

School Librarian Role in Pandemic Learning Conditions

LEARNING CONDITIONS	School Librarian as Instructional Partner	School Librarian as Teacher	School Librarian as Leader	School Librarian as Information Specialist	School Librarian as Program Administrator
<p>Face-to-Face Learning Learners are in school but social distancing measures are in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with educators to develop and co-teach PBL/Inquiry research Curate and provide SEL resources for student learning and educator self-care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble targeted resource lists for educators and parents that are regularly updated and aimed at specific age groups or needs Continue to instruct students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with administrators, educators, parents/caregivers and community members, proactively responding to evolving needs Participate in educator professional learning communities to provide differentiated learner resources and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen for and assess community needs to support the school curriculum, school culture, and social and emotional needs Ensure provided resources are diverse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage the impact of social distancing requirements, including library capacity, seating arrangements, traffic flow (enter/exit, stack access, catalog kiosk, circulation), and library access Develop procedures for safe handling of materials
<p>Blended Learning Learning is taking place alternately at home and in school, with some learners choosing only distance learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create, curate, and make available appropriate instructional videos and online resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach learners how to use digital platforms and resources Collaborate to help to ensure needs of at risk/vulnerable students are being met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to ensure equity and learner access to the internet Offer PD for legal compliance for copyright, COPPA, FERPA, and the TEACH Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide educators with targeted videos or resource lists highlighting key databases or electronic resources appropriate for their curriculum or age group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze budget impact of potential needs, exploring potential grants Develop procedures for returned materials
<p>Distance Learning Learners are required to learn from home with no face-to-face contact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with school educators to design and teach student orientation Support and provide PD to orient educators to digital resources, platforms, and librarian collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the impact of learning loss and share research and strategies for mitigating Explore and share methods of engaging all learners in online discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with educators to promote research-based ways to engage disengaged and vulnerable (EL/SPED, primary grade, new) learners Provide technical support for learners and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curate high quality digital resources, including free Open Educational Resources (OER), considering appropriate assistive technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with public library to promote their resources Curate list of community resources and partners and investigate potential partnerships to serve learners and their families



School Librarian Role in Pandemic Learning Conditions

School librarians fulfill five important roles: *instructional partner, teacher, leader, information specialist, and program administrator*, all of which highlight our profession's skill at building relationships and creating an inclusive school culture. During the COVID-19 pandemic, schools need this librarian skill set more than ever as they adapt to meet the current needs of learners in a constantly changing learning environment.

Most school plans address one or all three general models (face-to-face, blended learning, distance learning), based on their area's current experience with the pandemic. Proactive preparation by school librarians accounts for the differences of these models; these five roles can maintain school librarian visibility while reminding our community that we serve *all* our students, including the most vulnerable and at risk.

TYPES OF LEARNING CONDITIONS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Learning Conditions: Face-to-Face: In-person learning must accommodate local social distancing requirements, reduced learner movement, the elimination of extracurricular activities and sports, and drastically stepped up cleaning.

Challenges: The school library physical space may be annexed as an instructional space for regular classes, altering the use and function of the library; access to physical materials are altered; classroom educators may not have the mental space to collaborate on innovative projects when focusing on crucial content.

Opportunities: Online book clubs and other recreational reading programs meet the needs of learners with more free time; building relationships with educators using the library space for regular classes; innovative book delivery programs to learners.

Learning Conditions: Blended Environment: The blended learning environment encompasses schools adopting days on/days off models or face-to-face learning for some learners while medically impacted or quarantining students learn from home.

Challenges: A blended environment of some face-to-face learning and distance learning places unique demands as school librarians, like all educators, juggle in-person and online instruction and feedback; classroom educators may feel so overwhelmed in lesson preparation that they reduce collaboration.

Opportunities: School librarians can offer crisis technology help as well as professional development on technology platforms while also touting databases and other quality electronic sources; showcasing our ability to collect and analyze data through special committees collecting stakeholder data and feedback places school librarians “in the room where it happens.”

Learning Conditions: Distance Learning: Distance learning requires learners learn fully from home, with no in-person contact.

Challenges: The restriction of learner access to resources and decreased visibility/impact of the school library and library programming become the primary concern of school librarians during distance learning; administrators may tie the school librarian’s work to the physical space of the library, devaluing their other roles and not seeing them as a crucial resource in an online environment.

Opportunities: Reach out to public libraries and other community organizations to combine efforts for a greater impact; think outside the box to meet your learner needs; set up regular communication channels to educators and to parents to highlight resources.

SCHOOL LIBRARIAN ROLES: PLAN BY PLAN

Below are topics that the school librarian may consider based on each role and the specific learning conditions. Please refer to the chart for a quick jumping off point for a conversation with administrators and other decision makers about how the school librarian can help under any and every learning scenario.

