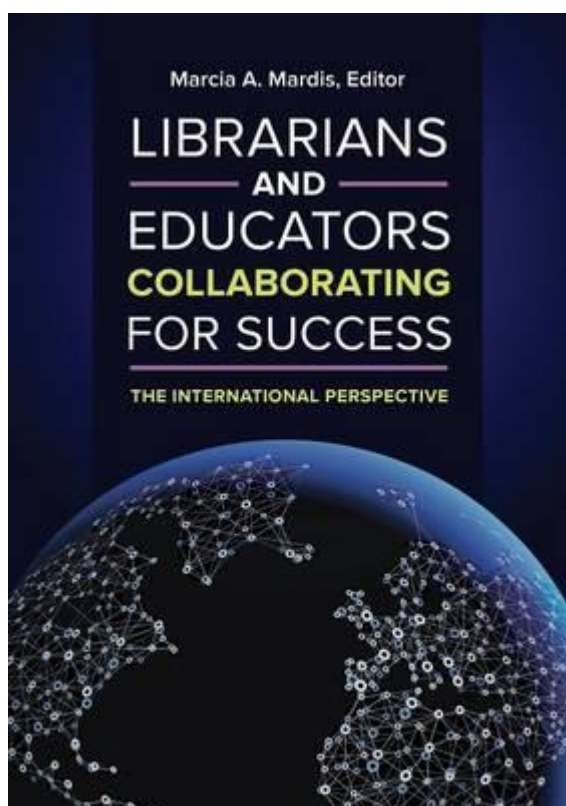


Reviews

Librarians and Educators Collaborating for Success: The International Perspective

Mardis, Marcia A. (Editor) (2017)
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This excellent book is the first in a series focusing on international perspectives of school libraries. A joint initiative of Libraries Unlimited and the IASL Publications Advisory Committee, the purpose is to review the finest global research on teacher-librarian collaboration and to provide evidence of teacher-librarian collaboration with teachers. Best practices for uptake in other libraries and schools and an international viewpoint on the role of school libraries are established, as part of collaborative cultures from which students benefit and learn.

Librarians and Educators Collaborating for Success: The International Perspective is organised clearly, in five comprehensive sections relating to collaboration:

- Considering stakeholder roles
- Collaboration in a digital environment
- Collaboration models to meet diverse needs
- Evaluating collaboration and discovering best practices
- Excellence in pre-professional preparation.

Each section has a preface and three relevant research articles, written by practitioners, all of whom have a wealth of experience and have made rich contributions to the field of school librarianship.

In the first section, 'Considering Stakeholder Roles', the researchers examine collaborative relationships amongst students, parents, teachers and administrators. In the section overview, Blanche Woolls and David Loertscher recast the school library as a learning commons which, through collaborative group work, encourages students to adopt and continue lifelong learning. The first research paper in this section, 'An International Study on Principal Support of School Libraries: Synergy in Themes and Methods' is written by James Henri, Lyn Hay and Dianne Oberg. Skilfully, this article outlines the findings of research conducted in seven countries – Australia, Canada, Scotland, Finland, France, Japan and South Korea – which reinforce the importance of teacher-librarians and principals communicating the collaborative, instructional role of the teacher-librarian with classroom teachers. In the following decade 2003-2014, seven studies from Japan and the USA reconfirmed many of the findings from the international study reported in 2001.

Although principals endorse the role of the teacher-librarian as a teacher of information literacy skills and as an instructional team member, there may be uncertainty and inconsistency in principal support for some important aspects of school library instruction. Such concerns include addressing multiple literacies, modelling an inquiry-based approach to learning and research skills and developing policies, procedures and guidelines that promote, throughout the school, equitable access to ideas and information.

In Section One, the second research article, 'Principals' Perspectives of School Librarians' is written by Donna Shannon who poses three main research questions: What criteria do principals use in hiring a school librarian? What competencies are considered important? What are the satisfaction levels of principals with the work of their current school librarian? Methodologies, research findings, discussions and implications together with the research conclusions are included for the three papers, as is a note on any previous publication of each article followed by a detailed reference list.

Presented in Section One is a research paper of Ross Todd and Carol Kuhlthau 'Student Learning Through Ohio School Libraries, Part 2: Faculty Perceptions of Effective School Libraries' (2005). The aim therein is to identify how school faculties perceived and provided evidence that their school library assisted students with their learning. Again, detail of research objectives, survey methodology, results, conclusion and references are outlined.

Ruth Small's overview in Section Two, relates to collaboration in a digital environment, whereby students work in groups within a multidisciplinary group teacher setting, on eight genre pieces based on their topic. The first research article follows, written by Marlene Asselin who demonstrates how teacher-librarians in Canada can uniquely support digital literacy programs in schools. Although literacy will continue to change, there is a need for leadership and research in new literacy learning outcomes, assessment and evaluation of all aspects of literacies related to digital technologies. A second article by Ruth Small and the last paper in this section, by Jennifer Branch-Mueller and Joanne de Groot, describe how digital environments encourage competence, creativity and community in new information profession graduates.

The three research articles in Section Three, 'Collaboration Models to Meet Diverse Needs' commences with Audrey Church's overview, exploring five models of collaboration and two contexts where teacher-librarian collaboration may occur. Three other valuable papers follow on social inclusion in the school library, information ecology or changes in information use and the teacher-librarian as a 'collaborative planning broker'.

Meghan Harper contends that collaboration needs to start and finish with an assessment of learning outcomes. This contention introduces Section Four, 'Evaluating Collaboration and Discovering Best Practices'. Following the set pattern and layout, there are various research articles on evaluating and assessing collaborative endeavours in school library programs. By this means, teacher-librarians demonstrate the value of the library services they provide to the school community, encompassing yet broader aims than primarily academic achievement.

The final theme section, 'Excellence in Pre-Professional Preparation' has an overview written by Ken Haycock who emphasises the importance of informal staff development and collaboration with classroom teachers for student learning. School library educators need to prepare their graduate students well in these joint practices.

The depth and breadth of the fifteen research articles and five section overviews are certainly impressive in their comprehensive and detailed nature. The text is duly scholarly and academic; global in scope and written by a stunning array of practitioners and research contributors. *Librarians and Educators Collaborating for Success: The International Perspective* is an outstanding compendium of research on teacher-librarian collaboration. The profession can look forward to other titles in the series, as this first title is exemplary.

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