

Philosophy of School Library Service

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I believe there are two main aspects of the media specialist profession, each warranting an individual philosophy. One is for education and the other for the media center and its resources. Though intertwined, teaching and resources have specific focuses that I prefer to address independently.

Teaching

I believe that teaching involves the whole child from motivation, cognitive processing, to classroom management. For learning to occur, I need to help students meet their basic needs such as safety, acceptance, and autonomy. It is difficult for anyone to learn in an unsettled environment. The goal for me is to create a community of trust between students, their peers, and instructors where we all learn. I need to build a positive relationship with the students to manage the classroom with consistency and positive discipline (Wong, 1998, p. 82). For instance, greeting students as they come in to the classroom each day lets them see how important they are to me. I can use non-controlling language like please and teach students to self-regulate because they know what to do from the rules, procedures and routines (Wong, 1998, p. 84). I want to involve students in creating classroom rules and procedures to show acceptance of their opinions as well as grant them ownership in the process. I also believe it is important to be an active listener of their concerns and difficulties. I can use different interventions for classroom management. I use simple methods such as i-messages to complex ideas like one-on-one problem solving conferences. I will be prepared with first day and every day strategies to help create a safe orderly classroom. In my library community, I want the students to be involved and thus responsible for their learning. I can encourage involvement by showing them my enthusiasm, interest and passion about teaching and learning. I will use tone, facial expressions, and movement around the classroom during lectures. I also will engage students in the lesson by relating information to their interests so they see the material as important. I will seek their ideas on the material so I am not dictating information in lecture form.

I believe students learn where investigations lead to answers rather than encouraging memorization. I will set up activities where students discover answers, help advance learning, critical thinking and cognition development. I will plan lessons with strategies and activities to support students' diversity via scaffolding aids for complex tasks and supportive feedback.

Diversity involves different features of a classroom community. Diversity includes exceptional student differences, cultural influences, gender, and others. I will mix students' group arrangements for certain situations such as high and low group arrangements. I have found many resources that help with lesson planning. From websites such as "Read Write Think" created by the International Reading Association (IRA) and National Council of Teachers (NCT) to teaching methods like the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model that provides scientifically based teaching methods. I also see that collaborating with other teachers with a lesson or with suggestions on management will improve on my effectiveness and results.

Media Center

I believe the media center should provide students, faculty, staff, and parents with access to information in a variety of formats to meet diverse needs. As a media specialist, I will select materials based on the needs of the community regardless of my personal opinions. The collection should be diverse and allow patrons to see themselves in the library via the material. This will help make them feel welcome and promote their lifelong learning. This goal is very important to me. I read a story once of a person that only became an avid reader after entering college because it was the first time they found a book that reflected their beliefs. I strongly feel a need to promote intellectual freedom and protect each patron's right to read. I believe that media centers should work toward enhancing student achievement by creating an environment for learning. One way is through collaboration with teachers to integrate information literacy skills into the classroom. As a media specialist, I will connect the media program beyond the library walls into the local learning community to promote lifelong learning. For example, I

can work with the local public library and bookmobiles to educate the community about these resources and assure access to material all year long. I can also work to have shared resources that my community might need but the media center does not currently own.

I will be an approachable media specialist and will be interested, and involved with patron needs so that I can help promote reading and learning. As a media aid, I found this important and accomplish this goal by not straying behind my desk but being proactive and talking to all patrons about their needs. Just as a teacher should greet students, as a media specialist, I also greet patrons to make them feel welcome. I even have found ways to help students remember to return late books making them feel good about the process.

In closing, I will stay current with information literacy and trends on all media and technology. I can accomplish this remaining active in professional organizations such as Young Adult Library Services Association and the Florida Association for Media Education. I also want to be an active member since it will benefit my library and my own professional development to stay involved in professional organizations. I will also read articles in magazines like School Library Journal and connect to my colleagues via LM_NET to stay informed with research solutions. I have personally seen how helpful and encouraging it is to discuss strategies and concerns with peers, teachers, and volunteers in the community.

Reference

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