

Research and Electronic Database Needs of the School

Action Research Plan and Survey

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TOPIC OR ISSUE

At the end of the last school year, the high school librarian purchased a number of online databases in attempts to better serve both student research and information-gathering needs. At the beginning of the new school year, she introduced all of the new databases to the staff members and displayed how they could help teachers design and develop research assignments. Three months into the school year, the librarian reviewed database usage records and discovered that very few teachers and students were using subscription databases.

FOCUSED QUESTIONS (must be relevant to issue)

What resources best serve the research and curricular needs of the school community?
What are the primary resources that are currently used for research projects and curriculum development?
What can the library staff do to assist students to use online subscription databases more often?

APPLICABLE RESEARCH or WEBSITES

"2006 ICT Literacy Assessment Preliminary Findings" *ISKILLS*. Educational Testing Service (ETS). 2007. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.

McAskill, William. "Information Literacy: The Leadership Role of the Academic Librarian." *College Quarterly* 11.1 (2008): 1-15. *ERIC*. EBSCO. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.

O'Sullivan, Michael K., and Kim B. Dallas. "A Collaborative Approach to Implementing 21st Century Skills in a High School Senior Research Class." *Education Libraries* 33.1 (2010): 3-9. *ERIC*. EBSCO. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.

Shonrock, Diana D., and Sue R. Crull. "Information Literacy and Cooperative Learning: A Global Housing Project." *Public Services Quarterly* 6.1 (2010): 1-18. *ERIC*. EBSCO. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.

Zhang, Yin, David Robins, Jason Holmes, and Athena Salaba. "Understanding Internet Searching Performance in a Heterogeneous Portal for K-12 Students: Search Success, Search Time, Strategy, and Effort." *Journal of Web Librarianship* 3.1 (2009): 15-33. ERIC. EBSCO. Web. 1 Oct. 2010.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Issue: The librarian has subscribed to the electronic databases and has trained the teaching staff on how to use them, but most students are not using them for research projects and teachers aren't using them in curriculum development. The purpose of the action research study is to how to encourage teacher and student database and find solutions to increase the database usage within the school community.

Assets: The administration is in favor of using these databases and is supportive of the librarian leading in faculty development.

Barriers: In past years, both teachers and students have not been introduced, nor used these types of databases and have relied on internet searches to find research for their projects. The school community hasn't had positive results in their information retrieval process with subscription databases. Furthermore, there is limited time to train teachers during faculty in-service, and limited time during library sessions to train the entire student body on database usage.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Research Question	Data Source #1	Data Source #2	Data Source #3
What can the library staff do to assist students to use online subscription databases more often?	Online survey of students	Online survey of teachers	Research-analysis of articles about successful programs who incorporate subscription database use; informal and formal observations by library staff
How have other schools	Online survey of	Phone calls to	Analysis of how

incorporated database research in their curriculum plans to ensure that these databases are being properly used by both teachers and students?	librarians from other school districts using electronic databases (announced via listserv)	librarians at two or more other school districts that use electronic databases	many high schools in the county use online subscription databases (from LMS online survey) presented in chart format

TIME LINE

Date	Action	Responsibility
October 4	Inform principal of intent to conduct the action research	SLMS
Oct 6	Create 2 online surveys (student, teacher) using Survey Monkey (no less than 10 questions). Begin research of student/ teacher use of subscription databases	SLMS Library staff
Oct 11	Pretest surveys with a few people- make changes as needed	SLMS
Oct 12-13	Contact English teachers on Oct 12 with link to survey, asking that all students complete the survey in their classes during computer lab time. (All teachers use the computer lab once a week.) Launch the survey, with Oct 18 set as survey completion date. In communication with teachers, stress the importance of monitoring students so that the survey isn't taken twice by the same student.	SLMS / Administrator/ teachers
Oct 15	• Check on progress of data collection, email a reminder if needed	SMLS

Oct 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get digital data reports from Survey Monkey; tabulate results, identify trends. Make appointment to meet with administrator to discuss results. 	SMLS
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration announces faculty professional development as determined by SMLS, Administration, staff, teachers and students based on research/data collected during the study. 	Administration
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-administer same survey once again; compare results 	SMLS/ teachers

ONLINE SURVEY

Link to take survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3K5FYT9>

Title of survey: LIBRARY RESEARCH SURVEY

Participants will include: Middle and High School students

Pre-test phase: two high school teachers

INTRODUCTION (to the Survey)

This short, online survey will be taken by all middle and high school students. It was created by the library committee to gather data on resources used in middle and high school research projects. The survey will take approximately ten minutes to complete. All responses will be anonymous. The librarian will compile and share the results with the principal and staff in order to find ways to improve access to credible research materials and ways that the library program can better assist middle and high school learners. Thank you for your time and candid responses.

SURVEY QUESTIONS

#	Question	Type of response
1	I am in grade: 7/8/9/10/11/12/	demographics
2	Research projects allow you to become an investigator. When you're working on a research project, you look into a topic to	Likert Scale

	<p>discover more about it. What is the level of difficulty that you have in gathering information and sources for research projects in your classes?</p> <p>a. really easy b. easy c. difficult d. really difficult</p>	
3	<p>How often do you use internet websites to find information for research projects in your classes?</p> <p>a. I use websites for research once-in-a-while b. I use websites for research often c. I rely on websites for almost all of my research</p>	Multiple choice/ rating
4	<p>In the space below, list specific ways that the internet helps you to gather information that is used in your research project assignments</p>	open-ended text box
5	<p>Being information literate means having the ability to locate, understand, evaluate, utilize, and share information. It also involves finding trustworthy and useful information. How would you rate your information literacy skills?</p> <p>a. Good b. Average c. Low d. In dire need of help</p>	Multiple choice / rating
6	<p>Would additional training on information literacy skills help you to perform better in your classes? A. strongly agree B. agree C. undecided D. disagree E. strongly disagree</p>	Likert scale
7	<p>It is important to use online subscription databases such as SIRS and Infotrack to gather research for your class projects and assignments</p>	Likert scale

	A. strongly agree B. agree C. undecided D. disagree E. strongly disagree	
8	List specific ways that online subscription databases help you to gather information that is used in your research project assignments.	open-ended text box
9	Would additional training on the benefits and strategies to use subscription databases encourage you to use them more often? A. strongly agree B. agree C. undecided D. disagree E. strongly disagree	Likert scale
10	How would you like to learn about subscription databases? Check all of the following types of training on subscription database use that you would like: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A presentation at the beginning of the year 2. Video tutorials that can be accessed at the library webpage. 3. Written instructions. 4. Teacher presenting lessons during a research unit. 5. Librarian presenting lessons during a research unit. 6. The librarian and teacher presenting lessons that are planned and taught together during a research unit. 7. Weekly “tips and tricks” for accessing information on electronic databases. 8. Other: 	Multiple choice