

MSLA Forum: November 2012

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HISTORY OF SCHOOL LIBRARY

*Compiled by Kathy Lowe and
 Introduction by Judi Paradis,*

PROGRAMS IN MASSACHUSETTS

*Donna Guerin, Past Presidents
 MSLA President-Elect*

The Massachusetts School
 been changes to MSLA's name,
 ensure that the students of
 and knowledgeable
 implement the new Common
 provide a 24/7 presence for our

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Audio Books
 eBooks & Nooks
 Security Gates
 Mitali Perkins visit
 Keep Kids Reading
 SLJ: Common Core
 SLJ: Advocacy!

Library Association (MSLA) has a history going back five decades. There have
 focus, and governance. However, the mission has always been steady: to
 Massachusetts have access to school library programs with excellent resources
 professionals. As we watch school libraries evolve to Learning Commons,
 Core Standards, and struggle to determine how to deliver digital resources and
 students, it is worth looking at how our organization has grown and changed.

Former MSLA presidents Kathy
 here. As I read it, I was struck by

- From an early date,
 we have always been
 of using current
- Library programs often
 schools and libraries
 for programs for
- Data is on our side as
 student learning and
 refute.
- AASL, MSLA and the
 student learning in
 Learning and the

Lowe and Donna Guerin have put together a fascinating guide to MSLA's past
 some interesting trends:

school library programs have encompassed both print and nonprint resources—
 about information access and delivery and we've always been at the forefront
 technology in education.

are without a champion. As local, state and federal budgets and governance of
 have changed over time, we've often been hit hard. Librarians have had to fight
 decades, and we're still here!

we've proven consistently over the past 15 years that what we do matters to
 achievement. The amount of data we've collected is impressive and difficult to

Massachusetts Library System have been leaders in setting standards for
 libraries as new initiatives come along, such as Partnership for 21st Century
 Common Core

School libraries matter, and it
 our sixth decade, MSLA
 excellent resources, and skilled

continues to be up to us to let decision makers know that they do. As we enter
 members must continue to put students first—advocating for strong programs,
 professionals in our libraries.

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ASSOCIATION NAMES:

Pre-1975: MSLA - Massachusetts School Library Association

(We don't know the exact year; it was not incorporated with the state, so there is no documentation. Probably the 1960s)

1975: MAECT - Massachusetts Association for Educational Communications and Technology, Inc.

1983: MAEM - Massachusetts Association for Educational Media, Inc.

1992: MSLMA – Massachusetts School Library Media Association

2006: MSLA – Massachusetts School Library Association

1960s

STRUCTURE

- Department of Education, Division of Curriculum and Instruction.
- Bureau of Library Extension represents public and school libraries.

FUNDING

- Local school budget.
- 1960 National Defense Act, federal money administered by the state
- Some funds targeted for libraries to improve literacy.

CERTIFICATION

- School Librarian with emphasis on print, cataloging, facility management, reading enjoyment.
- School administrators often transfer teachers, who are not school library certified, from the classroom to the library.

PROGRAM

- Collection development focuses on print resources.
- Librarian teaches library skills in isolation of the curriculum.

1970s

STRUCTURE

- Board of Library Commissioners leaves the Dept. of Education. Bureau of Library Extension is phased out.
- School libraries remain under the Dept. of Ed. but lose any significant representation.
- Bureau of Library Extension staff moves to MBLC or to MET, (MA Educational Television, a new Bureau created by the Department of Ed.)
- MET staff trains librarians and audiovisual directors in the use of technology and establishes the educational television network in the state.

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- State and federal funding to school libraries is administered by the MBLC.
- MA School Library Assoc. becomes the state voice for school libraries.
- Mass Audio-Visual Assoc. becomes the state voice for educational technologies.

FUNDING

- Local school budget.
- ESEA TITLE II, federal funds, are for school libraries and distributed on a per pupil formula. (Monies are used to purchase print and non-print materials or equipment.)

CERTIFICATION

- School Librarian with elementary or high school level focus.
- Technology and non-print materials become a part of the certification process.
- Audio-Visual Director focuses on technology. (Many classroom teachers assume this position.)

PROGRAM

- Includes non-print materials, technology, and educational television.
- Roles of librarian and audio-visual director often conflict.
- Traditional role of librarian begins to change with the introduction of educational technologies in the library media program.

1980s

STRUCTURE

- Dept. of Ed. with no representation.
- State associations merge in late 70's and form MAEM (Massachusetts Association of Educational Media), the State voice for school library media programs.

FUNDING

- Proposition 2 1/2 in 1981 drastically reduces local school budgets and greatly reduces or eliminates budgets and *staff*, especially at the elementary level.
- EEO (Equal Educational Opportunity) and Chapter II Block Grants, state funds, can be used for and by libraries.

CERTIFICATION

- Unified Library Media Specialist focuses on print, nonprint, educational technologies, curriculum development.
- Separate library and audiovisual positions still exist due to tenure and seniority.
- Focus on LMS as a teacher, instructional consultant, program manager, information specialist.

PROGRAM

- Quality of collections deteriorates and many elementary libraries close or share staff.

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- High school library media centers are necessary for high school accreditation by NEASC.
- LMC program integrates research/information skills into the curriculum.
- Improve reading and visual literacy.
- Use technology as a tool to improve instruction, enhance the curriculum, and teach students lifelong learning skills.
- Library automation and telecommunications.
- MAEM, the state school library association, develops MA State Library Media Standards.

1990s

STRUCTURE

- Secretary of Education vs. Dept. of Education.
- MAEM changes its name to MA School Library Media Assoc. (MSLMA) to be consistent with state changes in certification, national trends and for name recognition.

FUNDING

- Budget overrides restore library programs, funding and staff.
- Budget problems continue, more libraries close and/or lose funding and staff.

CERTIFICATION

- School Library Media Specialist with emphasis on teacher certification and library degree.

PROGRAM

- National Educational Goals VISION 2000
- INFORMATION POWER/Long Distance Learning/Internet/Technologies.
- White House Conference/Omnibus Bill
- MBLC King Study and MSLMA Survey shed light on status of school libraries in MA
- Communication and cooperation between MLA and MSLMA
- MBLC Strategic Planning Committee offers hope for the future of all libraries in MA, requires certified school librarian for membership in library regions
- 1993 MA Education Reform Act does not mention school libraries

2000s

STRUCTURE

- Department of Education with no representation
- MSLMA changes its name to MA School Library Assoc. (MSLA) to be consistent with national trends and for name recognition.

FUNDING

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- Local school budget. Budget problems continue, school librarians replaced by technology specialists or paraprofessionals, especially at the elementary level as many professionals reach retirement age

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CERTIFICATION

- Library Teacher or School Librarian; Master's degree. Requirement dropped for additional certification as classroom teacher.

PROGRAM

- No Child Left Behind
- Partnership for 21st Century Skills
- MCAS testing
- School Libraries Work! (Scholastic Study linking student achievement to strong school library programs)
- MSLMA Standards for School Library Media Programs and Model School Library Rubrics (2003)
- MA Curriculum Frameworks (information literacy skills integrated with ELA Framework)
- AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner and Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs (2007, 2009)
- MSLA Recommend PreK-12 Information Literacy Standards (aligned with AASL Standards and MA Technology Standards) (2009)
- AASL adopts School Librarian as our official job title
- Increased MSLA collaboration with MLA and MBLC especially concerning legislative efforts
- MSLA emphasis on advocacy

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2010s

STRUCTURE

- Department of Elementary & Secondary Education with no representation

FUNDING

- Local school budget. Cuts in funding and positions decline slightly, professionals begin to be rehired in some schools.

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CERTIFICATION

- Library Teacher or School Librarian. Master's degree.

