

# KEYSTONES

Describe the school library's mission, goals, and objectives as they relate to the mission, goals, and objectives of the school's and district's long-range plan. (p. 180)

*We are fortunate that our district allocates a school librarian and at least one para-professional for each school library in the district. There is a district commitment to libraries and literacy. The mission statement of our library is "The GRMS library is the safe, welcoming, and academic heart of our school where all are encouraged to be enthusiastic readers, curious and critical thinkers, and lifelong learners while complementing and supporting all GRMS initiatives and programs." It was developed by our adult library advisory council. As a Title One school with many students living in poverty and arriving to middle school with limited reading literacy our main focus is to increase their reading achievement. We want our students to have access to all types of reading materials with as diverse a collection of world views and reading levels. Additionally, we hope to expose our students to many STEAM related experiences that they have not had the privilege of experiencing, and bring the global world to our school virtually.*

*When I arrived at GRMS they already had a mission statement that helped the library program because it focused on collaboration. Our GRMS mission statement is "At GRMS teachers continually collaborate to create the best learning path for all students. Students understand the value of being engaged in their education as goal setting, college & career-bound, questioners who recognize the value of all learning opportunities." Due to the fact that collaboration is so encouraged at our school it hasn't taken much effort to get teachers to collaborate in the library program. Through our PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) we focus on student data frequently and are always looking for ways to help students achieve the next level. In 42 years in education, I have never worked in a school where student data is so actively looked at and decisions to improve are made weekly. We have a "Stingray Success" period each Wednesday and Thursday where students that need remediation in any course can receive that, and students that don't need remediation have the choice of multiple enrichment opportunities. The library program has Makerspaces during that time, as well as, Battle of the Books practice, and anything the students want to try in our space. The large library allows for many things to occur during that time.*

*Our district mission statement is "The St. Johns County School District will inspire good character and a passion for lifelong learning in all students, creating educated and caring contributors to the world." There are six character pillars that our district teaches and they fold very well into the digital citizenship and ethical use of technology we are trying to build in the library program. Additionally, we are always encouraging students to discover their personal learning passions. This is difficult for many students to identify at the middle school age. The Makerspace stations have helped some students discover talents and interests they didn't realize they have.*

Describe how the school library is continuously assessed and evaluated to ensure that it meets the needs of all members of the learning community. (p. 170)

*Our library advisory committees (student and adult committees) help the library staff with what would be effective. We also have a suggestion box for students to suggest things to benefit the library program. We have just completed electronically surveying a sample of all our stakeholders with the*

*Florida Power Library surveys. There are specific surveys for administrators, teachers, students and parents. We haven't received the data yet, but we will make adjustments to the program based on the feedback we receive from each group of stakeholders. We should receive the data by the end of February. Our monthly PTO(Parent Teacher Organization) meetings and SAC (School Advisory Committee) also provide us feedback on how to implement upcoming library initiatives or give us suggestions. They have also assisted us in getting resources we have needed in the past.*

**Describe how the school library is a dynamic learning environment that bridges the gap between equitable access and opportunities for all learners. (p. 54)**

*Firstly, we have an amazing architectural space that has many areas for so many different activities. We have designed the space to have many areas to encourage our students to inquire. Our circulation desk has an **"inquire"** area with a "Word of the Day" poster each day and students that can use the word in a sentence or give an alternative definition to win a pixie stick. We have a bulletin board of a famous piece of art with our StickTogether mosaic which always makes students inquisitive. We try to keep a three dimensional object at the desk too that they have to discover what it does. Right now we have an LED book lamp that once opens lights up. We have a graffiti wall that posts questions for students to answer or to practice their cursive penmanship and signature.*

*To **"include"** everyone we have our new acquisitions by the front entrance to the library on a rolling shelf with materials for everyone from our non-reading ESE students, Spanish materials for our ELL students, and high and low reading level new books. We always have several different types of jigsaw puzzles on the seating area in the front to allow any student to participate. The puzzles are selected to help student learn new things, maps of the world, landmarks of the world, National Parks of the United States, etc.*

*As soon as you walk into the library you see our 42" library electronic bulletin board that shows all the many different learning that occurs in the library and throughout the building. The students love seeing their own work on the screen. On that wall of windows are five large screen monitors and tables with flexible barrel stool seating with Mac Mini computers where students **"collaborate"** making videos using iMovie, creating animations using Stykx animation software, playing Oregon Trail together, playing electronic chess, writing their own books or articles with others using iBook Author, or creating music with Garageband.*

*On top of our Fiction shelving we have placed white board adhesive paper and we place the top books our students like to read. Our students **"curate"** our collection by placing their written reviews on the top of the shelves with markers. We also have recommendation cards that our students can fill out and we place on the shelves where the books are located so other students are aware of what other middle school students love to read. We also encourage the use of our students to write with our Destiny Discover catalog to rate books which includes the students in the curation of our collection.*

*Many of our Makerspace stations are on the shelves behind the Fiction section of the library and students are encouraged to **"explore"** anything back there. There are many board games and manipulative creative tools for students to use. At our Title One school we have discovered many of our students have never experienced working with things like Legos, K'Nex, play chess or checkers, or play familiar board games like Scrabble, Monopoly, or Battleship. We want all our students to experience creative tools and games that our more affluent students have always had access to in their lives.*

*Our large group activities such as Jeopardy, Cranium Core, and Minecraft Education help “engage” many of our students with learning across the content areas. Our other large group activities such as Author Skype visits, Teachingbooks.net, Mystery Skype and Skype Classroom Collaboration have brought excitement to our students for learning new things and for engaging them in the global world outside of our middle school. The library is the central location for these activities and the student’s associate new and creative activities with the library program. We have just begun a project with an area assisted living facility where they are reading one of our state award books and we have a plan to have our students go to their facility to discuss the book. We are hoping to also do some Skype visits about the book once the facility determines if it is possible. We are hoping this will engage our students with the older members of our community.*

**Describe how the school library scheduling is thoughtfully designed to ensure learners have access to school library services, spaces, and resources at the point of need. (p. 57)**

*Coming from a K-8 school where library was only on a fixed schedule I appreciate the flexibility of our schedule. Our schedule literally changes every day. What I love the most is that students can come anytime during the day at all. It allows the library staff to see students frequently and develop relationships with the students that really help us serve them and gives us information to help recommend books they would like. Teachers freely allow students to come to the library on a pass for checking out books or library materials, reading quietly, use our computers for research, print from our printer, finish up class projects or finish quizzes or tests, or to use the many Makerspace resources available. We use a paper schedule at the circulation desk and have multiple spots per period depending on what areas and resources in the library they want to use. Often teachers will call and explain what they want to do and I fill in on the schedule their times. We set up for our English Language Arts teachers to come at least every 2 to 3 weeks as a class so we see every student frequently. Our most struggling readers come with their reading class once a week at least. Our gifted students are also in the library weekly. We consciously are aware of how we greet patrons and want everyone to know that they are welcome and encouraged to be in the library space and use it the way they need for their learning. Having the copy machine in our back room has helped us see the entire faculty during the course of each week.*