# COLLABORATION TOOLKIT

Created by the AASL/ALSC/YALSA Interdivisional Committee on School/Public Library Cooperation



erica hool Librarians **For** 





## TABLE OF CONTENTS + + + + + + +

- - Chapter<sub>1</sub>1<sup>+</sup> Getting Started

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Successful School–Public

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Continuing the Partnership + + + +

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## TOOLKIT CREATION

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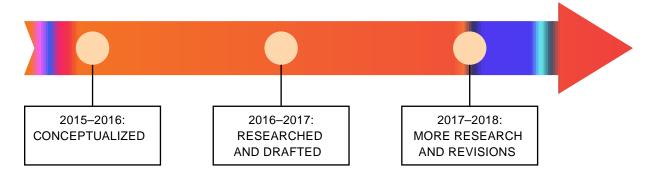
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The Public Library and School Library Collaboration Toolkit is itself an example of collaborative planning and e ort. The Interdivisional Committee on School/Public Library Cooperation (SPLC) worked for three years to create a resource useful for all librarians and library sta working with children, students, and teens.



Representatives from AASL, ALSC, and YALSA contributed to the toolkit's contents, and the boards of all three divisions provided feedback and final approval. We hope the included information and resources inspire and facilitate many types of public library and school library collaboration.

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## CHAPTER 1

# How to Initiate the Collaborative Process

In addition to communicating with counterparts, successful partner organizations also communicate internally. Regularly scheduled meetings between the school librarian and principal are a great opportunity to communicate the school's needs and strategize about ways to address them. Public library workers bene t from regularly scheduled meetings with a supervisor, as well as with other public library sta. The meetings o er an opportunity to determine goals and plans for the future. These internal meetings and communications enrich the conversations between public library workers and school librarians as they discuss collaborative projects.

Even if a collaboration cannot happen right away, school librarians and public library sta still bene t from communicating with each oth a suen pubiarn p-1.J -1.993 j4 (I b)-1.6 (e2.9 (y)0il m)H5e2.9 (y)0il mye (e)-6.1 (e)-3 (n t)15



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#### ву Donna Black, Judi Moreillon, and Mara Rosenberg

he saying "it takes a village" applies to nurturing and growing literacies in our communities. PreK–12 schools, school and public libraries, and many community-based organizations share a common mission: to promote literacies and learning and to prepare children and teens for the future. When school and public library sta collaborate to meet the needs of youth, they can increase the impact of their e orts manyfold. By building a seamless bridge for lifelong learning between school and public libraries, both can work together to help the

## RESEARCH TO SUPPORT JOINT PLANNING

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Understanding by Design, or UbD, codi ed by Grant Wiggins and Jay

## SUMMER LEARNING: A RESEARCH FOUNDATION FOR A HIGH-IMPACT OPPORTUNITY

Summer reading and learning programs present a natural opportunity for schools and public libraries to collaborate for the bene t of children. Multiple studies have shown that students can lose progress in reading and math skills over their summer breaks (McCombs 2011; Mraz and Rasinski 2007). In addition, low-income students lose more than two months in math skills and reading achievement over the summer, despite the fact that their middle-class peers make slight gains. Oxford Learning provides these sobering statistics:

- More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. As a result, low-income youth are less likely to graduate from high school or enter college.
- By the end of sixth grade, students who experience summer learning loss are an average of two years behind their peers.
- Two thirds of the income-based achievement gap is attributed to summer learning loss by the start of high school.

Education and library researchers and practitioners in the eld have identi ed summer learning loss as a problem that can be remedied through collaborative e orts. Many researchers have sought to collect summer learning data with the goal of closing the reading achievement gap between children who live in poverty and those from a uent homes. Richard Allington and Anne McGill-Franzen (2013) found the positive impact of summer learning has been most pronounced for low-income families and most particularly for kindergarten and rst-grade children. Gayle Bogel (2012) found that teachers and parents recognize that children are better prepared for the new school year when they have engaged in reading through a summer learning program.

Working together, school and public libraries can provide support and resources to all youth and their families to help prevent the learning loss also known as summer slide. A 2013 Pew Study noted that libraries can do a better job of outreach for both preschool and after-school activities (Rainie 2013). Librarians know that for many students, the public library is their source for summer learning materials (Lu and Gordon 2008). Summer learning programs that attract preschool children through high-school students t into a strategy for serving young people's year-round literacy needs.

