

# Implementing the Common Core State Standards

## The Role of the School Librarian

With support from **MetLife  
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A Joint Action Brief by



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

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## Preface

This document is a joint effort of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and Achieve in support of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). It is designed not only for school librarians who are supporting higher standards for student learning, but also for school leaders as they rethink and re-envision the role that the library can and should play in a major school improvement initiative. This brief also proposes that the school librarian is one of a number of specialists who share a vision of making a difference across the school. The cadre of school specialists - reading specialists, technology integration specialists, curriculum specialists, or any other specialists with a whole-school mission - can cooperatively break the isolation of the traditional classroom. Together, the specialists and classroom teachers can create a participatory culture that engenders excellence for all. Together, they can make a larger difference than any one person can alone. For the school librarian particularly, the school improvement initiative is enhanced by an information and technology rich environment that the librarian embeds into learning activities throughout the school. Thus, this document proposes that the school library program move away from providing a traditional warehouse of materials to adopting a proactive role in student learning as today's information and technology environment becomes an integral and natural part of life.

## Introduction

As shown by MetLife's 2010 *Survey of the American Teacher*, America's educators strongly believe that all students should graduate from high school ready for college and a career (85 percent).<sup>1</sup> Additionally, according to MetLife's 2009 survey, 86 percent of teachers believe that setting high expectations for students will improve student achievement to that end.<sup>2</sup>

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are strongly aligned with those sentiments. Based on evidence of the skills and knowledge needed for college and career readiness, the CCSS expect students to engage deeply in a wide variety of informational and literary texts in English language arts (ELA)/literacy and to be able to both know and do mathematics by solving a range of problems and engaging in key mathematical practices.

Since 2010, 46 states and the District of Columbia, or 85 percent of the nation's public school students, have adopted the CCSS which effectively reset expectations for all students to a higher level – college and career readiness. The CCSS provide an opportunity to realize systemic change and ensure that American students are held to the same high expectations in mathematics and literacy as their global peers — regardless of state or zip code.

The success of such change requires the thoughtful attention of school leaders. As such, this Action Brief for school librarians is offered as a **starting point**, designed to increase awareness of the standards, create a sense of urgency around their implementation, and provide these stakeholders — who are faced with dramatically increased expectations in the context of fewer

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<sup>1</sup> MetLife (2011, May). *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Preparing Students for College and Careers*. Retrieved from [https://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/contributions/foundation/american-teacher/MetLife\\_Teacher\\_Survey\\_2010.pdf](https://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/contributions/foundation/american-teacher/MetLife_Teacher_Survey_2010.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> MetLife (2010, March). *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success (Part 1: Effective Teaching and Leadership)*. Retrieved from [https://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/contributions/foundation/american-teacher/MetLife\\_Teacher\\_Survey\\_2009\\_Part\\_1.pdf](https://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/contributions/foundation/american-teacher/MetLife_Teacher_Survey_2009_Part_1.pdf)

resources — with a deeper understanding of the standards and their role in implementing the standards.

Many additional resources are coming online, many of which are captured in the Resources section of this document. This Action Brief provides no-cost takeaways and action steps that school leaders and librarians can begin to put into practice in their schools today. The brief also features rich examples of how librarians might integrate the CCSS into their work to impact teaching and learning in a CCSS environment.

## A Primer on the Common Core State Standards

Both the mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) standards demonstrate logical progressions of student learning through the grades so that teachers and librarians will understand how standards being taught on a particular day relate to the standards in other grades. In fact, classroom teacher and school librarian partners will be able to understand how their daily instructional plans help foster college and career readiness, provided the CCSS are well implemented.

The CCSS provide school leaders with the means to think across grades and not only to understand what students must know and be able to do in the present but also to view how the acquisition of mathematics and literacy skills progresses throughout a student's previous years of schooling as well as what is ahead. Vertically aligned standards encourage school leaders to engage in more frequent conversations with their colleagues and promote vertical articulation among their PK–12 peers.