PROGRAM

- Race to the Top
- Common Core State Standards
- 6 MA library regions consolidated into one MA Library System which provides professional development, statewide database access (with MBLC), and other resource sharing
- Standards for the 21st Century Learner, Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs (AASL)
- MSLA Information Literacy Standards (aligned with AASL Standards and MA Technology Standards)

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A Look back....PRESIDENTS:

Valerie Diggs: 2011-13
Gerri Fegan: 2009-11
Sandy Kelly: 2007-09
Kathy Lowe: 2005-07
Ann Perham: 2003-05
Dorothy McQuillan: 2001-03
Joan Gallagher: 1999-01
Doris Smith: 1998-99
Joe Angelo: 1997-98
Peggy Hallisey: 1996-97
Rick Paula: 1995-96
Barbara Selvitella: 1992-93
Donna Guerin: 1986

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FROM THE EDITOR – Ann Perham

Are we on the threshold of a "revolution" in the Library World? The **Hot Button Topic** of **Do We Ditch Dewey** in this issue may be the overview of a major change. Or, is it?



On one hand, it's called "Library Science," but on the other hand, we serve to promote the teaching and learning at our schools. We balance the "rules" of Dewey, the needs of teaching our students the survival skills for research in all libraries and the demand that we reflect the curriculum fabric of our school.

Common sense cataloging is what I call the assignment of call numbers that make sense for our own collection. Today, I rejected the Library of Congress classification of a reference set of books on drugs and substance abuse. Instead of using the 362 number that the Library of Congress assigned, I used a Dewey number of 615 so that all of our books on this topic would be together. There was definitely subject matter to merit shelving them in with the social problems, but I decided in favor of the science/health area. There are numerous areas where this practice of changing the Library of Congress number to a number that is a custom fit for our library makes so much sense. Make those decisions to allow your students and faculty to easily and logically find these books. Remember that it may be "Library Science" but you are running a program, tailored to your educational community.

Embellish records with keywords (thinking like your researching students) to increase the likelihood of students finding materials via the catalog. One assignment that I promote at the start of a research project is that the students "go shopping" using the catalog. In the planning of the unit, I ask that the teacher first have students do their presearching and develop keywords. Students have as their homework to bring to their first day in the Library a list of sources that are worth investigating. Many of the resources in my library have "enhanced records." By adding keywords and table of contents, the likelihood that my students will find the books via the catalog increases.

Special Collections are terrific tools to customize your collection to support your curriculum. When I started at Needham High School in 2000, I was perplexed to find a special collection, CritMat. My predecessors had centralized all of the critical materials used for the junior author study. I resisted the urge to dissolve CritMat and reserved my judgement until I saw how it functioned. That was a dozen years ago. I not only saved the CritMat, but I have expanded it because for the junior project, it is magic. Teachers appreciate the vast resources and students appreciate the browsability. I do caution students that when they are in the public library, they will get strange looks if they ask for the CritMat section.



Signage is an investment to help your students and staff successfully navigate your library. It does not need to be expensive and commercially-produced, as long as it is clear and placed strategically.

There is a tremendous cost to Ditching Dewey. Without even considering the time to plan and then the time of second-guessing our decisions, the logistics of finding the time and staff to accomplish this conversion is staggering. I would rather spend summer weeks collaborating with teachers on projects to promote the Common Core or another curriculum project. Instead of recataloging and rebarcoding and labeling the books, I would choose to invest staff time on embellishing catalog records to make them fit my program. Dewey may not be perfect, but it is a foundation upon which I can build a strong program to support the teaching and learning at my school.

[Just Dewey It](#) from Enokson via Flickr, used under a CC-license

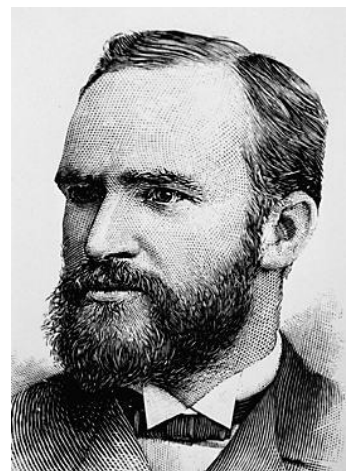
Do We Ditch Dewey?



by Ann Perham

This question echoes throughout the Library World: is there a better system for organizing our collections? At ALA Annual in 2012, the AASL Affiliate Assembly passed a concern and submitted it to the AASL Board to come out with a position statement on "Neighborhood Shelving." The October 2012 issue of *School Library Journal* has a cover story, "Are Dewey's Days Numbered?" In the August 2012 *School Library Journal*, Christopher Harris wrote an article, "Summer Project: Kill Dewey." Are we on the verge of a major change? What are the MSLA members saying and doing?

School Library Journal: "Are Dewey's Days Numbered?" The cover story of the October 2012 issue puts the question out for the Library World to consider. The article recounts the process of inventing a new classification system and then making the change. Four elementary school librarians at the Ethical Fieldstone School in New York City spent six summer weeks transforming their 20,000 volume collection from Dewey to a system that is child-centered, browseable and flexible. Why switch? "We had the sense that for all the energy that we and our students were spending on teaching and learning Dewey (all those scavenger hunts and online library games), even our most advanced students still struggled to navigate smoothly from their initial request through the catalog to the item's correct place on the shelves. So much effort was expended on this process that we felt as if our library was focused on finding materials rather than actually using them, and at odds with the emphasis on inquiry and critical think skills found in the American Association of School Librarians' 'Standards for the 21st Century Learner'" (Kaplan 26). In an effort to share their journey and to encourage others to share ideas, they have created a website:<http://www.metisinnovations.com>.



What are MSLA members thinking and doing about Dewey? In October 2012, members responded to a survey on their practices and thoughts about Dewey and alternatives to Dewey. Respondents elected to have names included in this article or to remain anonymous.

Have you used non-Dewey shelving?

Sandy Mott, Martha's Vineyard Regional High School: "I am thinking of changing up things regarding shelving in our high school library. In spite of solid library skills programs from the elementary school upwards, students, for the most part, resist the Dewey system. Staff and students rely on the library staff to look up whatever they need and basically put the material in their hands. I have tried to put all formats of a subject together (book, DVD, book on tape, VHS) It was not particularly successful and I found DVD discs missing. I will be following the responses from your survey and see what others are thinking."

Kelly Metzger, Dedham Middle School: "I have separated the sports fiction from the rest of my fiction. It has been extremely successful. Students were often unable to locate the books, and it is a popular genre in my school. I am considering a thrillers/horror section next, as that is another genre students often ask about but have difficulty browsing for."

Multiple middle school librarians responded that they have adopted special shelving arrangements for unique situations. Using special collections shelved separately works well to help students find books: easy readers, graphic

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novels, Scholastic Reading Count, series with multiple authors (*39 Clues*, *Dear America*). Using genre labels extensively on the fiction books and applying prefixes to call numbers for traditional (Oversized, Large Print) and less-traditional (Scholastic Reading Counts titles-with-quizzes) collections enables students to locate books more independently.

Advantages? What do you see as the positive possibilities/results of alternatives to Dewey?

Survey respondents recognized that students and faculty familiar with local bookstore “neighborhood shelving” would respond positively. Perhaps they would be more successful in finding things on their own rather than relying on a adult to get the material for them.

Kelly Metzger: “Categories can be a little more fluid, depending on current topics and needs. For example, my professional section is now separated into eight sections, such as STEM, Writing, and Special Education. In the future, I may need to change these designations. The books are still cataloged with Dewey numbers, and within each section they are organized by their call number.”

Some members recognized that alternative shelving would allow us to bring together books on a topic from different perspectives. For example, books on drug use in the 300s and 600s could be grouped together.

One response flatly declared that s/he is, “not a fan of non-Dewey - but - possibly better browsing for younger students.”

Disadvantages? What are the drawbacks to ditching Dewey?

Members were thoughtful in responding to this question. The most logical disadvantage to straying from Dewey is that we will lose the common denominator from library to library. “Lots of our students come and go during the school year - some stay in [the same] town but switch schools - having to learn a new system for each school could be a problem. Also, we want them to feel at home in the public library.” Put simply, “Books found in same places in every single library in the world.” Another member stated, “One of the benefits of Dewey is the fact that it is so widely used and that patrons can confidently and independently find materials without the help of library staff. My students react with amazement when I tell them that their favorite books

will be at the same address at whatever library they chose to visit. Local cataloging is a novelty; it doesn't promote self-sufficiency.”