One excellent source of research-based evidence from experimental studies and other research provides librarians and library workers with a great deal of food for thought. In the studies they cite, McGill-Franzen, Ward, and Cahill (2016) conclude that readers' interests and exercise of reading material choice both motivates and helps sustain their summer learning engagement. Free access to books and technology, as well as book ownership, are important keys to stemming summer learning loss. The researchers also conclude that adults should focus their summer learning guidance on pleasureseeking, leisure reading rather than reading for skill development.

Libraries are in a position to support summer learning. "Libraries have a mandate to intervene in public life" (Rainie 2013). When school and public library sta work collaboratively to prevent summer learning loss, they help children and youth maintain or develop their reading pro ciency. "This collaborative work has the potential to bring more children, teens, and families into both school and public libraries where they can meet their pleasure reading and information needs" (Moreillon 2014, 25).

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## DIGITAL LITERACY

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Longitudinal research studies suggest that high-quality early childhood programs help young children achieve readiness for school. "There have been two randomized studies, Carroll County, Maryland, and Pierce County, Washington, in which statistically signi cant results occurred for three (alphabetic principle, phonological awareness, and concepts about print) of the four early literacy principles when library training for childcare workers took place" (Dresang and Campana 2011, 23). How can school librarians support public library initiatives that reach out into the community to improve early childhood literacy training? How can librarians work in collaboration to improve their work to the fourth literacy principle, comprehension?

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Bringing resources into homes and classrooms presents another collaboration to support literacy learning. Library Larry's Big Day a locally produced and aired children's television show. This ve-year outreach program was produced by Denton (Texas) Public Library and

was

"I've heard a lot of talk about 'collaboration' vs. 'partnership' ... I define them both as an opportunity for the library and another organization to mutually benefit from a joint undertaking, working together to maximize the resources of both organizations and reach a goal they wouldn't be able to reach on their own."

 MAUREEN HARTMAN, HENNEPIN COUNTY (MN) LIBRARY YOUTH SERVICES COORDINATOR

McDonald, Nicola. You Can Do It: Successful Partnerships. YALS (Fall 2014).

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"We're all serving the same young people and are trying to give them our best; collaborating makes sense, helps all of us improve our service and practice, AND it's fun!"

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 MEREDITH STEINER, CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN, SAN FRANCISCO (CA) PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Our [school] visits to the public library resulted in a new excitement about the library and what is has to o er. Even students who were regular library users were introduced to areas of the library they had never visited and had a new comfort level with the facility. Students had such a positive experience that they were eager to return on their own."

 CAROL RICHMOND, WILSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARIAN, DENTON, TX (cited in Tucker and Moreillon 2015, 18)

"Keep lines of communication open about activities going on in each place; cross-promotion is great. Also, as a school librarian, I always liked to invite our youth librarians from the public library in during our special family nights and other literacy events, so our students saw them in both places."

– **JESSICA KLINKER**, HEAD LIBRARIAN, FRANKLIN HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL, COLUMBUS, OH

"Make sure there is time for the collaboration. Oftentimes there is a short deadline for one or both parties that makes a joint project too hard. It's also good to make sure that there is equal responsibility and that both parties benefit."

 EVE DATISMAN, TEACHER-LIBRARIAN (RETIRED), PORT ANGELES (WA) HIGH SCHOOL

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## CHAPTER 3

# Concrete Examples of Collaboration That Works

implement to the most time-consuming. Specific program outcomes may be explored and included in a future update of the toolkit. Many of these examples are taken from the School/Public Library Cooperative Programs page on the ALSC website (http://www.ala. org/alsc/schoolplcoop ). Check out the link for even more inspiration!

#### ASSIGNMENT ALERT PROGRAM

#### TITLE OF PROGRAM: ASSIGNMENT ALERT

#### Audience/Grade Level: K–12

Description of Program: A service provided by the Multnomah County Library School Corps (MCLSC) for teachers and school library sta working in Multnomah County schools. The MCLSC o ers services to students, teachers, and librarians in Multnomah County to help K–12 students succeed in school and improve their reading. Through Assignment Alert, teachers and school library sta II out an online form (https:// multcolib.org/assignment-alert\_\_\_\_) to share their assignments with the MCLSC librarians. They can request bibliographies and/or webliographies (annotated lists of websites) related to their topic. In addition, the MCLSC o ers classroom visits to share books, show students how to access library resources, and other literacy-related programs.

