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Professional Development
Outstanding School Libraries
Common Core Reading/Diversity
Learning Commons
Motivation and Lifelong Learning
Collaboration



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GROWING SCHOOLS: EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Debbie Abilock, Violet H. Harada, and Kristin Fontichiaro examine issues and opportunities for planning and implementing professional development activities for classroom teachers. Using a small case study, these three leaders provide not only insight into practical activities for PD but also guidance for personal/professional interactions.

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DEFINING A VISION OF OUTSTANDING SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Nancy Everhart, during her recent term as president of the AASL, took a "Visions Tour" of school libraries across the country to collect proficiency data augmented by interviews and observation. Her findings revealed attributes shared by outstanding library programs. Her findings and analysis provide an important and fascinating look at excellent programs.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 2013 NATIONAL SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAM OF THE YEAR WINNERS

Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux, TL coeditor, presents her annual look at the National School Library Program of the Year winners, who provide their own examination of their winning characteristics.

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HOW COMMON IS COMMON? AN ANALYSIS OF THE RECOMMENDED TEXT EXEMPLARS

Elizabeth Burns, Sue Kimmel, and Kasey L Garrison examine a list of exemplar texts included as an appendix to the *Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects*. Their findings are surprising and important, and offer another opportunity for teacher librarians to play a key role in understanding and implanting the CCSS.

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DOING THE LEGWORK, BUILDING THE FOUNDATION, AND SETTING THE STAGE FOR MEANINGFUL TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL LIBRARY TO LEARNING COMMONS

Christina A. Bentheim moved to a new school for the 2013-2014 school year to serve as media specialist and social studies instructional coach. She recounts here her early plans and activities to transform the traditional library into a learning commons for the 21st century. Her ambition, ingenuity, and legwork paid off and her story offers both inspiration and concrete guidance and ideas for others.

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"RESEARCHING STUFF IS THE BEST!" DESIGNING ASSIGNMENTS THAT FOSTER INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Sherry R. Crow argues that, to make students life-long learners, teacher librarians need to help students discover that information seeking is—at the very least—useful to their well-being and can even be truly joyful. This article discusses tips for making assignments intrinsically motivating to students, namely encouraging student-driven goals, infusing playfulness, and allowing creativity. Crow's findings are important and as useful as the tips. A good balance between academic research and practical advice, this article should be read by practitioners and instructors, alike.

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TIPS AND TACTICS: LIBRARY-CLASSROOM COLLABORATION STIMULATES READING, TEACHES SO MUCH MORE

Patricia Vermillion and Marty Melton, school media coordinator and social studies teacher, respectively, collaboratively developed a program for students to prepare booktalks, from selecting titles, to videoing their classmates' booktalks, utilizing QR codes, more. This deceptively simple program provides students with the opportunity to learn not only content and educational technology, but also self-confidence, public speaking, collaboration. We really like this activity.

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NOTEBOOK



A New Year, New Opportunities

David V. Loertscher and Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

School has started, and with it a renewed interest in making this school year memorable and positive for our students.

What about us, though? The pace at which our work is changing and how learning in our libraries is changing leaves us breathless. We find ourselves swirling in a vortex of opportunities and challenges as we weave new ideas and technology into our library programs. We want to help students be even more creative, collaborative learners. Just as we choose to equip our libraries with quality reads, so must we equip students with many quality opportunities. And that isn't easy. We find we must give up much of what we know for much that we are still learning. This issue of *Teacher Librarian* encourages you to stretch and grow, learn and do. Try out some of the ideas – the authors are candid about what worked for them and what they needed to adjust, just as you will in your particular setting.

Abilock, Harada, and Fontichiaro, three leading thinkers in our profession, look at various issues and talk about opportunities to plan and implement professional development activities with classroom teachers. Using a small case study, these three thinkers give us insight into how to create professional development activities to meet the needs of classroom teachers. They help us understand the value of our interactions with others in the education field and how to ensure those interactions are effective. Everhart, a recent AASL president, spent much of her year as president visiting each state's defined "exemplary" school library. She saw many things, and shares with us the insights as well as the common characteristics that she found in these libraries. Look at what she saw and see how many of these characteristics mirror your setting. Marcoux presents her annual look at AASL/Follett NSLPY winners (2013). She asked the winners to evaluate what made them exemplary and what they hope for their libraries' futures. Burns, Kimmel, and Garrison take a critical look at exemplar texts included as an appendix to the Common Core standards. Their findings are interesting and worth noting and offer another opportunity for the teacher librarian to play a key role in the implementation and success of the CCSS.