Another member went on at length on the drawbacks to leaving Dewey. “In a school library where our job is to teach students how to find what they need with ever-increasing independence in both their current library and the LIBRARIES IN THEIR FUTURES, why would we handicap them by not having them practice a commonly used organizational system from the beginning? Second, the categorization becomes, by its own terms, more subjective. Science Fiction merges into Fantasy; is Adventure fiction, nonfiction or both?; will Dogs really encompass everything



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from Clifford to how to train a Seeing Eye dog?; Horror, Thriller, Suspense? And most of all, is there any carryover to the next library a student will be trying to find his/her way around in? And third, in these days of eternally tight budgets, who has the money? Money for the staff whose current duties are light enough to re-assign, re-label, re-shelve, and, OMG, re-do the catalog? Money for the necessary supplies? Is it really worth it just to enhance browse-ability?"

Another member asked, "What do you do with a book like *The Shakespeare Stealer*...historical fiction mystery? Also I think patrons read fiction books by author, non-fiction by subject, and biography by person who the book is about...just like Dewey is organized."

Sandra Mott stated, "It is a lot of work to redo an entire collection so that it is accessible...retrospective conversion (remember that dreaded word). It would require reconfiguring shelving, moving actual shelving units and redoing carpet...probably an expense public school would really have to plan for. So, the process would be the biggest issue along with recataloging."

Nancy Loiselle – Abby Kelly Foster Charter School in Worcester: "As a school librarian often serving classes as large as 24 students, self-sufficiency is paramount. Students need to be able to use an OPAC to locate the 'address' of their materials and locate them on their own. As a former public librarian, I also found the same to be true as I could not personally help each patron."

Laura Gardner – Dartmouth Middle: "I see lots of drawbacks to ditching Dewey. For one thing, I have a hard time deciding what genre certain books belong in. A book like *Airhead* by Meg Cabot is a good example. Is it mystery, science fiction, romance or all three? What about *Found* by Margaret Peterson Haddix, which I consider to be historical fiction, science fiction and adventure? Furthermore, many titles, both fiction and non-fiction, wouldn't have much of a home at all and would end up in the "extra" section that would have to have some sort of classification. Why not just stick with Dewey, which also helps prepare students for other libraries in the future."

If we ditch Dewey, perhaps the question needs to be asked, "What standards will we use? It's challenging enough to switch between LC and Dewey. Maybe we should be asking which of those to use." Another member added, "As much as I see benefits of changing, I see mayhem if we drop Dewey. We all need a home!"

Kelly Metzger reminds us of the time-tested traits of Dewey, "It has lasted so long because it is effective. I would hate to lose some of the specificity that comes from Dewey numbers."

Do we all love bookstore neighborhood shelving? "I find searching for books in physical bookstores tiresome. If you search for fiction, the book could be in too many places such as, new fiction, old fiction, paperback fiction, hard cover fiction or on the special seasonal table. You have to go to a computer to find where a book or subject is placed because their system is unknown, and the book could be in a variety of places. An example would be a self-help subject, which could be shelved in education, psychology, women's/men's/family issues, child-rearing, personal growth, etc , all of which makes it too confusing; then the books are alphabetized by author. At least with Dewey there is a universal suggested address, which we can tweak it if needed. Some people think the decimal numbers are distracting; do our house or apartment numbers make sense?"

Members consider the larger library world. "I like using Dewey because it is a global system. Isn't our goal toward global education, rather than local? If our students learn the basics of the Dewey arrangement they can more easily adapt to the LC or the system of their own countries."

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Sue LaFlamme – West Springfield Middle School: “I think there is something to be said for having the expectation that no matter what library you visit, you will be able to find the materials you are looking for. I think that how you decide to group books can be very subjective and students will encounter a different organizational system in each library. Frankly, I don't see what the problem is with Dewey for middle school and above. I don't bang my students over the head with Dewey lessons. They have a general understanding of its organization and hierarchy and find what they need aided by signage and posters. When students go to our public library, they encounter another Dewey organized library. I do borrow merchandising techniques from bookstores, with revolving displays by genres, theme or seasons. Catchy signs and props always attract attention, entice students to pick up a book, and create a welcoming, user-friendly environment.”

Vicki Biancolo – Miss Hall's School: “I think that until most colleges and universities stop using classification systems, school libraries would be doing students a disservice by ditching formal classification schemes. The more competent students are using Dewey or another classification scheme, the more comfortable and successful they will be in college.”

As a follow-up, see my Editorial Comments in my "From the Editor" article .

Works Cited

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"Melvil Dewey." *Gale Biography in Context*. Detroit: Gale, 2010. *Gale Biography In Context*. Web. 10 Nov. 2012.

Chirping it up online: Massachusetts school librarians consider the new teacher evaluation tool in #MSLA Twitter discussion

by Carrie Tucker

East Bridgewater High School

Gmail and Twitter: ctucker240



How do we best leverage the new Massachusetts teacher evaluation tool to highlight the contributions of school librarians to student success?

This timely issue was foremost on the minds of MSLA members who gathered on Twitter Monday evening, October 22. About a dozen of us shared needs, ideas, and suggestions about how members of our profession can best meet the expectations of the new evaluation tool. Several others monitored in silence, as this was either a first foray into a new social media format or they were at school meetings and couldn't participate fully. Discussion covered a variety of topics, including the best choice of rubric (teacher or SISP), working with administrators, developing SMART goals, TeachPoint evaluation management software, and collecting evidence.

While the discussion was not intended to be authoritative, it did offer a forum to share concerns and suggest strategies--a rare opportunity in our profession. As sole library practitioners in our buildings, many of us miss the benefit of comparing notes with department colleagues that most teachers enjoy daily. Therefore, developing

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personal learning networks outside our schools is not only valuable, but essential.

Amy Short (@amysshort2) and I agreed to moderate a Twitter discussion partly in response to repeated listserv queries concerning the new teacher evaluation tool. As Director of Library and Media Services at Boston Public Schools, Amy was able to offer the administrator perspective as well as share her substantial knowledge of the new rubrics and standards.

Common threads emerged. First, participants want MSLA to offer online space for sharing SMART goals and examples of evidence. Judi Paradis (@judiparadis) will look into this. Second, members would welcome future Twitter discussions on other topics. As Jennifer Varney (@jenvarney) tweeted, "Nothing beats PD while in my PJs :-)"

Resources:

1. Read the full transcript of the Twitter discussion.

<http://storify.com/CarrieTucker/msla-discussion-of-new-ma-teacher-evaluation-tool>

2. Check out Robin Cicchetti's teacher evaluation web site for librarians.

<http://libguides.colonial.net/content.php?pid=203334&sid=3148120>

3. Send topic suggestions for future Twitter discussions to ctucker240 via Gmail or Twitter.

What to Do If You Become Unemployed



by Cynthia Grabke

FEEDBACK and COMMENTS to Cynthia If you have ideas to share or leads on jobs, get in touch with her. If you are also in the job hunt, make Cynthia a link in your network.

Unemployment is a topic that I've had the unfortunate opportunity to become an expert at. When I found out that my full time position at an elementary school was being reduced to part-time, I thought it was a chance to try teaching at another level. I soon landed a position at a middle school. Unfortunately this district had to cut 36 positions the following year, including two librarians. I soon found a position as a librarian at another middle school where I was actually teaching research skills to all of the students. Unfortunately, this district is in a constant state of flux with its curriculum and budget and again I was cut. What I have learned from this experience is to stay busy and look for opportunities to move forward. Here are some tips I have learned if you should find yourself in the same unfortunate situation.

