

The Librarian's Role in the School Technology Program

The Librarian is an invaluable member of the group developing the school's technology program because the Librarian, as the school's information specialist, has expertise in the area of information management, selection, storage, searching, retrieval and evaluation; has the experience of integrating technology into the library program; and has information literacy as a primary goal of the library's instructional program and a fundamental set of skills and strategies for students to acquire. LIBRARIANS are administrators who develop and manage library collections by

- collaborating with teachers on ways that the library and its services can support the curriculum;
- securing and managing electronic resources and services which support the curriculum and student learning;
- evaluating, selecting, and managing the technology through which information and ideas are available in a number of formats.

LIBRARIANS are teachers who integrate technology into the library program by

- preparing students and teachers to be independent learners in an era of rapid technological change through classes and through staff development programs;
- teaching students the process of gathering information from print and electronic sources;
- teaching students that the process of gathering information is as important as the information itself, that the means of gathering determines the quality, and that there are ethical issues involved in the gathering process;
- teaching students to create a comprehensive search strategy that moves logically through varied resources from print to electronic;
- teaching students how to evaluate and cite the information they've acquired;
- instructing students about academic honesty within the context of the new technology;

- teaching students Internet searching techniques including narrowing a search and using keywords to find information, then to analyze, synthesize and use the information.

LIBRARIANS teach information literacy, a part of the school's total instructional program,

- helping students to learn how to choose and evaluate information whether it's acquired from books, from on-line data bases, or through the Internet. The Internet offers expanded, global access to secondary and primary sources including students' contacting experts through e-mail or having greater access to primary/full text materials.

Because information literacy is essential to modern education and is a stated mission of the library program, the Librarian needs to be part of the school technology team. "To promote the full integration of information literacy and content learning, the school library media specialist also participates on curriculum and technology committees throughout the school. As an educational leader and as an equal partner of the instructional staff, the library media specialist collaborates in curriculum development and technology planning at all levels to promote information literacy's central place in the curriculum."¹

An important book that includes ways to plan for appropriate technology in the school curriculum, to assess the impact of technology on learning, to build and evaluate information literacy, and to support teacher-librarian collaboration is *Reinvent Your School's Library in the Age of Technology* by David Loertscher, ISBN 0-931510-6904. (DavidL@csn.net)

¹American Association of School Librarians. *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1998.

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