Bentheim's article describes her work at a new school and how she developed a plan to move the traditional school library into a learning commons. Her leadership, ambition, creativity, and hard work paid off and can be

Resources for the Teacher Librarian

David V. Loertscher & Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

Applegate, Rachel. *Practical Evaluation Techniques for Librarians*. Libraries Unlimited, 2013. 232p. \$50 Trade pb. 978-1-61069-159-8.

There are some interesting techniques in this publication that take evaluation to a significantly higher level. The problem is in tying these issues to what the librarian is doing. There is little reference to what can be called Common Core issues, so that will need to be extrapolated by the reader of this publication. One of the strongest components this publication offers is preparation for evaluation and what to report on for evaluation. However, what to do with what is evaluated and learned is weak, yet certainly can be used in communications/collaborations with others involved in learning, including students. *EM*

Barnes, Mark. *The 5-Minute Teacher: How Do I Maximize Time for Learning in My Classroom?* ASCD, 2013. 58p. \$12.99 Trade pb. 978-1-4166-1708-2.

Small, but mighty . . . this easy to use and apply publication is developed on the premise that all minutes in a classroom ought to be spent wisely, learning being the top priority. Barnes takes steps to make this happen. If all education were to dedicate itself to making every minute count while a student is at school, the learning environment would benefit from the power and excitement this would bring to a school. Well worth the minimum time it will take to read this, well worth experimenting with this concept, well worth thinking hard about. Highly recommended. *BM*

Behen, Linda D. *Recharge Your Library Programs with Pop Culture and Technology: Connect with Today's Teens*. Libraries Unlimited, 2013. 179p. \$45 Trade pb. 978-1-61069-369-1.

This publication has some interesting ideas, many are for beginners into the concepts of updating their roles. While it has some interesting "power tools," it needs to encourage more concepts of

these tools and others that fit with the learners at hand. It also needs to consider more international connections as well as AASL ones. Theory for "why" use these tools is sparse – learning and teaching and coaching are essential to any tool's success. Yes, school libraries are in the midst of dramatic change, but so is education and learning. *EM*

Bell, Mary Ann, Holly Weimar, and James Van Roekel. *School Librarians and the Technology Department: A Practical Guide to Successful Collaboration*. Linworth, 2013. 118p. \$40 Trade pb. 978-1-58683-539-2.

This publication meets the concern of communication and collaboration between the school library and the school technology department head on. It calls for much more connection as well as collaboration between these two entities in a school, especially for the advancement of its students. There is a need to substantiate some of its assertions. For instance, there is a figure 1.6 without citation, and many quotes don't find themselves into the works cited area at the end of a chapter. Some good ideas, but nothing really new here. *EM*

Churches, Andrew, and Harry J. Dickens. *Apps for Learning - Elementary School Classrooms*. Corwin Press, 2013. 151p. \$24.95 Trade pb. 978-1-4848-5670-3. *Apps for Learning for Middle School Classrooms*. Corwin Press, 2013. 160p. \$24.95 Trade pb. 978-1-4791-6400-4. *Apps for Learning: 40 Best iPad, iPod Touch, iPhone Apps for High School Classrooms*. Corwin Press, 2013. \$24.95. 978-1-4636-1285-6.

All three of these books, one for elementary, middle school, and high school are by a team of authors who are part of the 21st Century Fluency Project and are a part of a series of publications that are very useful in teaching and learning through technology. Essentially, each is an annotated guide to both free and fee apps for the iPad, the iPodTouch, and the iPhone, rather than laptops and full computers. The elementary and middle school lists are divided by curricular topics, such as math and social studies, and the high school guide is alphabetized by tool name. In their annotations, the authors not only describe the tool but show illustrations of the tool and describe its use with students. So, if your students have these devices, whether supplied by the school or owned by the students, these are essential lists that will get adults and youth started. These seasoned educators know what they are talking about and have the experience to recommend the best of the best. Of course, a list like this will get out-dated quickly, but it is ripe for picking the most useful apps right now. Highly recommended. *DVL*

Dow, Mirah J., ed. *School Libraries Matter: Views from the Research*. Libraries Unlimited, 2013. 173 pp. \$ 50 Trade pb. 978-1-61069-161-1.