Most important, don't panic! There are resources to help financially until you land another permanent position. First, apply for unemployment benefits – it's a safety net. According to the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) brochure, "What to Do If You're RIF'd [Reduction in Force]," you may be eligible to collect benefits beginning one week after your last day of work. The Division of Unemployment Assistance <http://www.mass.gov/lwd/unemployment-insur/> determines your eligibility and the amount of your weekly benefit once you file a claim, therefore you should do this as soon as possible after your last day of work. You may file by telephone or in person, but in either case you'll need some basic information, including your social security number, the social security numbers of your dependent children, your last day of work, and your employment information for the past 15 months. The MTA publication also discusses contract rights and health care benefits.

Second, prepare for the job hunt: prepare a portfolio, update your resume, and get current references. Your portfolio should include work that would interest the employers at jobs you'll be applying to, not just a collection of past work. For example, if you were an elementary librarian, but are applying for secondary positions, find lesson plans for

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upper grade research projects, or projects in which you collaborated with another teacher. Some principals are interested in integrating technology so include examples of lesson plans using a great website, or show a webpage that you created for the school's website in your portfolio as well. Also keep your resume current and update it for specific jobs that you are applying for. Make sure your resume lists your latest accomplishments. Finally, look beyond your school principal for possible references. Sometimes a teacher that you collaborated with or another administrator is more familiar with your work and can write a stronger reference.

There are many employment search tools available. Use the Mass. School Library Association's job list for listings of state wide jobs: <http://mslajobs.blogspot.com/>. It also has links to relevant sites with job lists, such as Simmons College and the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners.

Other regional jobs lists:

University of Rhode Island: <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/lsc/Career/joblist.html>

New England Library Association: <http://www.nelib.org/jobsearchaids>

American Library Association's Joblist: <http://joblist.ala.org/>

Library Job Postings on the Internet: <http://www.libraryjobpostings.org/>

While you're searching for a permanent position, try a part time or temporary one or volunteer. Substitute teaching is a great way to gain classroom experience and to network. School districts are usually happy to find subs that are licensed with classroom experience. Care.com is a great place to find babysitting and tutoring positions. It's free to fill out a profile and search a database of jobs. If you have lesson plans that you would like to share, you can post them on TeachersPayTeachers.com. There are also many temporary agencies, such as Manpower, that offer part time temporary work.

Don't become isolated and wallow in self pity. Keep networking and stay connected to the profession and friends. If possible, keep your professional association memberships active. It's a great way to keep abreast of news, even job postings. Also, keep in touch with friends from your previous job: meet for coffee, email, or even Facebook. Friends will provide both moral and professional support. Many jobs are found through networking, so keeping in touch may even help you land a job.

Don't treat unemployment as a vacation. Take advantage of time off to update your skills and learn new skills. The Division of Unemployment Assistance Career Centers offer free workshops on everything from resume writing to using Microsoft office. Find your local Career Center on the Mass. Labor and Workforce Development's website <http://www.mass.gov/lwd/unemployment-insur/>. Take a course, attend a workshop or take an online course, and read. You may want to look into getting certified in another subject, to help broaden your career choices. I used this opportunity to become certified to teach English, and although I'd prefer to remain in a career in libraries, I now have the option to teach another subject.

It's normal to be upset when you're unemployed. You're suffering a loss. But it's important not to dwell on the negative and to focus on the positive. Unemployment is a grant of time to discover new opportunities. After the last day of school, last June, I made a list of things I wanted to accomplish if I didn't find a job, thinking that I would have so much free time. So far I haven't gotten around to completing one item on the list. I've been busier than ever, between looking for a new position, working part-time temporarily, and updating my skills. I know that the right position will eventually open up for me, and I'll be ready when it does.

E-readers and Audio Books

by Audrey Borus [Contact Audrey](#)

Audrey is the School Librarian at the Meadowbrook School in Weston.

This is Part 1 of a two-part series; the next column in the MSLA Forum will focus on E-readers.

Looking at the listserv for the past few months, I've seen more and more posts about e-readers and audio books. Perhaps it is because I've set a goal for myself this year of making a foray into the realm of the electronic that I've been noticing more posts on our listserv on the topic. Devika Muruga, Librarian at Nessacus Regional Middle School in Dalton, posted on October 15th asking whether any of us has experience with an application that will allow students to not only hear the text of book but follow along with the written words. Several of us wrote in with suggestions, but it got me thinking: what is actually available in terms of non-print materials? I started by looking at audiobooks and quickly realized the line between sound and electronic media gets blurry.



As you probably already know, audiobooks have been around for some time. They were originally developed for blind soldiers returning from World War I and were issued on long-playing records for gramophones (164). As long playing records became obsolete, recordings moved to cassette tape, driving down their cost and thus making them more available to libraries. Compact disk technology provided another, more durable format and audio content manufacturers quickly embraced it. Though CD technology does have drawbacks (e.g., sound files on CD are not compressed and therefore can one book may take up a lot of disks), sound quality is often better than with a cassette. Furthermore, the life expectancy of a disk is much longer than that of a cassette, an important consideration if you are lending materials to patrons.

The technology has developed quickly. In 2005, the Findaway Corporation introduced the Playaway, a self-playing digital audio book using an audio file in a proprietary format called ACELP (Algebraic Code Excited Linear Prediction). More recently, technology permits audio files to be compressed into more easily transmittable formats such as MP3 and .Wav files, so vendors have been offering downloadable audiobooks via subscription services.

According to Jessica Moyer, Associate Professor at the School of Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin, these changes in technology have caused audiobooks to go from being a small part of many public collections to a favorite among patrons (340-41). At the same time, audiobooks are increasingly popular in classrooms and school libraries. And it's no wonder. If our goal as school librarians is to help students read for information and pleasure, to find meaning and think critically about what they read, to use imagination and make connections, then audio books are certainly a useful tool in every librarian's arsenal.

Lest you are not convinced that audio books constitute "real" reading, consider this definition of reading from Carol Simpson: "The ability to intellectually process text while understanding the literary or informational content, or from a narrower perspective, a reader's ability to decode letter sequences, along with understanding the grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary employed in the text" (qtd. in Clark 49). In their article, "Tuning into Audio Books," industry specialists such as Tim Ditlow (Random House/Listening Library), Arnie Cardillo (Live Oak Media) and Bruce Coville (president of Full Cast Audio), Ellen Myrick (North-South Books) and Teri Lesesne (Professor of Library Science, Sam Houston State University) point to the fact that learning is a multisensory experience. "Infants and toddlers see,

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hear, and touch things in the world, their parents name these things, and so they are taught and learn to associate words with the things they sense. The same holds true in the world of the picture book readalong. In teaching reading to young children, educators have found that, if a child sees a word and hears it at the same time, the dual experience of seeing and hearing creates a double impression and deeper imprint of the word in the child's memory than the act of just seeing the word" (Cardillo 43). The authors of this article go on to caution that not all audiobooks are created equally. They enumerate three distinct types of audiobook: readalong, single voice narration, and full cast. Just as children's book formats offer a wide range from picture books to YA novels, audiobooks differ in their production styles, treatments and techniques.

A *readalong*, or word-for-word recording, is generally the format audiobook producers choose for a picture books because these books are meant for listening and following along with a printed copy. Audiobook producers are quick to note that such productions are not "easy." When producing readalongs, there are very specific goals. First and foremost: to help children through multisensory and associative learning. Audiobooks capitalize on the dual experience of seeing and hearing a word. This multisensory experience allows young readers to more effectively retain words and make associations between the "visual and auditory nature of words" thus becoming stronger readers (Cardillo 43). Because words and pictures are so closely linked in a picture book, audiobook producers are careful to maintain that connection. One way they do so is to pace narration. They are mindful of leaving enough time between lines of text so that children can examine pictures and make associations between story and illustration. However, the pace must not be too fast lest emerging readers become frustrated, or too slow so as to bore the listener/reader.

