

Collaboration Between School and Public Libraries Best Practices



This best practices document was developed to encourage communication between public and school librarians, improve patron services and promote respect and understanding between librarians and other community stakeholders.

Opportunities for collaboration

School literacy events
Back to school events
School library orientation classes
Public library reading programs
Author visits to schools or public libraries
Teacher appreciation events

Teacher Librarian Best Practices

- Call your local public library and introduce yourself to the youth services librarian.
- Notify your principal that there will be collaboration going on between your library and the public library.
- Monitor teacher projects within your building (through emails, RSS feeds, face-to-face meetings, etc.) and inform public librarians of large projects which might require the use of their materials. Depth and breadth of these projects should be provided so that public librarians can assist with homework help as necessary.
- Monitor local and county public library events and publicize these within your school by making (or distributing) flyers, posting to an internal website or other means to promote these events.
- Invite public librarians to district meetings when the topic might be beneficial for cooperation between them or pass along pertinent information from these meetings when it seems appropriate. The beginning of each school year would be ideal.
- Keep public librarians updated on the leveled reading methods used in your school and available Accelerated Reading tests (if applicable).

Public Children's / Youth Services Librarian Best Practices

- Contact teacher librarians in your area. Introduce yourself and express a willingness to collaborate.
- Provide information and marketing materials for public library reading programs to school libraries.
- Notify local teacher librarians of grade appropriate library events and provide marketing materials for them to distribute when requested.
- Publicize noteworthy literacy events to be held at local schools.
- Offer to share booklists with teacher librarians for distribution to their teachers and students and assist in creating specialized lists when requested.
- Offer to provide in-school or in-library programs (such as book talks, library tours, author visits, etc.).

Administration and Association Best Practices

- ULA / UELMA should encourage their members to belong to, attend, and participate in annual meetings as they are able. If members are unable to attend, they should be directed to content that has been saved on the appropriate organization's website or send a representative who can report at the next staff meeting.
- Webmasters for these entities post lists of both public and teacher librarians and their contact information.
- State Children's and Youth Services Coordinators encourage cooperation between all types of librarians and pass on any helpful or relevant information pertaining to this topic.
- School Library Media Supervisors encourage collaboration between these types of libraries and invite a public librarian or representative from the public library system to district meetings when appropriate.
- School Principals, Public Library Directors and Branch Library Managers encourage collaboration between school and public libraries by providing support, resources and work time whenever possible.

Spring 2011