Patricia Cozza

The Five Aspects of Collection Development

The main focus of collection development is to provide a collection that supports the educational objectives of the school, students and faculty. The development of the collection is facilitated by the school librarian. The Lance study in 1999 found, “The mere presence of a large collection of books, magazines, ad newspapers in the school library is not enough to generate high levels of academic achievement by students. Such collections only make a positive difference when they are part of school-wide initiatives to integrate information literacy into the school’s approach to standards and curricula. Rich collections of information resources can only help to improve the learning environment if the school librarian is in the position to mobilize them to that end” (Lance)

The foundation for a well rounded collection is based on the following criteria. First, curriculum assessment is necessary to determine areas curricular need. Curriculum mapping by content area teachers provides an easy resource to make determinations based on individual needs and the standards addressed. Although, mapping can be time consuming and tedious it provides the necessary information to make decisions based on curricular needs.

The next criteria to collection development is the collection assessment. Data collected by the librarian through various means provides and accurate picture of the health of the collection. Specific data, such as, age of collection or section, circulation records, and physical assessment of materials provides librarians with the tools to determine the specific needs of the collection. This data can be utilized to make administrative budget requests and set long range goals for collection development. Data maybe generated in-house with the library circulation system or by outside vendor tools, such as Follett’s Titlewave. ([www.titlewave.com](http://www.titlewave.com))

After areas of need are determined the selection process begins. A comprehensive selection process requires the development of a collection development policy that outlines specific information on who, what, when and how the development will take place. A good collection development policy provides for all potential questions that could arise from the selection process. When making selections it is important to spend district funds wisely. Aspects of quality and value for the dollar are very important. Professional resources, such as School Library Journal or Titlewave, should be utilized to provide the selector with material reviews, awards, bindings and price. These resources are utilized to make the most prudent purchases possible.

Weeding or deselection allows materials to be removed from the collection based on wear, accuracy and circulation. Some of the above factors allow for an informed weeding process. Materials that do not meet the student or teachers needs should be removed.

Acquisition of selected resources now depends on funding. Librarian’s informed with data can accurately state objectives for the need of budgetary funds to supplement the curricular needs. This data provides an accurate picture of the collection’s health and the ability to meet the needs of the school. When funds are procured, materials can be ordered, processed and quickly placed in the hands of the students and teachers.

Presentation of new acquisitions is important in getting these items to those who need them most. It is important to promote the new materials and how they supplement the curricular needs of the school. Sharing new acquisitions with faculty shows how the library is ready to support their individual needs. When teachers are aware of what is available the more the resources will be utilized. Providing teachers with materials and suggested usages help build the bridge of collaboration.

The foundation of a strong collection development program will enhance the library experience for all users.

Works Cited

Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. *Measuring up to the Standards: Findings*. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2000. *ERIC* (*Education Resources Information Center)*. Web. 29 Apr. 2010. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/‌ERICWebPortal/‌custom/‌portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?\_nfpb=true&\_&ERICExtSearch\_SearchValue\_0=ED446770&ERICExtSearch\_SearchType\_0=no&accno=ED446770>.