Another goal of the audiobook is to make reading a positive, fun experience. For this reason, producers look for skilled and creative narrators. Books with regional accents or unusual words make great candidates for engaging audiobooks. Consider, for example, *The Whale Rider* by Whiti Ihimarea. The story takes place in Whangara, New Zealand among a Maori tribe that claim descent from Kahutia Te Rangi, the legendary "whale rider." As an audiobook, New Zealander Jay Laga'aia easily navigates the Maori words and names, helping the listener gain access to a world very different from our own. And here's where single voice narration comes into play. Audiobook producers say they pay as much attention to casting a narrator as film producers pay to casting actors. They strive to find a wide range of talents. A typical audiobook producer oversees almost 100 productions a year, so finding just the right voice for a particular book can be a terrific challenge. Casting begins the moment the producers receive a script. As Tim Ditlow of Listening Library points out, "[w]e know children listen to our titles over and over again, therefore, why not give them (and their parents) the widest possible range of new voices to enjoy." Ditlow also points out that some books just don't lend themselves to reading aloud because they lack the "internal rhythm and flow to make a good recording" (Cardillo 43). In addition to considering the text itself, Listening Library's producers mull over other questions such as whether an author is interested in reading, would a celebrity or current actor on Broadway be a fitting choice, how many characters does the book contain, are there young or old voices in the story, where is story's setting and so forth. As you can see, producing an audiobook is closely coupled with the material itself.

Full cast audiobooks require yet another set of considerations, starting with title selection. To quote Bruce Coville of Full Cast Audio, "not only must we love the book we choose, it must be dialogue driven" (Cardillo 44). As many as fifty actors can perform on one book using only four microphones so the process can be time-consuming. Unlike single voice narration, production requires that the director sit in the recording booth with the actors so he/she can provide feedback such as noting when an actor needs a break to discussing pronunciation. Coville says casts typically put in six or seven hours for every one hour that becomes the permanent recording.

The Cataloging Conundrum

There is now a confounding array of formats for sound recording. There's the standard CD format. Then there's Daisy (or Digital Accessible Information System) format. The format allows for the combination of audio, text and graphic information and has superior sound quality. It also allows large amounts of information to be compressed into one CD. Daisy format may be used on a computer, a CD player formatted for its use or an MP3 player, including some handheld devices such as the Playaway. But is a Playaway a sound recording or an electronic device? I was able to find guidance several articles including "Guide to Cataloging Playaway Devices Based on AACR2 Chapters 6 and 9" and "Providing Access to E-Audiobooks: Help for the Non-Cataloger."

You can also download audiobooks through online digital services. But what are the rules governing downloadable audio; e.g. if you are using a provider like OverDrive or NetLibrary? There's the sticky issue of who owns the rights to the titles and in most cases, it's the provider not the library. We'll look at digital rights management (DRM) more closely in the second part of this article when we examine e-books, but suffice it to say that librarians must weigh the relative benefits before investing.

Implementing a program

If you do decide to go with audiobooks, Brenda Rich (Lexington High School) and Mary Melaugh (Marshall Middle School, Billerica) answered Devika's original email and their advice may be valuable for you. But here are some considerations:

- Consider what format you want to purchase: MP3, CD or Playaway. If you chose MP3, do you want to provide it for a desktop computer or some other device?
- If you go with a Playaways, consider that the earbuds may need to be sanitized (or in my library replaced) after use, the battery may need to be replaced after just one check out. Students can add up to 50 bookmarks on a Playaway. Do you have the staff to quickly delete them before someone else checks an item out?
- Do you want to offer a variety of devices a la the Princeton Public Library's "gadget garage:" www.princetonlibrary.org/about/services/gadgets.
- Do you have a population with reading disabilities or visual impairment?
- How will you present your audio collection? If you're going with an online model, how will your students and faculty learn about what titles you have to offer? Do you have the technology support to host on a school server or if you chose a subscription model such as Audible, OverDrive, or Follett. How will your collection be affected by the licensing arrangements set by these services?

Obviously, there are so many considerations it can make your head spin. But I hope that won't deter you. It's been helpful for me to really investigate and after doing some reading, I'm more determined. It seems that my questions have shifted. Not only am I concerned about getting an optimal format, I'm starting to refine my notion of what we're hoping to achieve by adding audiobooks and e-books to the collection and for whom.

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My Experiences with eBooks & Nooks...So Far

by Patsy Divver, Millis Middle/High School Librarian

This is Part I of a two-part article. Look for Part II in the January Forum.

I admit it: I am a book person, as in "print," not "electronic." However, the 21st century student walks, talks, texts, reads, and breathes with a device. Hence, the library either has to upgrade or outsource. Fortunately, last June I received funds to help improve our collection and put the power into the pages and thus began my quest for the best solution. The story has yet to be finished, as we are still updating, adding, and refining. This is a basic start for beginners, from my personal experience with comments from colleagues.

EBooks: The Beginning

Before you start adding your eBooks, do a Collection Analysis and check with your teachers about their curricular needs. This sounds like a no-brainer but it's often a step we overlook. Don't add expensive eBook sets because they look interesting. Your goal should be to find materials that will be used by your students and staff.

After looking at the gaps in my collection, I connected with the vendors and learned some basics about electronic books. For one thing, I did not realize that each vendor has its own reader platform. Unlike print materials, eBooks don't transfer from one reader to another. I contacted three vendors, Follett, Mackin, and Permabound, to get information and pricing. It was very discouraging to learn that I couldn't share between the companies without offering multiple reader connections. Because my library was also updating to Destiny Library manager, I chose Follett and FollettShelf. All the vendor representatives were helpful, informative and supportive, and I suggest checking out a few options before purchasing.

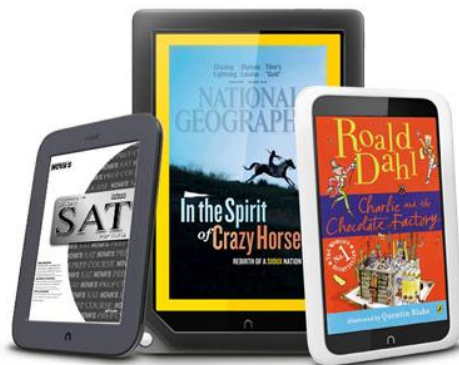
When you decide on a vendor, there are additional considerations: network support, application accessibility, multi-user vs. individual titles, etc. We are a "Mac" school, with a heavy investment with iPads as well as laptops. My Technology team reviewed all the specs to be sure students and staff would be able to access and read materials

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online. Although we still have some issues with iPad connectivity, there are apps available, and FollettShelf is working for us.

What to buy? I reviewed my needs from the collection analysis, the suggestions offered by my vendor, the bundles on the Follett website, and my teachers' requests. I began with a number of non-fiction titles and reference sets that were commonly used in research. Plus, I contained my purchases to "multi-user" which offer unlimited, simultaneous access. This suited my library needs with middle and high school students and a small district of about 850. Most vendors offer basics on creating digital libraries through their websites and if you are new to the program, this is a great first step.

How much to spend? Again, it's your budget and your choice, and for my school, it's a new tool. So, my initial investment was about 10% of my budget for the eBooks, and 110% of my time to promote them. Like advertising all library programming, the better it's publicized, the better the response. This translates into another piece of the digital library dilemma: promoting your plan. In order to get the teachers and students aware of our online library and eBooks, I visited teacher teams through the grade levels, PLCs, staff events and after-school workshops.



Also, Millis Public Schools use the blended learning platform, "ITS Learning." Thus, I've made sure to include a Library folder for all the teachers' ITS Learning courses and include links, instructions, and information on our eBooks, Nooks and online collection. This same information is on our Library webpage, too. The result is that teachers and students are informed.

What about the Nooks?

So far, the Nooks have been working well, and are primarily used by students in book groups since we're able to put multiple book titles on them. They have been used in lieu of laptops or iPads by students, but the screen is much smaller and not as user-friendly. Finally, although there is an iPad app for both our eBook collection (Follett Shelf) and our online print collection access (Destiny), neither will work on the Nook. Ironically, the Kindle will support these apps. I've suggested to Barnes & Noble that they develop these apps, and of course, they're rushing to accommodate my request. This is a situation that will probably be resolved in the future.

Not-so-final musings

Do I like the eBooks? Yes, when everything works and the links go through and there are no issues with accessing the materials. This format is very helpful with my classes who want students to have immediate, simultaneous access to particular resources. With print copies, it's just not possible. But - especially since most items are available through any web-supported device - the eBooks are a welcome addition to the collection.