#### **Contact Information**:

Multnomah County Library 205 NE Russell Portland, OR 97212 (503) 988-6004 https://multcolib.org/contact lib.school.corps@multco.us

#### BOOK COLLECTIONS/KITS PROGRAM

TITLE OF PROGRAM: PAL PAK

Audience/Grade Level: K–8

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School liaison for Immaculate Conception School; Danbury School; Put-in-Bay School; Port Clinton City Schools Ida Rupp Public Library 310 Madison Street Port Clinton, OH 43452 (419) 732-3212 jbuch@seolibraries.org http://www.idarupp.org

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#### TITLE OF PROGRAM: BLAST (BRINGING LIBRARIES ANOs5 ( A)6 (S)9.94 Avod6

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#### Contact Information:

Deborah L. Dubois Children's Outreach Librarian Mans eld/Richland County Public Library 43 W 3rd St Mans eld, OH 44902 <u>deborah\_dubois@freenet.richland.oh.us</u> https://www.mrcpl.org/\_\_\_\_

#### STEM PROGRAMS

# TITLE OF PROGRAM: A+ PARTNERS IN EDUCATION: STEM INITIATIVE

#### Audience/Grade Level: PreK-12

**Description of Program**: The A+ STEM initiative is part of a larger, county-wide program (A+ Partners in Education) launched in 2002 by Howard County Library System (HCLS) and the Howard County Public School System, and subsequently joined by Howard County Community College. The HCLS and school systems work together to promote STEM learning, reading, and research.

School teachers and librarians invite public library instructors into their classrooms to teach a variety of courses that correspond to the school curriculum. Elementary classes include topics such as Candy Science and Everyday Engineering, while middle- and high-school students take classes as part of HCLS's HiTech initiative. (In addition to classroom visits, HCLS o ers classes housed at one of their six branches throughout the year.)

The school and public library also co-host an annual Rube Goldberg competition for fourth- and fth-graders. Students are challenged to solve a problem using STEM concepts. The challenge for participants in the 2018 competition is to II and close a container.

#### **Contact Information:**

Kelli Shimabukuro Community Education and Partnerships Coordinator Howard County Library System – Administrative Branch 9411 Frederick Road Ellicott City, MD 21042 (410) 313-7763

#### HCLS A+ Students & Teachers website:

http://hclibrary.org/new-a-main/

#### Center for Digital Education article:

http://www.centerdigitaled.com/news/STEM-Partnerships-Connect-Students-to-Schools-and-Libraries.html

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#### COMMUNITY READING PROGRAM

#### TITLE OF PROGRAM: GLOBAL READING CHALLENGE

#### Audience/Grade Level: Grades 4–5

Description of Program: The Global Reading Challenge is a collaborative Battle of the Books program between the Seattle Public Library and Seattle Public Schools. The citywide program encourages 4th- and 5th-grade children to have fun and enjoy the sp9 0 Td [( T)-4.5 (h) ( of)8 g/g13.7 20d enL.6 (e)-11.2 (a)2.8 (t)-19.4 (t)6.406 -1.474 Td [(s)ab A1.238aatta**a**vprordren s -10 Td [( T)-41 (b)-10.7 (a)-8.5 (l Re)-11.2 (a)-12.7 4ding Ch8-9.4 (a)-8.5 (ll)-7.4 (e)-14.4 (n)-9 (g)-12.7 (e is a c)2.1 4therapy and the second second

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### SYSTEMWIDE INITIATIVES

#### TITLE OF PROGRAM: LIBRARY LINX: BRINGING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY TO SCHOOLS

#### Audience/Grade Level: K–12

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**Description of Program**: Library Linx is a cooperative project between the Deschutes Public Library in central Oregon and two school districts. Students and teachers can place holds on public library materials, which are then taken to a central location for each district and delivered to schools via school courier ve days each week.

Linx schools are selected when they are able to meet certain responsibilities, including employing a regularly-scheduled media manager and creating opportunities for public library sta to speak to students and teachers each year about library services and resources.