*Standards alone will not improve schools and raise student achievement, nor will they narrow the achievement gap. It will take implementation of the standards with fidelity by school leaders, librarians, and teachers to significantly raise student achievement.*

## The Case for Urgency

For most building leaders and librarians, the CCSS lay out a new set of expectations that are more cognitively demanding. The adoption of these standards means that **all, not just some students should be on the pathway to college and career**

**readiness.** Such a pathway has never been more critical to students for their personal success, success as citizens in a representative democracy, and economic success.

School librarians recognize these statements as part of a larger concept known as inquiry. They see inquiry as a way for children and teens to become more sophisticated over time as citizens of an increasingly rich information and technology environment.

Being ready for college means that a high school graduate has the English and mathematics knowledge and skills necessary to qualify for and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses without the need for remedial coursework. Being college and career ready means being prepared for any postsecondary education or training experience, including study at two- and four-year institutions leading to a postsecondary credential (i.e., a certificate, license, associate degree, or bachelor's degree).

In terms of research, for example, colleges, universities and employers want students to:

- **Conduct research and apply that research** to solve problems or address a particular issue;
- **Identify areas for research**, narrow those topics and adjust research methodology as necessary, and evaluate and synthesize primary and secondary resources as they develop and defend their own conclusions;
- **Apply skills and knowledge across the content areas** to solve real-world problems; and
- **Model** real-world situations and persevere in solving complex and novel problems.

**An Example:** The CCSS encourages a strong focus on deep research. For some years, many senior high school English teachers have assigned research papers based on any topic the student chose to pursue. A school librarian noticed that the science department had expressed interest in assigning research papers connected to real research but were somewhat uncertain about the result if they just assigned the paper and hoped for the best. Getting both the science and English teachers together on an in-service day, the school librarian and other specialists including a reading specialist, gifted and talented specialist, technology specialist, curriculum specialist, and science teacher proposed that a science umbrella topic be created and students be asked to select specific topics correlated to that question. This revised list not only allowed the school librarian, science and language arts teachers to teach the research process together but also to target their instruction toward scientific concepts, science information, data gathering, analysis, synthesis, and the production and sharing of “research papers” in a variety of formats. For this project, groups of students served as resources for each other as the papers were developed and an authentic audience for the results was provided. The school librarian along with any available specialists pulled a special team of students aside to become experts in data analysis and visualization techniques who could then assist in the various projects involving data collection. As groups completed their research and presentations, the groups were jigsawed so that a new group was formed with one member from each of the subtopics. As each group member presented to the others, the students looked across the various research projects for implications about the original umbrella question. As a culminating activity, a half dozen scientists from various professions in the community were invited to a “share fair” where both the individual projects and the whole presentation were explored by the science experts and other interested parties. After the presentations, the team of guests held an active discussion with the entire group about careers in science and technology with attention given to how science information is disseminated through the various research publications and channels. The adult coaches assessed progress in science knowledge, research skills, presentation techniques, and scientific thinking. By combining their efforts, both language arts teachers and science teachers were amazed at the depth of understanding and skills that had emerged. The school librarian was extremely pleased with the “just in time” teaching of skills.

As principals, school librarians, and business leaders know too well, the reality is that an 18-year-old who does not have the skills for college or career is effectively sentenced to a lifetime of marginal employment and second-class citizenship. School leaders and librarians have embraced the idea that all students should be prepared to pursue postsecondary education and/or training.

School librarians and their colleagues have learned a hard truth — college eligible does not mean college ready. Simply put, most states' old K-12 standards set the bar too low and not at a college and career ready level. Moreover, end of high school state assessments were never intended to be an indicator of college or career readiness, at least not for 21<sup>st</sup> century college and careers. For example, one state that has an 80 percent proficiency rate on state assessments reported that only 38 percent of its high school graduates could enroll in credit-bearing courses without the need to take remedial courses.<sup>3</sup>

The time has come for school leaders and school librarians to take up the civic and economic necessity to ensure that students leave their schools ready for college and career through focused attention on effective implementation of the CCSS and school transformation.

### **Start Now: Twelve Schoolwide Instructional Shifts**

The CCSS require educators and school leaders to make fundamental shifts in practice. Some have called these shifts monolithic in scope. For school leaders and school librarians, implementing the CCSS is *not* about thinking out of the box. It is about transforming the box itself.