It is nice to have much of the school library research compiled into

one volume. The indices give a practitioner a chance to know various researcher names, and a chance to peruse what research is out there on a certain subject. Covering much of the last decade of research, much of it is still timely and relevant. The references listed after each research study are also valuable in terms of practitioner action. Worth looking further into various theoretical issues centering on student learning and seeing how the school library can fit into these concerns. Recommended. *EM*

Kemp, Adam. *The Makerspace Workbench: Tools, Technologies, and Techniques for Making*. Maker Media, 2013. 282p. \$29.99. 978-1-4493-5567-8.

You can have a simple makerspace in a learning commons without spending much money or having many tools available, but as you begin more serious efforts, disruptive technologies and tools of construction become more and more important, and you find that you need some guidance before you start the serious planning just to glimpse the possibilities. This is the book that will help you do this. Kemp is a pro and while the technologies and tools keep getting better and better, hurry and use this advice now before it gets too old. It is very helpful to use this book as background and then you can talk the talk that will help architects and administrators understand what you want and need. This is an extremely useful guide to the building of infrastructure so that creativity, building, tinkering, and inventing can take its place in the school environment; both in formal classes and informal learning that often takes place in after school programs. Excellent! *DVL*

Lang, David. *Zero to Maker: Learn (Just Enough) to Make (Just About) Anything*. Maker Media, 2013. 204p. \$19.99 Trade pb. 978-1-4493-5643-9.

Have you ever said, "I'm not creative...I could never invent anything..." That is the fascinating narrative on this book as Lang starts from that attitude and becomes a superb "maker." It is a fascinating tour, but along the way, he teaches you the basic

elements of such a journey. It is the journey that every one of our students should experience in the learning commons as it becomes the intersection between formal and informal learning. It is a must read, because when you watch this young man develop, you can then recognize that same journey in the young people whom you serve every day, and, you can take action to encourage informal learning whether or not it is happening in the classrooms. Others may be rushing to get students to score high on tests. You can lead in the areas where young people can create, build, construct, problem solve, think, do, make, and have great fun doing it. And, if you don't believe it, just try to attend a Maker Faire in your area and ask any kid or adult there: "Are you a Maker?" The conversations you have will give you the courage and the imagination to improve what is going on in the learning commons. It's a must read! *DVL*

Martinez, Sylvia Libow, and Gary S. Stager. *Invent To Learn: Making, Tinkering, and Engineering in the Classroom*. Constructing Modern Knowledge Press, 2013. 237p. \$34.95 Trade pb. 978-0-9891511-0-8.

Making and makerspaces is big right now, and makerspaces should be one major part of the learning commons of every school. These two popular authors, speakers, workshop directors, and thinkers introduce the concept of what a maker is and how to cultivate this characteristic into the classroom. Every time the authors say classroom, we just replace with the words learning commons. A maker is a builder, constructor, thinker, tinkerer, inventor, collaborator and most any other action word you can think about. Makerspaces are at the center of informal learning and should have a place right alongside formal education in the school. The authors explain the many facets of making and provide all sorts of tips, ideas, techniques, ideas, and resources to help the reader design this kind of educational environment as a part of the learning commons concept. It is one of the best books of the year and a must read for every teacher librarian. *DVL*

Nichols, Joel. *iPads in the Library: Using Tablet Technology to Enhance Program for All Ages*. Libraries Unlimited, 2013. 136p. \$45 Trade pb. 978-1-61069-347-9.

Tablet technology continues to become more and more user friendly. This publication offers ideas about not only how to use them, but also why to use them. Whether familiar with this technology or not, this publication offers suggestions for how to optimize their presence in learning. The appendices and annotated lists offer even more thoughts about how to make this technology learning smart. Concepts that can be applied to schools are often found in other areas than the publication's chapters on school-aged children. Explore it all. Recommended. *EM*

Pandora, Cherie, and Stacey Hayman. *Better Serving Teens through School Library-Public Library Collaborations*. Libraries Unlimited, 2013. 256p. \$40 Trade pb. 978-1-59884-970-7.

This is a hot topic presently. Between programs at various national and international conferences regarding this type of work, there is much being said about the concept of shared collaborations between library types. After all, the teens being served are the same teens regardless of library type. Issues like language, assessment demands, timing concerns, etc. need more explanation. This publication does address the economic concerns that hinder learning and how public libraries are being asked to assume many roles that used to occur in a school library setting. There are ideas for how to maximize these roles with each other and how to market what is happening with students in more public ways. Good ideas for those that need them. *EM*