Deschutes Public Library fully funds Library Linx, including sta time, courier delivery, and a maintenance fee for each portal. Library Linx is available in 25

#### TITLE OF PROGRAM: ONE ACCESS

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## CHAPTER 4

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BY Alexa Newman, Rachel Reinwald, and Natalie Romano

artnerships are always in ux, whether from sta changes, completed tasks, or changing initiatives. Therefore, partnerships are in constant need of evaluation and updating. This chapter discusses ways to evaluate and continue a partnership between schools and public libraries.

### **REGULAR COMMUNICATION**

After establishing a partnership, regular and two-way communication is a must. If possible, public and school librarians should meet frequently to brainstorm new projects and/or new ways to improve already-existing ones. Consider using collaboration and project-management tools to keep in touch. Some project management tools to consider include:

- Viewpath
- Slack
- Trello
- Google Docs/Sheets/Calendars/Hangouts
- Wiki sites

To extend collaborative efforts, schools can share information about upcoming events or major school projects with the public library so that they can be prepared for students coming in for specific materials. Public libraries can share information about new materials/ resources and upcoming children's and/or teen programming. They can communicate library news with parents and caregivers via a district's virtual backpack, school newsletters, parent handouts, or by presenting at a PTO/PTA meeting.

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include a monthly library newsletter, Facebook promotion of library events, or attending and making announcements at PTA or other school functions.

Manage turnover and preserve institutional knowledge regularly.

 Sta turnover often causes communication lapses between public and school librarians. Throughout the year, update the contact information for the schools served, including school library counterparts and any other notes that will help future sta in the event of a sta change.

### SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

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Integrate teachers' syllabi and curricula into conversations with your public library workers on an ongoing basis.

- Does a teacher plan to o er a book club in a few months? Your public library worker might be able to support that teacher by o ering copies of books, discussion questions, or even a physical meeting space outside the classroom for a book club to meet.
- Checking in with your public library workers on a regular basis ensures that they e ectively support you, teachers, and students with special projects throughout the school year.

Consider integrating annual public library events into the school's reading, language arts, and technology curricula.

- Each year, ALA divisions sponsor El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Children's Day/Book Day); Teen Tech Week and Teen Read Week; and Banned Books Week. ALA's initiatives align with schools' learning objectives to help students gain experience with new technologies, recognize the importance of cultural heritage and language diversity, and participate in interdisciplinary discussions in the social sciences and other subject areas.
- Work with your public librarian and library sta to discuss

program dates and how any related events can be customized to align with curriculum objectives and student outcomes. Work these into your collaborative plan by looking ahead and creating an ongoing communication plan.

Designate one contact person to keep in touch with the public librarian and library sta .

 School librarians will most likely be the contact person, but it could also be a paraprofessional sta member. Establishing one point of contact is helpful for consistency and limiting confusion.

Update the school principal about collaborative plans with the public library.

• He or she may have helpful ideas for both institutions, including working together to schedule and host school-related functions.

Form a student library advisory committee.

 Find out what your students want from their public and school libraries by inviting their input. An advisory committee is a great leadership experience for students and it is a great way to get feedback from your students.

### EVALUATING PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS

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How well is your partnership performing? Public and school librarians need to demonstrate the value and impact of their partnerships. Additionally, evaluations provide the opportunity to learn what has been successful and what has not, building these lessons into revised plans. Since most programs and partnerships are designed in response to a demonstrated need, a completed evaluation should show how the need was met and what is left to accomplish. Collaborative projects often contribute to a larger community goal and/or the library and school's mission statement. If so, a completed evaluation should illustrate how the collaborative project furthered the community and institutional goals.

Measuring outcomes clari es the purpose of a program, revealing what is working and what is not. It keeps partners focused on goals, instead of the process, and can stimulate a discussion of issues surrounding the initiative. Outcomes identify milestones and motivate sta by demonstrating the impact their work produces toward the partners' common goals. Outcomes also provide stakeholders and patrons with insight into why and how library services are used and needed. Later, the measured outcomes may help justify funding or grants.

### SETTING MEASURABLE PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

When initiating your partnership, you should set goals and objectives for your planned event or overall partnership. Questions to consider include:

What were the goals?

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- How will you know if the goals were met?
- What was your nal product?
- How did you measure the impact of the project/initiative on the chosen community?