The CCSS represent a real shift in instructional goals from high school graduation to college and career readiness. This shift in intent means profound changes in the way students learn and are assessed, in the way teachers teach, and in the way instructional leaders lead. The reality is that the responsibility for ensuring high-quality, transformative professional development and fidelity of implementation will fall squarely on the shoulders of the school leaders.

Raising literacy and mathematics achievement cannot be the work of a small group of teachers and cannot be done in one content area. For example, English teachers alone cannot be responsible for teaching reading and writing skills. With the CCSS, explicit literacy instruction is now a shared responsibility of all teachers, librarians, reading specialists, and technology integration specialists throughout the school.

***These are new, higher standards.***

Most schools are already engaged in building the capacity to effectively implement the new standards. School leaders, librarians, and teachers all need to take on the role of learner. Learning new ways of teaching and leading will take months and years of deliberate practice to master. Because each of the instructional shifts below can be expected to take years to implement with fidelity, school leaders will need both short- and long-term plans that are based on the assessed needs of students as well as the professional development needs of teachers.

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<sup>3</sup>Wilson, Lauren (2012, February 21). Officials offer details on new tests. Retrieved from <http://www.bgdailynews.com>

The respective shifts required by the CCSS are as follows, and are an elaboration of the three major shifts in each content area as described at [www.achievethecore.org](http://www.achievethecore.org):

Six INSTRUCTIONAL Shifts in ELA/Literacy	
1.	<b>Balancing Informational and Literary Text (PK–5):</b> Students read a true balance of informational and literary texts. Elementary school classrooms are, therefore, places where students access the world — science, social studies, the arts and literature — through text. At least 50 percent of what students read is informational.
2.	<b>Building Knowledge in the Disciplines (6–12):</b> Content area teachers outside of the ELA classroom emphasize literacy experiences in their planning and instruction. Students learn through domain-specific texts in science and social studies classrooms — rather than referring to the text, they are expected to learn from what they read.
3.	<b>Staircase of Complexity:</b> To prepare students for the complexity of college- and career-ready texts, each grade level requires a “step” of growth on the “staircase.” Students read the central, grade-appropriate text around which instruction is centered. Teachers are patient, create more time and space in the curriculum for this close and careful reading, and provide appropriate and necessary scaffolding and supports so that it is possible for students reading below grade level.
4.	<b>Text-Based Answers:</b> Students have rich and rigorous conversations that depend on a common text. Teachers insist that classroom experiences stay deeply connected to the text on the page and that students develop habits for making evidentiary arguments both in conversation and in writing to assess comprehension of a text.
5.	<b>Writing from Sources:</b> Writing needs to emphasize use of evidence to inform or make an argument rather than the personal narrative and other forms of decontextualized prompts. While the narrative still has an important role, students develop skills through written arguments that respond to the ideas, events, facts, and arguments presented in the texts they read.
6.	<b>Academic Vocabulary:</b> Students constantly build the vocabulary they need to access grade-level complex texts. By focusing strategically on comprehension of pivotal and commonly found words (such as “discourse,” “generation,” “theory,” and “principled”) and less on esoteric literary terms (such as “onomatopoeia” or “homonym”), teachers constantly build students’ ability to access more complex texts across the content areas.

In each of these six shifts of emphasis, school leaders and librarians should recognize their important role not just in supplying and recommending texts, but also in their understanding and use, and in thinking across the many curricular areas in the school. Librarians recognize their role in the teaching of reading and can contribute much because they manage a wide variety of informational and literary texts and the technologies to assist each reader with these essential literacy elements.

