

Core Proficiencies of the Library Media Specialist

In answer to several inquiries regarding, "a standard job description for today's library media specialist," NJASL's Professional Resources Committee researched this field. Job descriptions for library personnel typically include: a job title, immediate supervisor(s) to whom personnel shall report, and educational qualifications, followed by a list of duties or responsibilities.

Examples of job descriptions can be found on the Web that are very specific and may or may not be applicable to individuals in our diverse membership. Rather than direct queries to various examples of job descriptions, we have summarized key points below. Of course, you may choose to adapt this outline to best meet your individual needs. The following outline speaks in very general terms of Core Proficiencies of the Library Media Specialist to educate others on the scope of our role.

Recommended references that expand the core proficiencies noted below include:

"School Library Media Standards Handbook." 29 April. 1999. Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Instruction, Curriculum Services.

<<http://www.dese.state.mo.us/divinstr/curriculum/library>>

Valenza, Joyce Kazman. Power Tools: 100+ Essential Forms and Presentations for Your School Library Information Program. Chicago: American Library Association, 1998.

Outline of Core Proficiencies of the Library Media Specialist

Administrative

Establishes annual and long-range goals for the library media program.

Plans, arranges, administers, operates, and supervises the library media center, developing policy for efficient operation and optimal service.

Utilizes the district's adopted selection policy to develop a collection of resources that enhance teaching and learning.

Seeks input from administrators and teachers in budgeting, program planning, and collection development of print and non-print materials.

Maintains accurate records of library media center holdings, including acquisition, circulation, and maintenance (i.e. cataloging, inventory, interlibrary loan).

Maintains open channels of communication throughout the district and community (i.e. technology and curriculum development committees, local public and academic libraries, the regional library cooperative, and other community organizations).

Prepares schedules, with input from teachers and building administrators, for integrated information skills instruction.

Trains and supervises library clerks, paraprofessionals, and adult and student volunteers.

Evaluates the collection and weeds obsolete and worn materials.

Fosters an atmosphere which encourages student and faculty use.

Instructional

Collaboratively plans and teaches instructional units with other teachers, incorporating the Core Curriculum Content and Workplace Readiness Standards, as well as the information literacy objectives.

Helps students develop attitudes, habits, and skills leading to lifelong library use.

Provides group and individual instruction in information skills, research strategies, and use of resources and equipment.

Serves as a resource to administrators, teachers, students, and parents (i.e. offers faculty workshops, readership guidance, and bibliographies).

Assumes a leadership role in promoting the principles of intellectual freedom by creating and sustaining an environment encouraging free inquiry and exposing students to a broad range of ideas.

Technology

Understands and implements the role of technology in instruction, student learning, and professional development. Instructs students to be discerning, responsible, and ethical users of information.

Serves as a resource to administrators, teachers, students, and parents (i.e. investigates and evaluates products, services, and equipment; encourages use of telecommunications as a communication and resource tool; and facilitates the use of presentation tools in print, technology, and media).

Professionalism

Has a working knowledge of national and state legislation affecting the school library media program and applies this to library media center operations.

Keeps educationally and professionally informed by participating in professional organizations, coursework, workshops, conferences, and by the reading of professional literature.

Serves as a resource to administrators, teachers, students, and parents (i.e. provides information on issues regarding copyright and intellectual freedom, grant proposals, and professional development).

8/26/99