And the Nooks? Once again, it's been a great way to expand our Book Club books without having to purchase a dozen copies of one title (and then shelve them!) Also, some students think it's fairly cool to use a Nook (and some still wait for the book!) We ran into an issue that would be similar on a Kindle: purchasing needs to be based on a credit card. Our solution was to get a small general card such as a \$25 VISA gift card, and use that as a base to begin the

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account, followed up by adding gift cards as needed, or billing via our district. This is an individual solution and might not be possible in all schools.

If I could wish for anything, I would like everything on the same platform. The way it's set up currently is limiting choices. You either choose one vendor and use their reader, or offer multiple reader situations for the various vendors. Likewise, the eReaders such as Nook and Kindle should join forces to maintain the same apps and expand their usability. Probably, if funds were unlimited, this would be best served via an iPad, where both the Kindle and Nook app can be downloaded. Again, though, the issue of a credit card activation is to be considered for purchases.

My biggest thrill is keeping kids reading. No matter the vehicle, our students are active readers. We'll try any device to make reading a priority.

Nook Graphic from <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/u/NOOK-in-Education/379003215/>

Security Gates: Yea or Nay?

by Sue LaFlamme

3M™ Model 3800 Series 36"W Detection System from Highsmith

West Springfield Middle School Librarian

Two years ago the twelve year- old 3M security gates at West Springfield Middle School died. They had been fixed the previous year to the tune of \$600 and that was with NO replacement parts involved. We had been paying for a maintenance contract of approximately \$800 a year, but that had been discontinued eight years prior. It had been a spider web in the mechanism that caused the gates to fail. New gates would be approximately \$10,000, and there was no money in the budget for that. What to do? Repair them again? Advocate for new gates at the first economic opportunity? Just leave them there as a visual deterrent?



I turned to the MSLA Listerv for advice. Two years ago, I learned that many of us were grappling with the same issue as the gates reached the end of their life expectancy. I had twelve responses and only one strongly advocated needing security gates. The majority of respondents said the trend was to discontinue using security gates and that new construction schools were not investing in them. One person said they tossed theirs out at the beginning of the school year and has not regretted it one bit. I was really surprised by that because I felt sure that my security gates had been preventing a large number of books from being pilfered. I decided that come inventory time I would prove to my administration in hard data the large number of books missing from the shelves.



After two years of inventories, I was proved wrong. There was a negligible increase in the amount of lost or missing books. In fact, more books were unreturned by students than were missing and unaccounted for. When we returned to school this fall it struck me how uninviting the gates made the entrance of my library look. They hadn't worked in two years and perhaps they were a visual deterrent, but I couldn't be sure. I again posted a query asking the group if after two years, did those who had no security gates still feel the same? I had seven responses, most asking for me to share the feedback. One comment I took to heart was "It

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takes a lot of stolen library materials to pay for one security gate". Another reported that the building committee for the new Minnechaug Regional High School in Wilbraham opted not to install them. A third one said, "I just took mine out last spring and am thrilled".

I asked the maintenance department to remove the dead security gates. They balked at first, claiming it was a mystery as to what we would find underneath. A week later a maintenance man removed the gates in barely half an hour. Just four small holes were in the rug where the bolts went into the floor. Everything was flush and neat. A few students have commented on the missing gates and I confess that I have told them a new system will be in place shortly that will be very high tech and unnoticeable...but I can't really discuss it because it is a "security issue" after all.

We'll see next year what my inventory numbers reveal.

Author Visit Changes Lives: Mitali Perkins

by Laura Larsson

School Librarian at Stanley Elementary, Waltham

The fourth grade students at the William F. Stanley Elementary School in Waltham, MA reached beyond the walls of their school last April. I had read them the book *Rickshaw Girl* by Mitali Bose Perkins and followed it up with a visit from the author as well as a fundraiser for women in third-world countries.



With permission from the author, the students colored bookmarks with designs from the book on them and sold them at Fine Arts Night for \$1 each. Proceeds were given to the Grameen Foundation through a web page that Mrs. Larsson created. The Grameen Foundation empowers the world's poorest, especially women, by helping them support their families using microfinance.



The author visit was made possible through a grant from the Waltham Cultural Council.

Children's illustrator Paul Zelinsky and his wife, Deborah supported the cause by making a generous donation to the Grameen Foundation. Paul Zelinsky is known for illustrating fairy tales such as *Rumpelstiltskin* (1986) and *Rapunzel* in the baroque style (2002). His most recent publication is the alphabet book, *Z is for Moose* (2012).

Two professors from Brandeis University were in attendance the day Mitali Perkins visited the school: Dr. Laurie Nisiah-Jefferson, The Heller School for Social Policy and Management and Dr. Preeta Banerjee, Brandeis International Business School.

Donations in any denomination are still being accepted through the Grameen Foundation at <http://tinyurl.com/RickshawGirl>.

Keep Kids Reading by Loosening Control

By Vicki Biancolo, Miss Hall's School

In March 2012, Vicki Biancolo received the M.S.L.A. Award (Massachusetts Super Librarian Award). This article is a reflection on a favorite aspect of her program.

When I walked in to my high school library to start my new job, I was very pleased and excited. I am lucky to work in a lovely space filled with natural light. I realized pretty quickly, however, that my new library, as beautiful as it was, was not being used as much as it could or should be.

My assistant and I looked around the library and started making changes. We thoroughly weeded the print collection and were fortunate enough to have a budget that allowed us to purchase some new books and relevant databases. We rearranged the soft seating. We started talking to teachers and the administration about their needs and did our best to meet them. We worked on our web presence.



Our most exciting and rewarding project, however, came just two years ago when we launched a teen advisory club. We started by approaching two students who are avid readers and active patrons of the library and asking if they would be interested in helping choose what we buy for the collection. They were. We called ourselves the "ReAD (Recommendation And Discussion) Club," wrote a mission statement, and welcomed all students who were interested in joining us. The kids were so enthusiastic about the club that at the end of our inaugural year they petitioned the student council to be recognized as an official school club with elected officers and a photo in the yearbook.

This group of approximately 20 students still meets one evening a week with the librarian to discuss ways to promote recreational reading and to select fiction to purchase for the library. Our club president chairs the meetings, I provide snacks, and we all come armed with suggestions for the group to consider. I project the Ingram or Amazon websites so we can all consider the book cover together as well as the relevant details such as page count. We discuss each suggestion and vote on whether to purchase the title. I've found that the students are very thoughtful about purchasing for everyone in the student community, including English language learners. As a sophomore member of the club put it: "We make sure everyone has something to read." When the books come in, we sticker the spine labels with fluorescent green stars so the books are easily identified on the shelves, and the ReAD Club members get first crack at checking them out.

Last year we took field trips to a local bookstore to browse their shelves and gather ideas while sipping lattes. This year we will go again, as well as add other club activities such as writing reviews to add to the OPAC, label books by genre as a step toward shelving the books that way, and brainstorm ways the club members can, in their words, perform "random acts of reading."

The program has been very successful in expected and unexpected ways. One surprise to me is that even students who don't participate in the club feel ownership of the collection. Perhaps knowing that their peers are choosing many books in the library gives them a level of assurance that the books were chosen by people who really

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understand them. But no matter. Our fiction collection is more heavily used than ever, and students are more readily recommending books to their friends. My ReAD Club members are not only more comfortable talking to me about library matters, but also about other things on their minds. I have learned to trust their judgment about what book covers are “lame” and what plots and characters will really grab readers, as well as those that won’t.

I’m certain there are many ways to run a successful teen advisory group, but this is what is working for my students in my library. What is important to us is keeping the students reading as well as interested and engaged in the library. A senior told me recently: “People never tire of the library.” Sounds good, doesn’t it? Our hope, like that of every school librarian, is that our students will be life-long readers, patrons of their local public libraries, and perhaps someday, enthusiastic supporters of their children’s school library programs!

School Library Journal Summit: COMMON CORE!