Public and school library partnership goals are almost always studentbased, but a partnership's focus could also include teachers or families. Goals, objectives, and outcomes vary based on the type of program location, as well as external factors such as governmental/school district directives and restrictions. Speci c goals may look di erent case-by-case, but they generally answer some of the following questions:

• How did this partnership increase students' understanding of a particular lesson plan or unit in the curriculum?

- How did this partnership address a speci c student/child or family need, and was that need met?
- How did this partnership increase teachers' access to and awareness of public library resources, and how can we measure this impact on a longitudinal scale?

Both school and public library workers should be aware that the privacy of student records is of utmost importance, and rules governing access to student records will apply to school–public library partnerships. Demonstrating outcomes based on test scores, for example, may be problematic because scores are typically not available without a proper legal records release. Communicate with your school or public library contact to nd other potential sources of data to demonstrate desired program outcomes.

### sfu.04510 (an)-N ( )2.065 -1.6.9 (e wc)14.58.9 (i)8.8 (9 (p)-1.6 (e)-3 DETERMINING SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES +

Successful outcomes provide qualitative and/or quantitative evidence of the progress achieved through the partnership. Every partnership is di erent and contains di erent goals, as well as analys(er)250 erUs rfd rell s dCnshe r.022 Review o cial and uno cial school and library documents to discover what outcomes may have been reported outside of your research

- Did someone include on their monthly report that more people showed up to a certain program after your promotion of it?
- Did a teacher report that her students scored higher or showed improvement on a skill that you taught her class?

Use data collection and reporting tools

- Surveys
- · Pre- and post-test of skills, knowledge, attitude, behavior
- Success stories/anecdotes (qualitative assumptions of cause and e ect)
- · Interviews and/or focus groups of participants
- PLA's Project Outcome initiative (<u>http://publiclibrariesonline.</u> org/2015/09/project-outcome-helping-libraries-capture-theircommunity-impact/\_\_)

### DEMONSTRATING OUTCOMES

Outcomes-based evaluation is a user-centered approach to the assessment of programs and services provided in order to address particular user needs. The impact can be changes in behavior, attitude, skills and knowledge. Think about the goals you made for a collaborative school/library project or initiative:

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#### Partnership Vision

- Do partners share a common vision?
- Are partners willing to make changes to achieve shared goals?
- Are the overall vision, purpose, and goals still recognized by members?
- Have these key de nitions changed?
- If so, how was this communicated?

#### Partnership Purpose

- Why was the partnership established, and are members still clear about this (bene ts and added value)?
- Do members understand and agree to the purpose and accept its importance?

#### Partnership Work

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- Does the work of the group possess shared values and accepted principles?
- If shared values and principles are in place, has everyone agreed to them?
- Is everyone aware of the goals' principles?
- Does the group still meet the original need for its existence?
- Does the group's focus need to change?

#### Individual Roles

- Is there a clear understanding of one's own/others' roles and responsibilities?
- Have roles and responsibilities changed?
- How are changes monitored?

#### Internal Communication

- Do formal and informal communications take place?
- Is there regular communication, or con icting values/poor communication?
- · Does the partnership work in an open or closed way?

### External Communication

- Is the purpose of the group known and understood outside the partnership itself?
- Is adequate information available about the partnership and its decision?
- Is there a communication strategy? Is it e ective?
- Are outcomes communicated across the partnership and externally?

#### Outcomes

- What do individuals/organizations expect to receive from the partnership?
- Has the group agreed upon a set of outcomes?
- Is everyone aware of the outcomes?
- · How has the group measured progress against the outcomes?
- Is progress measured on a regular basis?
- Has the partnership been successful in achieving its accepted outcomes?
- What di erences have resulted from the partnership?
- Have any organizational improvements occurred after establishment of the partnership?

#### Partnership Support

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Representation

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- Does the membership of the partnership represent the right people?
- Does it fully represent target groups?

## LAST BUT NOT LEAST . . . CELEBRATE!

Another important aspect of collaboration is celebrating and publicizing successes, both small and large.

- Share events on social media: if your library has a Facebook page, blog, or Twitter or Instagram account, schedule a post. Include tags for participating organizations; ALA divisions including ALSC, AASL, and YALSA; and for speci c events such as Banned Books Week. Social media can signi cantly boost coverage of your event.
- If you held a successful family reading night, or if students take

   a eld trip to the public library, make a short presentation for
   the school board or library board to keep them up-to-date and
   remind them of the importance of school librarians and public
   libraries working together and how partnerships positively impact
   students.
- If you have been awarded a joint grant, create a press release to publicize the award and communicate your success to the community.
- Large events can be publicized in school or library newsletters as well in the community's newspapers, magazines, and on local television. If you have great pictures of an event, send them to the newspaper with prepared captions.

