

PLAN OF SERVICE 2006 - 2011

SOUTHERN WESTCHESTER BOCES SCHOOL LIBRARY SYSTEM

COOPERATIVE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

DEFINITION

“Cooperation coordination or sharing in the development and management of collections by libraries making an agreement for this purpose.”

Collection development and management is: “The process of acquiring materials, developing collections, managing the growth and maintenance of collections in a cost- and user-beneficial way. The functions of collection planning, analysis or evaluation, selection, effective procurement of materials, review of collections for preservation, storage, discard and other functions designed to make library collections as useful and effective as possible, are included.”

(ALA, Guide to Coordinated and Cooperative Collection Development Among Libraries)

DISCUSSION

Referencing the above definitions to the framework of School Library Systems and its participants, collection development is the acquisition and maintenance of collections of materials by local school libraries which meet the needs of the person they are intended to serve. It is enhanced by agreements between and among these libraries to cooperatively acquire and maintain materials which are not available at the individual level and are needed by their collective clientele.

The emphasis in this definition is on responding to identified needs for materials, not on collecting materials for the purpose of covering all fields of knowledge. Improved access to library collections, while not a cooperative collection activity in and of itself, is critical to the effectiveness of any cooperative collection development plan.

It is commonly accepted that school libraries cannot satisfy user needs with local resources alone – they must be part of a network. However, library networks are only as effective as the resources available through each of its participating members. The strength of a network then depends largely on what each library owns or services it provides and is willing to make available to others.

As specified in Education Law 283 and Commissioner Regulations 90.18 the Southern Westchester BOCES School Library System continues to examine and analyze the

resource sharing needs (of its participants) that can be effectively met through a viable local and regional Cooperative Development Plan.

SCOPE

All participants in the Southern Westchester BOCES School Library System are invited to participate.

School libraries hold a unique place in the world of libraries. Their primary function is to support the informational needs of a varied and diverse school community including students, faculty and in turn their extended learning community. Through resource sharing on a System-wide basis, patrons have access to specialized collections.

Participation in cooperative collection development provides a larger pool of materials to meet the needs of patrons as well as enhancing professional development opportunities for school librarians as they manage their local collections.

GOALS

Cooperative collection development fosters an environment in which:

- libraries develop strong collections based on individual needs and requirements,
- libraries identify areas for resource sharing,
- the resources necessary for research are available to patrons as needed, and
- acquisitions become more economical and cost-effective due to the elimination of expensive duplication.

SCHOOL LIBRARY SYSTEM RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide the means for data collection
- Work with the Cooperative Collection Development Committee in soliciting input for revisions that meet the needs of our members
- Provide information and updates to School Library System participants on the status of the revised Cooperative Collection Development Plan
- Inform School Library System Council members periodically on the status of the Cooperative Collection Development Plan
- Provide staff development for collection development, assessment and use of specialized collections of library resources
- Oversee the implementation of the revised Plan including use of appropriate technologies
- Evaluate the revised Plan in meeting the resource sharing needs of School Library System participants

PARTICIPATING SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assume professional responsibility for participating in Cooperative Collection Development
- Continue to acquire a balanced collection of materials to support the district's curricula and meet recognized national and state standards
- Assess collection for strengths and weakness in all subject areas through collection analysis
- Identify up to three (3) specialty areas whose collection strengths support in-depth learning
- Continue to enhance these collections through professional judgment and selection
- Work with the Cooperative Collection Development Committee to publicize these materials through the appropriate technologies
- Make the collection available to other libraries through interlibrary loan
- Notify the School Library System if unable to continue with Cooperative Collection Development commitment
- Maintain statistics as required

IMPLEMENTATION

Our previous Cooperative Collection Development Plan, which focused on periodicals and serials, did not meet the current needs of our participants. The proliferation and depth of various online databases that concentrate on periodicals and serials has made the collection of this information obsolete on a local level. In addition many of the original participants no longer subscribed to or maintained periodical and/or serial collections.

The Cooperative Collection Development Plan for this current time period will continue to focus on specialized and/or subject collections. The School Library System Council in its discussions has determined that the identification of specialized and/or subject collections (both print and non-print) that support the curricula would be of benefit to all participants. Criteria for a library to be designated as having a subject and/or specialized collection is being re-evaluated by the Cooperative Collection Development Committee and includes electronic collection analysis.

Rather than listing the specialized collections on the School Library System's home page, the Council has decided to specify a local field in a specific MARC tag in the Union Catalog to contain this information. By designating the Union Catalog as the holder of this information, the Council is stressing the importance of the Union Catalog as a resource sharing tool. The ease of interlibrary loan through OPALS software also enhances the status of the Union Catalog in Cooperative Collection Development.

The School Library System Council continues to discuss the value of e-books as a cooperative resource sharing activity. The technology and infrastructure has progressed so that a pilot project involving multiple locations is quite feasible. The Council, with

input from the Committee and School Library System participants, will ascertain the practicality of such an undertaking.

The use of wikis and blogs will also be investigated to ascertain whether this technology has an appropriate place in Cooperative Collection Development.

EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the Cooperative Collection Development Plan will be measured by:

- the number of school libraries participating in the Plan;
- questionnaires to provide feedback on the Plan;
- the ability to adopt emerging technologies, if appropriate, into the delivery of service; and
- the ability to respond to the changing needs of school libraries as influenced by economic conditions which is reflected in the guidelines and criteria of the Plan.