By Judi Paradis, Sandy Kelly and Ann Perham

School Library Journal has been convening groups of “movers and shakers” in the world of school libraries for the past eight years. The profession have challenged participants to ask the tough questions about our practice and to change up paradigms. The Common Core and discussions at the 2012 School Library Journal Summit in Philadelphia on October 26th and 27th. Although the theme was Common Core was on the range-finder of all speakers, a common theme of tweets and discussions.

“Librarians teach process! Librarians are Common Core—this is what we do!” was the proclamation of Melissa Jacobs-Israel, a public schools have “unpacked Common Core” for librarians: <http://www2.lhric.org/libsys/IFC.html>. Using the Stripling Model have created the **Empire State Information Fluency Continuum**.



Pennsylvania School Librarians Association just completed a HUGE study on the status of school library information literacy curriculum correlated to the Pennsylvania Common Core—something for Massachusetts

Mary Kay Biagini of the University of Pittsburg spoke about the intersection of Common Core, 21st Century and state test scores. Indeed, Common Core is the “new normal” and we must re-start our mandate of Common Core is FACTTS, exemplified in the Pennsylvania study which concludes that

that influence student achievement:

- F**unding...for library resources
- A**ccess...relationship between extended library services and elevated state scores
- C**ollection....digital and print...more is better, curated by a school library professional
- T**echnology...more, networked and used for teaching and learning
- T**eaching...certified school librarians make a difference in student scores
- S**taff...the most important component: a well-staffed school library with professionals and support personnel

School librarians know the curriculum better than anyone else in the building; this adds huge value in rolling out Common Core this often. We know technology and how to use it to gather information and create products that show learning.

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In order to do what we do well, we need to be able to do it—time to collaborate, time to plan, time to teach. When we don't have these things, we are not doing our best for our students and our colleagues, the librarians. If you do have these things, you owe it to those who don't to advocate on their behalf.

Digital reading is getting teens and young adults reading—don't worry about print vs. ebook, just look at how kids are reading and use that information to provide more information on young adult reading habits.

Nonfiction is center stage in the Common Core ELA standards, and the author panel at the SLJ Summit showed that it can be a powerful tool. Authors included: Steven Sheinkin, *Bomb*, (Macmillan); Barbara Kerley, *Those Rebels, John & Tom* (Scholastic); Deborah Hopcraft, *John & Tom* (Scholastic); Sally Walker, *Written in Stone* (Carolrhoda/Lerner). During the discussion participants heard how authors cull primary research, create a narrative, compare points of view, and show how ideas develop over time.

The panelists also talked about how excellent book design and graphics can add to student understanding of the topic. We listened to the illustrations in *John & Tom* that showed who was more influential in different aspects of founding the United States; and heard how the illustrations in *Bomb* changed the historic record of the Cold War into a thriller focused on the most dangerous weapon ever developed. A nonfiction book is "not a book—it's an instructional tool put together by a committee," while excellent nonfiction trade books provide us with an engaging narrative that topics grab kids' imaginations. Keeping abreast of excellent, recent, relevant nonfiction is another way for librarians to add value to their programs.

MSLA has created a resource to support the members' understanding of the Common Core: <http://mslacommoncore.wikispaces.com> assembled by MSLA members to assist school librarians in creating lessons and projects to support and implement the Common Core.

School Library Journal Summit: ADVOCACY!



By Sandy Kelly, Judi Paradis and Ann Perham

Superintendent **Pam Moran of Albermarle County Public Schools** in Charlottesville, Virginia laid it on the line in her UNkeynote address: patrons will vote with their feet on whether a school library works for them. **Ira Socol, of Michigan State University's College of Education** joined her in the UNkeynote, saying that school libraries do not need to disappear, but can flourish if we embrace the need to promote connection, engagement and discovery. The theme of re-thinking everything we do in the light of new technologies and competing options was woven throughout the summit.



One of the interesting comments from the closing panel of vendors centered on how appalled they were that school administrators do not understand what we do. It brought back memories of Gary Hartzell's SLJ article on "The Invisible School Librarian" published in 2003. Ten years later, administrators still do not know what we do. We really need to be better advocates for ourselves. No one else will do it for us.

In the session, "Know What You Do! Know How to Talk About it!" **Deb Kachel** from **Mansfield University** led the group through the process of getting our message out. Marketing is the same as advertising. We must focus on the audience: who are they, what do they care about, how do we snag them in. Once you understand your audience you can determine how the school library resolves their issues. The response needs to be unique and point out how we are different from the classroom teacher. What do we bring to the table?

In separate groups we addressed five topics to come up with a "tweet." The idea is that if you cannot get your message across in 140 characters people will not read it. Therefore a statement based on your message must be



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concise and compelling. These tweets are ready-made elevator speeches.

Phil Goerner won the **2012 School Library Program of the Year at Silver Creek High School**. He had some concrete suggestions for advocacy. *Be a leader!* Get on every committee, collaborate not just in your own school but with other schools. Advocate in whatever way you can! Phil uses the "Potty Press," posting library newsletters in the staff and student lavatories. He regularly uses blogs, Facebook and Twitter to communicate with students and staff. The advocacy films from the Colorado Department of Education are terrific advocacy tools: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/highlyeffective/index.htm>. Colorado has an award for highly effective libraries; these libraries are encouraged to work with others through a mentoring network. His parting advice was actually a thank you note from a retiring teacher: *"The answer is always yes...there is always a way...the service is always friendly."*

Melissa Techman of the Albermarle County Schools presented on her AMAZING elementary program. She pointed out that advocacy is easy when you get kids engaged and excited at the elementary level. Every student that goes home and describes a cool day in the school library, makes a product to share (digitally or physically), or tells a parent s/he loves the library, is creating a parent advocate. Librarians who interact with adults have a built-in opportunity to showcase what they do...so it is important to volunteer for duties and activities where you see parents, to invite visitors in, and to use volunteers. When they see what you're doing, they become your advocate. Get their emails and send out regular updates about your program. When the library is exciting and busy, the rest follows. Techman is an "outside the box" person who thinks a great deal about space, technology, and how best to support her school's literacy initiative. She has lots of great ideas on Pinterest <http://pinterest.com/mtechman/> and blogs at <http://mtechman.wordpress.com>.

School Library Journal Summit: FAVORITE TWEETS

During the SLJ Summit on October 26 and 27, 2012, the participants were tweeting. Here are some of the favorites, selected by Judi Paradis, Sandy Kelly and Ann Perham.



"We are teaching children to be good at school but not necessarily good at learning."

"Common Core State Standards ask students to read as a writer and write as a reader."

"Our job as educators is not to create compliant workers but to engage thinkers and doers."

"The most expensive book in your collection is the one that does not get used."

"Librarians get inquiry, how to use the best materials to engage and delight kids, and how to teach teachers, too."

"It's about equity for all students, justice."

"Full-Time School Librarians Boost Student Reading, Writing,' says PA Report."

"The demise of the textbook may be the golden age for the supplemental materials we love."

"Align yourself to the curriculum and student achievement to grow your collection. "

"Publisher's Panel states their surprise over administrators' complete lack of understanding of what librarians actually do."

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2013 Bookmark Contest

by Linda J. Coviello, School Librarian at Job Lane School, Bedford

MSLA Bookmark Contest Chairperson

Photo Credits: Richard Curran

The MSLA 2013 Bookmark Contest theme will be “School Libraries: Books and Beyond!” to reflect the vision of our evolving School Libraries. This theme also highlights our many programs and services that extend far beyond our bookshelves. This is a premiere advocacy event for MSLA, a chance to showcase our programs.



Members may run the contest at any time convenient for their programs. Entries must be postmarked by February 10, 2013.

The contest judging will take place on March 3rd at the annual MSLA conference at the Sturbridge Host Hotel. The Awards Ceremony is planned for the MSLA/MLA Legislative Day at the State House in Boston, on March 26, 2013.