School Librarian as Instructional Partner - When faced with drastically different learning conditions, educators and students respond with increased stress levels. School librarians can support our colleagues and student learning by:

- Face-to-Face Learning
 - Offering examples of research projects and supporting materials that can flip between in-person and distance learning
 - Highlighting social-emotional learning (SEL) resources to stressed educators to support self-care and student learning
- Blended Learning
 - Preparing ready-made electronic instruction for research projects that educators can deploy in the physical classroom or online

- Distance Learning
 - Collaborating with school educators to design student orientation
 - Supporting and orienting educators to digital resources, platforms, and librarian collaboration

AASL RESOURCES

Sturge, Jennifer. 2020 "School Libraries and UDL in the Time of Learning from Home." *Knowledge Quest* (June 2). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/school-libraries-and-udl-in-the-time-of-learning-from-home>

Tetreault, Steve. 2020. "Pandemic Journals: A Case Study in Online Lesson Collaboration." *Knowledge Quest* (April 03). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/pandemic-journals-a-case-study-in-online-lesson-collaboration>

School Librarian as Teacher - School librarians can model effective classroom teaching strategies by:

- Face-to-Face Learning
 - Assembling targeted resource lists for teachers and parents that are regularly updated and aimed at specific age groups or needs
- Blended Learning
 - Developing learner expertise in the technical aspects of required digital learning platforms
 - Collecting and promoting strategies to address differentiated instruction (handling Individualized Education Programs (IEP), special needs learners)
- Distance Learning
 - Considering how to provide instruction and services to learners whose parents choose only remote learning if a hybrid model is in place
 - Offering a primer or infographic of tips for communicating digitally or using the school's specific videoconferencing platform
 - Investigating the impact of learning loss and sharing research and strategies for mitigation
 - Exploring and sharing methods of engaging all learners in online discussion

AASL RESOURCES

Ellis, Leanne. 2020 "Pandemic Preparedness for School Libraries." *Knowledge Quest* (March 27). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/pandemic-preparedness-for-school-libraries>

Greenberg, Karin. 2020. "Tips for Recording Digital Book Talks." *Knowledge Quest* (May 27). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/tips-for-recording-digital-book-talks>

School Librarian as Leader - The need for data collection and analysis from community members as well as an umbrella understanding of learner needs, teacher support, technology, and the school curriculum makes the school librarian an ideal leader at all times, but particularly in crisis situations. School librarians can provide leadership by:

- Face-to-Face Learning
 - Collaborating with administrators, educators, parents/caregivers, and community members to address their needs
 - Monitoring and proactively responding to evolving needs
- Blended Learning
 - Working with other stakeholders to provide as many learners as possible with broadband or ensuring home access to devices and hotspots/Internet access
 - Exploring the impact of different types of potential schedules (hybrid vs. face-to-face format (A/B, AM/PM))
 - Reviewing policies
 - Offering professional development to teachers and administrators to ensure everyone abides by copyright and privacy policies (COPPA, FERPA, TEACH Act) as related to a remote learning environment (e.g., publisher compliance for storytime recordings)
 - Reviewing district policies that may be developed, revised, or clarified to address the changes in the learning environment
- Distance Learning
 - Developing strategies for communicating with learners, including:
 - New students/learners and transitional grade changes
 - Primary grade (PK-1) learners
 - Transfer students/learners
 - English Learners (EL) / Special Education (SPED) learners
 - Collaborating with school personnel to support the needs of disengaged learners
 - Investigating and sharing methods of supporting SEL in a remote learning environment
 - Sharing stories with stakeholders on how the school librarian's role is relevant in this ever-changing learning environment

AASL RESOURCES

Logan, Deb. 2020. "Unmasking Your Contributions to Decision-makers during School Closures." *Knowledge Quest* (May 8). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/unmasking-your-contributions-to-decision-makers-during-school-closures>

Northern, Sam. 2020. "Distance Read-Alouds." *Knowledge Quest* (March 19). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/distance-read-alouds>

Sturge, Jennifer. 2020. "Library Leadership: A Seat at the Table." *Knowledge Quest* (July 13). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/library-leadership-a-seat-at-the-table>

School Librarian as Information Specialist - Curated, quality resources provide vital information and the school librarian can disseminate these resources by:

- Face-to-Face Learning
 - Listening to learners and colleagues to develop resource lists that meet the needs of the community inside and outside the school curriculum
- Blended Learning
 - Developing innovative strategies for readers' advisory
 - Communicating with other educators with targeted videos or resource lists highlighting key databases or electronic resources appropriate for their curriculum or age group
- Distance Learning
 - Curating high-quality digital resources, intersectional primary sources, and open educational resources (OER), keeping in mind accessibility features and appropriate assistive technology

AASL RESOURCES

Hester, Deah. 2020. "School Librarians Curate More than Just Books." *Knowledge Quest* (April 14). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/school-librarians-curate-more-than-just-books>

Little, Hannah Byrd. 2020. "Avoiding information Overload During COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place Orders." *Knowledge Quest* <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/avoiding-information-overload-during-covid-19-shelter-in-place-orders>

