PRHS library is used as an extension of the cafeteria during crowded lunches (Staff Voice, PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).

External Analysis

- "Identifies and implements solutions to physical, social, cultural, linguistic, and intellectual barriers to the use of resources" (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019).
- Maintains a collection of sufficient breadth and currency to be pertinent to the schools program of studies" (NSLY Rubric, 2018).
- "In regards to budget and collection development - [focus on] breadth at primary, depth at secondary" (Hempfield SD, 2020).
- School libraries are intentional about including diverse books with connections to traditionally underrepresented populations (Hempfield SD, Norman PS, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, 2020; Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019; We Need Diverse Books, 2020).
- "Supporters of diverse books say that it's important for children of color to see their own identities and experiences reflected in literature. And studies have shown that black children who receive messages emphasizing cultural pride -- though not necessarily through books -- have higher self-esteem, better social-emotional functioning, and increased classroom engagement" (Schwartz, 2020).
- "When students read books where they see characters like themselves who are valued in the world, they feel a sense of belonging" (Moran, 2018).
- "Students need to learn about how other people conduct themselves in the world in order to understand how they might fit in. ... all students get to see a window into the range of possibilities out in the world. For some children, this may be the first time they are exposed to differences in culture, skin color, religion, and lifestyle. It's important that their introduction is one of non-judgment and supportive acceptance, " (Moran, 2018).
- Library collections K-12 should include resources in a variety of formats (including books, graphic novels, magazines, ebooks, audiobooks, databases, and open educational resources) to support the curriculum and student interest (Abington SD, Baltimore County PS, Dallastown SD, Hempfield SD, Norman PS, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, Wilson SD, 2020).

- “Students choose from a varied, non-graded collection of materials which reflect their personal interests” (Reading Development Position Statement, AASL).
- Collaborates with the public, university, and school libraries to expand collections (e.g. AccessPA, ILL, open educational resources) (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019).
- "As good library managers, we have a responsibility to maintain a collection that is free from outdated, obsolete, shabby, or no longer useful items" (CREW: A Manual for Modern Libraries, 2012).
- Annual library budgets for most districts take into consideration projects, size of student population, format and cost of resources (Hempfield SD, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, 2020).
- Librarians or library department leaders collaborate with principals to establish the library resource budget based on building needs (NSLY Rubric, 2018; Conestoga Valley SD, 2020).
- The majority of the secondary budget is spent on databases and eBooks (Conestoga Valley SD, Hempfield SD, Kutztown SD, Salisbury Township SD, 2020).
- “Certified school librarians have the education and training to serve as educators, leaders, instructional partners, informational specialists, and program administrators. Adding appropriate clerical staff frees the certified school librarian to perform these tasks” (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019).
- “In a busy school library, many routine tasks must be accomplished each school day ... If the librarian spends time each day on these routine, but necessary tasks, there is very little time for collaborating with teachers, teaching teachers and students how to use information technology, and encouraging independent reading. A librarian who has the assistance of an aide can concentrate on the daily collaborative planning, teaching and assessment activities with teachers and students that lead to student academic success” (Biagini, 2012).
- (Barrier-free) access to the library and its resources should accommodate the needs of all learners to support teaching and learning (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019; Role of the School Library Program, 2016).
- “Things can be done to transform [library] learning environments at a fairly low cost if you’re willing to do the research” (Behr, 2020).
- Student, librarian and teacher, and administrative involvement in designing the space is crucial to ensuring that the environment reflects the needs of the students (Behr, 2020; Conestoga Valley SD, Norman PS, Abington SD, 2020).
- The library space and furniture should be flexible "to meet the learners’ needs: spaces for sharing ideas and information; areas for collaborative work; instructional space; display areas that are available for learners to share and to promote literacy,” (Guidelines for PA School Libraries, 2019; NSLY Rubric, 2018; Conestoga Valley SD, Baltimore County PS, North Allegheny SD, Salisbury Township SD, Abington SD, Norman PS, 2020; McClintock Miller 2020).
- “The library's physical space is where you want to drive innovative teaching practices, other districts have done it” (Behr, 2020).
- The library space, (both physical and virtual), should create "an atmosphere that is conducive to learning; enables learners to wonder, explore, innovate, question, teach and create; fosters a learning environment where learners feel safe and welcome;” and nurtures personal curiosity (Guidelines for Pennsylvania School Libraries, 2019; NSLY Rubric, 2018).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): August 2020- ongoing

Key Personnel: K-12 Librarians, Building Principals, District Administration

Major Action Steps:. (1) Develop and perform a systematic cycle of collection review and weeding; (2) Conduct a diversity audit of library collections; (3) Identify and evaluate options for providing clerical support in all libraries (K-12); (4) Establish stakeholder committees to receive input on specific recommendations for repurposing the library spaces; (5) Based on stakeholder recommendations, explore options for funding of projects to improve the use of library spaces; (6) Establish timeline and execute library improvement projects.

Estimated Budget/Resources: Minimal or no costs to the district for developing a weeding policy and diversity audit (time for collaboration, coverage and cost of substitutes). Potential staffing costs for clerical support. Potential capital costs for redesigning physical library spaces (construction, purchase of furniture, etc.). Potential costs related to professional development for librarians.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long Term): The work completed in other areas of our program review (specifically the work in curriculum and collaboration) will inform decisions related to library resources. Librarians may need professional development in order to incorporate best practices for weeding or conducting a diversity audit. Continuous review, evaluation and weeding of the library collection will ensure that students and staff have access to the most relevant, up-to-date and high-quality resources. A diversity audit will compel librarians to be intentional about including diverse books. Technology, including e-resources such as databases, ebooks and audiobooks, will provide students and staff access to library resources throughout the entire school day and beyond. Clerical support will allow the librarian to focus on learners through collaboratively planned learning experiences. Enhancements to the library space will create a modern, safe, welcoming atmosphere that is conducive to learning and enables learners to think, create, share and grow.

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