An exciting change this year is that we are accepting **Digital Art submissions for DIVISIONS III AND IV**. Look to the MSLA webpage for a complete entry form including UPDATED RULES, especially regarding the digital art entries. All entries must be on paper and submitted via mail.

We will keep you posted: check the website for FAQs, details on student prizes and resources to help you run the contest at your library.

Library Websites as the Tool



by Rachael Costello, School Librarian at Pentucket Regional High School

Six years ago, when I moved from the classroom to the library, I had a vision that the Pentucket Regional High School library would become the “Hub” of the school. A critical part of being the “Hub” is having resources available 24/7, so I set out to build a dynamic website that would be a tool for student learning. The [website](http://pths.schoolloop.com/library) that exists today is the result of a marathon, not a sprint. The first year I added the [Research Guide](#), the next year the [Databases Page](#), but each very much in a beta form. Each year I have revised the site, added pieces, and learned new technology tools. Having been a classroom teacher, I am sensitive to designing accessible tools that all students can easily navigate.

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Access and Control

When we switched web hosting companies two and a half years ago, I finally gained “control” of my website, which was a relief to everyone. (I was a bit of a pest to the webmaster, which I think helped in finding a host which would allow each department to maintain their own web space.) However, in those early days I didn’t have control of the library website, so I had to find tools that could be linked on the website but accessible to me outside of it. That’s where www.netvibes.com came in. Netvibes is a dashboard similar to ioogle. David Loertscher would describe Netvibes as my personal learning environment; it is where I house my PLN (personal learning network) and where I organize my personal digital life. Each free account also provides a public side allowing me to organize and share my professional life. I actually have several Netvibes accounts: the [Online Resources Page](#) is used as a place to share all the cool tools around books and technology that I find or create, and the [Pathfinders Page](#) is where I house the research paths that I have created for recurring projects on which I collaborate. Additionally, I have set up a public page for my school’s NEASC E-portfolio and one for use as a professional portfolio for certification (each of these require a separate email address or you can pay for a premium site).

Bridging the Home/School Gap

Being the “hub” of the school while students are at home is a challenge, but [Jing](#) and screencast.com bridge the home-school gap. My first thought when I am teaching students or staff is how will I reach them when they are not in front of me. Screencasting is that answer, it enables me to teach live on one side of the library and simultaneously teach virtually on the other side of the library, as well as at home or in a classroom. I am a strong proponent of the flip-curriculum model because screencasting allows me to deliver library services anywhere, anytime, encouraging students to be independent learners. I use screencasting for everything, including teaching all the great features of my MassCat catalog. I have screencasts on [how to renew](#) library books and [how to take a screenshot](#). I use it to teach lessons like [Photostory](#) and how to [check the audio controls](#) on the library computers. I use screencasting for many of my Digital Literacy Challenges (DLCs) and to teach the staff how to use the electronic grade book.

Google and Data Collection

I am a data fiend and couldn’t live without Googleforms! The previous librarian, Sheila Callahan, gave me the best advice ever. She said *document everything!* She kept records on student use of the library, and she strongly encouraged me to prepare an end of the year report to share with administrators. I now follow her advice. The reality is our library programs can only get appreciation and support if everyone (teachers, administrators, parents and students) knows what we are doing. When I can say 31,412 students walked through the doors of the library and received services last year-that’s powerful! I use Googleforms for everything from getting student [suggestions for the summer reading program](#), to [assessing my library orientation](#), to gathering information about our student’s [home computer and technology use](#). I used Google forms to collect information for our [NEASC self-study](#) and long range planning, to collect staff’s [favorite books](#) for a display, and I use it every time I provide [professional development](#).



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Independent of the technology used, there are two collaborations that have made all the difference to our website, our Grassroots Technology Group (GRTG) and my Library and Technology Student Advisory Group. I am a founding member of Pentucket's Grassroots Technology Group, and this is where I learned much of the technology that I use for the library website. We meet every Friday morning for a half hour before school; it's a group of teachers teaching teachers to use technology to improve classroom practice. One week someone presents a tool and the next week we play with the tool, and then try to use it in our teaching. The second group is my Student Library and Technology Advisory Group. We spent last year's meetings looking at exemplar library websites, and then analyzing our own website. The student perspective is crucial when creating a tool for student use.

This website is not finished; it will always be evolving as student needs evolve. I recently added a mobile library site when I realized seventy-five percent of our students own a handheld device. In five years I will think that the 2011/2012 version of the site was a beta version. Websites, like life, are journeys. The Pentucket Regional High School library website is the home for gathering and sharing, teaching and learning; it has become the tool itself. As Pentucket moves to become a Bring-Your-Own Device school, I plan to purchase more E-books to support student's new mobility, and it is obvious that I must start tracking activity on the library website, because as students no longer have to come to the physical library, I must continue to demonstrate the library's vitality.

List of electronic tools and tips

Tools and Tips	How I use the tool
NetVibes www.netvibes.com	to share everything
Jing www.jingproject.com	to teach when they are not physically present
ScreenCast www.screencast.com	to teach when they are not physically present
GoogleDocs	Google Forms to collect data
Audacity http://audacity.sourceforge.net	To record the podcast option for library orientation
italk App	To Record Research Guide audio files via my iPod touch
Evanced Book Club http://masummerreading.pbworks.com/w/page/20492325/FrontPage	Provided free by MLS for summer reading program, but I use it all year as an Online Book Club
ProProfs www.proprofs.com	for the research guide quiz

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Photostory3	Free Download, I use it for the video option for Library Orientation, but I teach this to many classes
www.edu.glogster.com	To house the whole of my library orientation, and I teach this to many classes
winksite.com	To host my mobile library site
Masscat catalog	Get an electronic catalog and link it on your website. I use ILL & the lists feature all the time.
Teach yourself to take a screenshot , and then learn to crop it in Paint	I use this every day.
If you don't have access to your library website, then find a tool that will give you access and then link that to your school website.	Keep fighting to get access to your own library website!!!! Be a pest!
Use your student Learning Management System, to improve your library's scalability. Our LMS is School Loop (\$3.75 per student each year). They have web hosting, a grade book, and student/teacher accounts including digital lockers and Loop mail.	I use the School Loop calendar feature to post library related events like my DLCs on every student and teachers portal. I use the News feed to share library related information and I use the Groups to organize our summer reading program and as a secure blogging tool, and I use the Loopmail feature to communicate with students.

Last Updated (Wednesday, 14 November 2012)

MSLA Members' Blogs

Another Course to College <http://anothercoursetocollegelibrary.blogspot.com/>

Alma Ramos-McDermott

Library Teacher and Director, Another Course to College High Schools, Brighton

The Cazzy Files <http://thecazzyfiles.wordpress.com/>

Kelly Caswell Metzger

Library Media Specialist, Dedham Middle School, Dedham

Common Cor(e)relations: Libraries, the Common Core and so much more

<http://commoncorrelations.wordpress.com/>

Nancy Riemer Kellner

Librarian, Marguerite E. Peaslee Elementary School, Northborough



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Dorchester Academy: <http://dorchesteracademylibrary.blogspot.com/>

Alma Ramos-McDermott

Library Teacher and Director, Dorchester Academy, Dorchester, MA

Reederama: Happenings at the intersection of reader and story

<http://reederama.blogspot.com/>

Jennifer Reed

Library Teacher/Instructional Tech. Specialist, Mason-Rice School, Newton

Should I Read it or Not? :

Good (and bad) books are reviewed from Young Adult to Middle School to Adult

<http://shouldireaditornot.wordpress.com/>

Alma Ramos-McDermott

Library Teacher and Director, Dorchester Academy and
Another Course to College High Schools, Dorchester

Thinking Outside the Library Box: Les pensees d'une bibliothecaire scolaire

<http://thinkingoutsidethelibrarybox.blogspot.com/>

Alissa Rosellini

Lower School Librarian, International School of Boston, Cambridge

Wandering Librarians: We read, we travel, we write about it because you weren't there

<http://wanderinglibrarians.blogspot.com/>

Arianna Lechan, co-written with Anna Jorgensen

Assistant Librarian, Dana Hall School, Wellesley