**An Example:** The CCSS asks students to gather information from multiple print and digital sources in order to conduct sustained research. In one case, students were asked to understand the Gettysburg Address as primary source text in an American history class. Seeing an opportunity to build deep understanding rather than cursory knowledge, the school librarian met with both history and language arts teachers to explore the possibilities for both curriculum areas. Using a Google Site, each phrase of the document was placed on a separate page and individual students or small groups “curated” around that phrase using all types of helps, documents, websites, videos, and any other materials that helped a fellow classmate understand that phrase. When the curation was finished, teams of students examined, studied, and shared their understanding to produce a whole class understanding of not only the text, but its historical importance to the people of that time and to us today. All students had experience reading, writing, speaking and listening during the project and both content teachers agreed that every student had met or exceeded expectations. The librarian noted that the use of both technology and quality information resources had boosted the possibilities for each learner. For students, the experience was engaging, participatory, and challenged their creativity and critical thinking. The team of adult coaches attributed much of their success to the wide variety of multimedia resources of varying sophistication levels. These resources allowed each learner, from gifted to challenged and of various native languages spoken, an opportunity to succeed. As a culminating activity, a Lincoln expert from the community was invited to a parents’ night and the students played a “Stump the Expert” game where everyone, including the parents, participated.

### Six INSTRUCTIONAL Shifts in Mathematics

1. **Focus:** Teachers narrow and deepen the scope of how time and energy is spent in the mathematics classroom. A deep focus is placed only on the concepts that are prioritized in the standards so that students reach strong foundational knowledge and conceptual understanding and are able to transfer mathematical skills and understanding across concepts and grades.
2. **Coherence:** Principals and teachers carefully connect the learning within and across grades so that, for example, fractions or multiplication spiral across grade levels and students can build new understanding onto foundations built in previous years. Teachers can begin to count on deep conceptual understanding of core content and build on it. Each standard is not a new event but an extension of previous learning.
3. **Fluency:** Students are expected to have speed and accuracy with simple calculations; teachers structure class and/or homework time for students to memorize, through repetition, core functions such as arithmetic operations so they are better able to understand and manipulate more complex concepts.
4. **Deep Understanding:** Teachers teach more than “how to get the answer” by supporting students’ ability to access concepts from a number of perspectives. As a result, students are able to see mathematics as more than a set of mnemonics or discrete procedures. Students demonstrate deep conceptual understanding of core mathematics concepts by applying them to new situations as well as by writing and speaking about their understanding.
5. **Applications:** Students are expected to use mathematics and choose the appropriate concept for application even when they are not prompted to do so. Teachers provide opportunities at all grade levels for students to apply mathematics concepts in real-world situations. Teachers in content areas outside of math, particularly science, ensure that students are using mathematics — at all grade levels — to make meaning of and access content.

6. **Dual Intensity:** Students are practicing and understanding. There is more than a balance between these two endeavors in the classroom — both are occurring with intensity. Teachers create opportunities for students to participate in “drills” and make use of those skills through extended application of mathematics concepts. The amount of time and energy spent practicing and understanding learning environments is driven by the specific mathematical concept and, therefore, varies throughout the given school year.

Collectively, these shifts in the **CCSS mean teaching and learning need to be organized to have students:**

- **Conduct** short, focused projects and longer term in-depth research;
- **Produce** clear and coherent writing, whatever the selected format;
- **Communicate** research findings (speaking and listening skills) and mathematical thinking;
- **Model** quantitative problems with mathematics;
- **Persevere** in solving problems; and
- **Reason** deeply about mathematics and mathematical situations by applying concepts to real world situations while demonstrating higher-level thinking.

In each of the six shifts of emphasis, school librarians should recognize their important role in supporting math across the curriculum. Their role is to provide literary and informational text related to mathematics, as well as providing technologies that help students conceptualize mathematical principles. It is important that librarians assist in structuring problem solving activities that help students understand and articulate their solution process. A school librarian’s knowledge and support of students’ writing, researching, speaking and listening skills will be pivotal in meeting these six mathematical shifts.

**An Example:** The school librarian was looking for an opportunity to insert some new technology tools into real learning experiences. When attending a third grade teacher team meeting, several teachers expressed frustration over how to include the math CCSS standards into their already overflowing curriculum as well as having little or no time to teach science. The librarian asked for fifteen minutes at the next meeting to present an idea for the teachers to consider. The school librarian explored three different technology tools that teach programming skills including Scratch, Minecraft, and Tynker, deciding to recommend all three as possibilities for real math and science at the same time. At the meeting with teachers, the librarian gave brief demos of the three programs and then, in a brainstorming session, the group decided to challenge students to create machines, inventions, or structures that used all five simple machines and that could be described using mathematical language. Three weeks prior to the introduction of the unit, three students were selected from each participating class to attend “secret” luncheon seminars with the school librarian. The librarian introduced the three tools and found that several in the group already knew at least one of them. So, over the next three weeks, the students used lunch seminars to perfect their skills so they could be the class experts. On day one of the challenge, all the third graders had a combined seminar in which the adults and the student tech team presented the challenge and previewed the tech tools. Then small groups in each class pursued their challenge using one of the three software tools. To say that engagement, interest, critical thinking, and creativity were present is a major understatement. The resulting math/science showcase hit the local papers.