Tetreault, Steve. 2020. "#infodemic: Why #SchoolLibraries are More Than Ever, a #NecessityNotALuxury." *Knowledge Quest* (March 6). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/infodemic-why-schoollibraries-are-more-than-ever-a-necessitynotaluxury>

School Librarian as Program Administrator - School librarians juggle instructional responsibilities with administrative ones as they consider facility management under complex conditions as well as a variety of budgeting needs by:

- Face-to-Face Learning
 - Facilities (Include, Engage, Explore, Collaborate)
 - Considering the impact of social distancing requirements on library capacity, seating arrangements, traffic flow (enter/exit, stack access, catalog kiosk, circulation), and library access
 - Ensuring guidelines are in place for use of materials, furniture, technology
 - Communicating with stakeholders (learners, parents, educators, administrators, and community) changes in policies (i.e., circulation policy, access to library space, etc.)
- Blended Learning
 - Financial Impact (Curate, Include)
 - Implementing existing or acquiring new budgeting skills, addressing costs associated with needed digital resources, analyzing for potential budget cuts, and using these numbers to communicate the impact on learners to decision makers
 - Identifying grant opportunities to make up for budget gaps or to implement responsive programs
 - Materials Circulation (Include, Explore)
 - Developing procedures for handling of returned materials
 - Exploring and analyzing impact on circulation policy (e.g., fees, lost items, etc.)
- Distance Learning
 - Collaborating with the public library to expand services and access, promoting public library card acquisition and their resources as a supplement to school resources
 - Curating lists of community resources serving learners and their families and investigating partnerships

AASL RESOURCES

Hincks, Kelly. 2020. "7 Ways to Keep Kids Reading Even at a Distance." *Knowledge Quest* (May 13). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/7-ways-to-keep-kids-reading-even-at-a-distance>

Miller, Angie. 2020. "The Library is Still Open! Ten Ways to Change Our Physical Spaces into Virtual Libraries." *Knowledge Quest* (April 4). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/the-school-library-is-still-open-ten-ways-to-change-our-physical-spaces-into-virtual-libraries>

Pennington, Cherity. 2020. "The Future of Education Needs School Librarians". *Knowledge Quest* (May 11). <https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/the-future-of-education-needs-school-librarians>

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

American Association of School Librarians. n.d. "Pandemic Resources for School Librarians." <http://www.ala.org/aasl/about/pandemic> (accessed July 2, 2020).

American Library Association. n.d. "Grant Writing 101: Basics for Programming Librarians." Webinar. <http://www.ala.org/tools/grant-writing-101-basics-programming-librarians> (accessed July 2, 2020).

Branson, Mindy, et al. n.d. "Tips from Teachers on Engaging Students in Online Live Sessions and Asynchronous Discussions." MIT Abdul Latif Jameel World Education Lab. <https://jwel.mit.edu/assets/video/tips-teachers-engaging-students-online-live-sessions-and-asynchronous-discussions> (accessed July 2, 2020).

Cervera, Mariangely Solis. 2020. "Modeling SEL During Distance Learning." *Transforming Learning* (May 20). <https://www.transformingeducation.org/modeling-sel-during-distance-learning> (accessed July 2, 2020).

Ferlazzo, Larry. 2020. "Five Ways to Differentiate Instruction in an Online Environment." *Education Week Teacher* (May 4). https://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/classroom_qa_with_larry_ferlazzo/2020/O5/six_ways_to_differentiate_instruction_in_an_online_environment.html (accessed July 2, 2020).

Internet Education Foundation. n.d. "Copyright & Creativity for Ethical Digital Citizens." <https://www.copyrightandcreativity.org> (accessed July 2, 2020).

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OER Commons. n.d. "K-12 Remote Learning." <https://www.oercommons.org/hubs/k12> (accessed July 2, 2020).

Sansbury, Sarah, and Martha Bongiorno. 2020. "Two Key Ways School Libraries Can Impact Social-Emotional Learning." *Perspectives on Reading* (May). <https://perspectivesonreading.com/social-emotional> (accessed July 2, 2020).

Texas State Library Archives Commission. 2020. "Planning for Libraries Communications during COVID-19."

https://www.tsl.texas.gov/sites/default/files/public/tslac/ld/workshops/webinars/COVID/TSLAC_COVID_Communications_for_Libraries_Resource.pdf (accessed July 2, 2020).

Winner, Matthew. 2020. "Ways School Librarians Can Serve Students in Fall 2020." *Ideas and Inspiration* (June 26). <https://ideas.demco.com/blog/ways-school-librarians-can-serve-students-in-fall-2020> (accessed July 2, 2020).

Witteveen, April. 2019. "5 Grant Writing Tips." *School Library Journal* (November 7).

<https://www.slj.com/?detailStory=5-Grant-Writing-Tips-libraries> (accessed July 2, 2020).