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Evaluation and Assessment *for* Learning

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Evaluation and assessment are pathways to transformation. Effective school librarians and librarian supervisors apply evaluation and assessment tools to transform learning outcomes, teaching practices, and library services. These "tools of the trade" provide school librarians with opportunities to adjust and improve, and, ultimately, innovate, their practices with new and better strategies to serve the needs of their learning communities. Evaluation and assessment are the ways school librarians determine how well they are doing in meeting their goals, in what areas they are strong, and in what areas they can focus further improvement efforts.

Today's educational decision-makers are paying more attention to the inputs provided by learning environments, resources, and educators' expertise. Evaluation and assessment hold adults accountable for improving learning environments, learning opportunities, and learning outcomes. The concept of assessment *for* learning (Stiggins and Chappuis 2012) focuses on deepening understanding and improvement rather than on meeting a standardized, sometimes high-stakes, target. Assessments imply that the topics, behaviors, or tasks under investigation are in progress and that interventions can still be enacted to improve outcomes; assessments are formative. Evaluations tend to be summative and conducted at the end of a learning event, a term of employment, or a change in process. Evaluation is often used to compare facilities, resources, learners, or school librarians and other educators to standards of excellence and achievement. Applied in the library setting, evaluation and assessment *for* learning place the emphasis on the learner, school librarian, and library.

Leading change based on data is a way to build credibility for change-makers and to gain support from decision-makers for the improvements under consideration. The feature articles in this issue focus on how school librarian leaders are using assessment and evaluation to support change processes in their districts and schools. Each author has identified a specific "problem" to address or solve. Each author has analyzed the problem and implemented changes the author believes will result in improved outcomes. Finally, every author has determined ways to evaluate these changes to ensure that library services and teaching have indeed become more effective as a result.

District librarian and technolibrarian Carolyn Foote in Eanes (TX) Independent School District near Austin set out to evaluate library spaces in her district. Carolyn's goal was to ensure that updating school library facilities would be included in an upcoming bond initiative. Taking a collaborative approach, Carolyn first formed a district-level library advisory committee that included learners, educators, school librarians, technologists, administrators, and community members. She shared information with the committee about how school libraries could be configured to best support future ready learning and teaching. She developed a rubric that the team used when they visited every school in the district. After analyzing data, Carolyn and the library advisory

committee communicated recommendations for each school library to building-level principals and central office administrators.

Working with two other Beaverton, Oregon, district-level librarian leaders, Jenny Takeda developed a school library collection evaluation tool designed to collect data that could be presented to administrators. The goal was to advocate for equitable library budgets across the school district to ensure that all learners and educators in the district had access to high-quality library resources. Jenny designed and aligned the evaluation tool with AASL's "School Library Evaluation Checklist" found in the *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*. In her article, Jenny offers links to resources, tools, and examples that other site- and district-level librarians can adapt and use to advocate for equity and quality in their school library collections.

In her role as specialist for libraries in the Calvert County (MD) Public Schools, Jennifer Sturge set out to create the conditions in which elementary school librarians in her district could take steps toward collaboration between classroom teachers and school librarians. By working with school principals and other administrators, Jen was able to help schools that were ready to move toward a flexible schedule and collaborative model. Her goal—and the goal of her collaborators—was to ensure that learners could engage in increasingly effective and relevant, just-in-time learning facilitated by classroom-library coteaching. In her article, Jen shares testimonials from administrators and the lessons learned as bright spots of exemplary practice are leading the way toward positive change in Calvert County.

Misti Werle is the library coordinator for Bismarck (ND) Public Schools. She has been focusing professional development for librarians in her district on the distinctions among cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. Misti co-developed a "Levels of Library Services and Instructional Partnerships" self-assessment rubric to help school librarians analyze their practice. In the collaboration category, Bismarck librarians are using the rubric to guide and measure their role in coteaching project-based learning. Their goal is to improve learning while seamlessly integrating curriculum content and library standards. In this article, Misti, school librarian Kat Berg, and sixth-grade English language arts educator Jenni Kramer share their perspectives on their learning and implementation of classroom-library coteaching.

I wrap up the feature articles with a close look at the types of assessment and evaluation strategies school librarians can use as they coteach inquiry learning. When forming instructional partnerships with other educators, librarians co-plan, co-implement, and co-assess learning outcomes. Coteachers use various formative assessments to monitor learners' progress, and provide timely, specific, and actionable feedback. Coteachers also use these data to adjust instruction during the inquiry process. At the conclusion of inquiry learning, learners use summative assessments to evaluate their achievement and to reflect on their experience. Coteachers analyze, evaluate, and reflect on the effectiveness of their instruction and the support the school library collection provided learners.

It has been said in education that what is considered "important" gets measured and what gets measured gets done. As demonstrated by the articles in this issue, evaluation and assessment can be used to determine the quality of inputs such as facilities, resources, and practices, as well as the proficiency of learners, educators, and school librarians. The authors in this issue have taken a collaborative approach to design and administer assessment tools, collect and analyze data, and make decisions informed by evidence. They are using data to evaluate and improve library learning environments, resources, instructional practices, and learning outcomes. As you read, we invite you to consider how you are currently assessing and evaluating your practice and how you can develop strategies to use data for continuous improvement in your library.

Judi Moreillon *is a literacy and libraries consultant and a Lilead Project mentor. A former school librarian and retired school librarian educator, she is the author of four professional books published by ALA, three of which focused on classroom-library coteaching reading comprehension strategies. Judi's most recent book is* Maximizing School Librarian Leadership: Building Connections for Learning and Advocacy *(ALA 2018). Among other publications, she contributed the literacy chapter in* The Many Faces of School Library Leadership *(Libraries Unlimited 2017). A twenty-eight-year ALA/AASL member, she blogs at SchoolLibrarianLeadership.com, tweets @CactusWoman, and administers the Maximizing School Librarian Leadership Facebook Group.*

Work Cited:

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