Beyond knowing about the standards, principals and school librarians need to know how schools must change to successfully implement the CCSS. School leaders need a practical understanding of the school-wide changes made necessary by the new CCSS and how to lead those changes to create a culture of success in schools. Such change does not happen by itself in schools. It results from change in attitudes encouraged by new information, reflection, and changes in practice. School leaders in collaboration with their school librarians will need to engage in both instructional leadership and systemic leadership to implement the necessary changes.

## Implementing the CCSS for School Librarians

The shift in instructional goals from high school completion to college and career readiness effectively places each and every student on a pathway to college and career readiness. The CCSS were developed beginning with the end of high school college- and career-ready standards and working then on a path way from K-12 to meet that ambitious bar, often resulting in grade-level shifts in content down through the grades.

Knowing about the standards is important. Learning how schools must change to meet the CCSS is critical. School librarians need an understanding of how the standards will affect the three domains of professional school librarians — academic, career, and personal/social— in relation to the needs of their students.

### *Taking Action*

As part of a school team consisting of administrators, teachers, parents, and students, school librarians have a critical role to play in the successful implementation of the new standards. School librarians are uniquely positioned to influence and implement many of the school-wide goals and initiatives to ensure that all students are college and career ready because they work across grade levels and across the disciplines.

School librarians must play an active role working collaboratively with the school leadership team to move the CCSS forward and make the necessary instructional and cultural shifts within their school environments. If the leadership team of the school includes all specialists who have a responsibility across the school, then as a team they can influence what is going on in every classroom, department and curricular area. By integrating their own agendas with those of the classroom teachers, the specialists can have a larger impact than they otherwise could by carrying out a “curriculum” of their own.

This document presents a three-step approach to help school librarians take action and thus move themselves and their program to the center of teaching and learning in their school:

- Step 1 — Understand It
- Step 2 — Create a Plan
- Step 3 — Act On It

**Step 1 — Understand It.** What elements of the CCSS or other school improvement plans cross over to the mission of the school library program and information technology?

A read through the CCSS clearly points to their significance for every school librarian. The words *research, text, read, write, technology, and information* are all prevalent in the standards, all purviews of the school librarian, all suggesting the need for a focus on school library programs and technology. As the elements of the CCSS are studied and analyzed by the school leadership team, the librarian and other specialists in the school begin to understand ways of embedding their specialties as co-teachers in order to achieve the standards as co-teachers across the school. It is not what can be done as an individual; it is what can be done as a team in a participatory community. So, what are those central elements of the CCSS worthy of consideration?

### **Key Points in ELA/Literacy**

#### **Reading**

- The standards require the progressive development of reading comprehension so that students advancing through the grades are able to gain more from whatever they read.
- Through reading a diverse array of classic and contemporary literature as well as challenging informational texts in a range of subjects, students are expected to build knowledge, gain insights, explore possibilities, and broaden their perspective.
- The standards describe certain critical types of content for all students, including classic myths and stories from around the world, foundational U.S. documents, seminal works of American literature, and the writings of Shakespeare.

#### **Writing**

- The ability to write logical arguments based on substantive claims, sound reasoning, and relevant evidence is a cornerstone of the writing standards.
- The standards require students to perform research — both short, focused projects (such as those commonly required in the workplace) and longer term in-depth research.
- Annotated samples of student writing accompany the standards and help establish adequate performance levels in writing arguments, informational/explanatory texts, and narratives in the various grades.

#### **Speaking and Listening**

- The standards require that students gain, evaluate and present increasingly complex information, ideas and evidence through listening and speaking as well as through media.