## OTHER COLLABORATION IDEAS

<u>Chapter 2 lists speci c, successful examples and provides program</u> details and contact information. Here are some additional ideas to further your collaborative e orts:

- Host Family Reading Night/Literacy Night
- Form a Battle of the Books program
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### NETWORKING GROUPS

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### CHAPTER 5

# Tools to Help Facilitate Collaboration

ву Robbin Friedman, Robin Gibson, Rebecca Jackman, and Katie Klein

## E-MAIL TEMPLATES

f you are new to your public or school library, or your counterpart is new, it is important to reach out as soon as possible to encourage collaboration. These e-mail templates can give you a starting point for

# INTRODUCTORY E-MAIL TEMPLATE (SCHOOL TO PUBLIC)

Dear [public librarian or administrator],

My name is [name] and I am the [your title] at [name of school].

We look forward to working with [name of public library] to support our school's students and families. In the past, we have worked together on [librarian guest readers, summer reading sign-up in schools, assignment support, book clubs etc.] I am excited to continue working together! You can learn more about the school curriculum and upcoming activities on the school website [school website URL].

We encourage our students to access [name of public library] and love to promote events at your library. You can send any events and programs you'd like us to advertise to [contact person/website] and we will be sure to spread the word. Please contact us with questions about upcoming assignments or curriculum.

I would love to meet with you to discuss the ways we can work together to support students and families. Are you available on [date] at [time]? Or is there a better date and time for you? If you have any questions, or are interested in working together, please let me know. I look forward to a productive relationship with the [name of public library].

Sincerely, [Name]

### EDUCATOR CARD APPLICATION

Many public libraries extend borrowing terms, allow larger item limits, are more exible about renewal policies, or o er other services to teachers in the community. Creating a set policy for teachers bene ts schools and allows public libraries to be consistent with school services. Educator cards may also be appropriate for tutors, educational assistants/technologists, or parents in a home-school cooperative.

[Library Name] supports your work with your students. We can set books aside on "Temporary Reserve" for your students to use in our library, or you may check them out to use in your classroom.

We o er special borrowing privileges to classroom teachers who live or work in [community]. Privileges include extended loan periods, waiving standard limits on books, and, if necessary, waiving overdue nes.

Please note: You are responsible for materials that are damaged or lost.

[Add any caveats. For example: We cannot extend these privileges to materials from other libraries. Special privileges apply only to materials used in your classroom.]

Please review the following procedures:

- 1. [Include any speci c information about checkout or materials return.
- 2. In some cases, we may need to ask you to return speci c items after the regular check out time if they are in demand.
- 3. Notify us if you change schools or move, so that we have the correct information.

My signature con rms that I agree to abide bo11.2 (b)-13.7 (e c)2.1 (e)-10.3 (s:)]TJ (m)-83.1 (o)-11.1 (n)-5.9 (s)1

### BOOK SETS

Public and school libraries often have multiple copies of books for use in book discussions by teachers or the general public. Consider keeping a list of those titles, including the number of copies available, on your website for teachers and facilitators to identify books for their students or groups. If you have discussion questions available or can access questions provided by the publishers, consider o ering those with your sets.

The library owns classroom sets ( or multiple copies) of a number of titles ideal for book discussion groups or classroom study. Please nd a list online ( or below). Please complete and submit this form if you would like to borrow multiple copies of a title at a time. We will need one week [ or however long it will take materials. Post forms on both the public library website and on the school website to maximize use.

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Public librarians are eager to collaborate with teachers and school librarians. Having advance notice of an assignment helps us better prepare for students, manage material loans, and plan purchases. We can also provide materials for teachers

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### COLLABORATIVE PLANNING FORMS

Once school and public libraries have identi ed a collaborative project, the next step is to work out the logistics. These sample documents can help answer questions about everyone's objectives and expectations and keep the project proceeding smoothly. Sample forms can be found on the next three pages.

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# School–Public Library Collaborative Planning Form SAMPLE 2

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PREPARATION	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b> (indicate responsibilities of one or both collaborators)

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