#### **Language**

- The standards expect that students will grow their vocabularies through a mix of conversations, direct instruction, and reading. The standards will help students determine word meanings, appreciate the nuances of words, and steadily expand their repertoire of words and phrases.

## Media and Technology

- Just as media and technology are integrated in school and life in the 21st century, skills related to media use (both critical analysis and production of media) are integrated throughout the standards.

## Key Points in Mathematics

- The K–5 standards provide students with a solid foundation in whole numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and decimals.
- In kindergarten, the standards follow successful international models and recommendations from the National Research Council’s Early Math Panel report by focusing kindergarten work on the number core.
- The standards stress not only procedural skill but also conceptual understanding to make sure students are learning and absorbing the critical information they need to succeed at higher levels.
- Having built a strong foundation in grades K–5, students can do hands-on learning in geometry, algebra, and probability and statistics. The middle school standards are robust and provide a coherent and rich preparation for high school mathematics.
- The high school standards call on students to practice applying mathematical ways of thinking to real-world issues and challenges; they prepare students to think and reason mathematically.
- The high school standards emphasize mathematical modeling — the use of mathematics and statistics to analyze empirical situations, understand them better, and improve decisions.

Librarians need to develop a deep understanding of the larger context that surrounds the CCSS. Other major documents add additional dimensions to the CCSS document and initiative, and many of these are listed in the further reading section of this brief.

It is as if every specialist needs an encyclopedic knowledge of numerous national efforts in addition to those at the state and district level. When meshed and integrated, these major documents help each school librarian develop a vision of the possibilities that an information-rich and technology-rich environment can have on every single learner and the way every teacher can improve their teaching.

**An Example:** Just as the CCSS asks students to integrate information from a wide variety of reputable sources, so too are librarians challenged to do so. When faced with a wide variety of standards documents, a school librarian was becoming overwhelmed by possible conflict, diverging pathways and directions of the various documents. Faced with information overload, the librarian suddenly realized that this is the same feeling that every student faces when confronting a plethora of information, documents, and ideas on any research project. So, using the same strategies taught to students for reading complex texts — finding central ideas, using information strategies to compare and contrast, analyzing and synthesizing data across the documents — a vision developed that built a repertoire of ways to embed one’s own expertise into the expertise of others in order to produce the desired results. This vision was strengthened through individual study, but also with a group of like-minded professionals determined to build programs based on solid ideas, research, and best practices in a school and district. It became a matter of developing one’s own personal learning network rather than stagnating in a pool of confusion.

**Step 2 — Create a Plan.** What initiatives by the school librarian and other specialists will make the most difference in teaching and learning across the school?

The implementation of CCSS aligned with other national standards documents and state initiatives allows the school librarian and other specialists to change the direction of the current school library program in ways that not only are at the center of school improvement, but maximize the difference that a rich information and technology environment can have on teaching and learning. Making minor adjustments or fine tuning what has been done in the past is not likely to make the major improvements that every person and department in the school is trying to implement.

For example, the mere purchase of a computer or tablet for every student is not likely to make a difference without a plan for how they will be used. Devoting a larger percentage of the school library program budget to the purchase of informational books will not automatically make a difference. The mere offering of help to teachers from the school librarian will not automatically result in a plethora of new collaborative activities. The perception of the school library as a warehouse of stuff will no longer be relevant as information and technology move to every student's hand-held device.

Everyone in the school is facing disruptive change. To be considered as essential or central to this change, the plan created by the school librarian to march alongside the whole school improvement plan will be critical to the future of the school library program and information technology as any kind of a solution.

The possibilities for a new school library program focus are everywhere in the literature; it is found not only in the school library and technology literature, but also in the many voices for school change and reform. Bold changes may require a new focus such as the push toward a library learning commons philosophy that combines both library spaces and computers into a participatory physical and virtual environment. Whatever the disruptive change proposed and implemented by the school librarian, risk taking, experimentation, and putting students at the center rather than the school will determine the kind of impact possible. Many reports in the literature from school library professionals describe how they have stepped up to the challenge and report a whole new world of excitement across the school, for both students and adults.

In Part 3 of this document, specific initiatives are recommended because of their potential to make an impact on teaching and learning in a CCSS environment. What follows is a list of the central elements around which specific plans can be made.

### **The Ten Recommended Initiatives**

1. Building reading, writing, speaking and listening skills together across the curriculum.
2. Building appreciation of the best literature and informational materials together across the curriculum as a part of a literate culture.
3. Creating a school-wide participatory culture.
4. Building co-taught research projects in blended learning experiences.
5. Promoting interdisciplinary real-world problems, projects and learning experiences that take advantage of rich information resources and useful technology tools.
6. Using technology to boost teaching and learning together.
7. Creating cultural experience across the school, community, and across the world.
8. Fostering creativity, innovation, play, building, and experimentation.
9. Assessing the results of collaborative learning experiences.
10. Managing the integration of classroom, school library learning commons, and technology tools.

**Step 3 — Act On It.** What school library and technology initiatives will make the most impact on teaching and learning?

#### **1. Building reading, writing, speaking and listening skills together across the curriculum.**

##### **The school librarian:**

- Attends curriculum team meetings where reading, complex texts, and reading strategies are being discussed.
- Models reading and writing strategies for students such as previewing texts, annotating text, and using graphic organizers.
- Encourages every adult to model fluent and avid reading.
- Assists teachers in the selection of complex and informational texts that support the curriculum.
- Helps differentiate opportunities for learners by providing a range of easy to challenging texts on topics under study.
- Promotes both informational and literary texts in a variety of genres for any topic under consideration.
- Creates displays highlighting both informational and literary texts that address the same subject.
- Promotes the idea that student's motivation, knowledge, and experiences must also come into play in text selection. Students deeply interested in a particular topic, for example, may engage with the text on that subject across a range of complexity levels.
- Ensures that there is a writing component across all learning activities whether individual composition or collaborative writing using a variety of technologies.
- Ensures that students have opportunities to stretch their reading abilities but also to experience the satisfaction and pleasure of easy, fluent reading.
- Provides opportunities to engage with texts 24/7 on any preferred device and format.
- Participates in teaching the use, understanding, and interpretation of complex texts.
- Promotes the shared responsibility for students' literacy development.
- Includes opportunities to develop speaking and listening in collaborative learning experiences, both face-to-face and using technology.
- Collaborates with reading specialists to teach and promote reading across the school.

- ❑ Promotes speaking and listening skills by using a variety of participatory strategies such as think, pair and share, brainstorming, analysis, debate, and compelling questions.
- ❑ Provides activities that give students opportunities to practice speaking as individuals and within a group in face-to-face formats and using technology.
- ❑ Provides opportunities for students to listen to a wide variety of texts being read aloud and responding to their meaning by identifying evidences in the text.

**Examples of this initiative:**

**Example 1:** In an effort to encourage more nonfiction reading that is emphasized across the curriculum in the CCSS, the school librarian creates displays of books that pair a popular fiction title with a narrative nonfiction text about the same topic. The teacher and the librarian book talk these recommendations as they introduce a learning activity together.

**Example 2:** In line with the deep attention paid to the importance of writing in the CCSS, the elementary school librarian and 4th grade teachers want to incorporate writing into every activity and lesson with students. The librarian and teachers use a variety of writing techniques that not only provide opportunities for students to write but also assess understanding. With 2nd grade students, the librarian and teachers decide to use a four square activity to assess understanding. After the lesson, students fold their paper into four squares. In each square each student records their response to a question the school librarian asks about the material presented. With 5th graders, the librarian and 5th grade teachers agree to use exit slips as students leave the library. The students are asked to write five sentences about something new they learned today about their research topic.

## 2. Building appreciation of the best literature and informational materials together across the curriculum as a part of a literate culture.

### The school librarian:

- Makes the library learning commons the center of the literacy culture of the school.
- Creates opportunities for storytelling and digital storytelling by both adults and students across the various technologies.
- Provides opportunities for children and teens to write and publish stories, books, poetry, and create original media across the various genres and technologies.
- Creates opportunities for book clubs/discussion groups across schools and grades both in person and virtually. These groups can be organized in a variety of ways and unique times that allow maximum student involvement.
- Organizes and participates in reading initiatives in the school, community, state, and nation.
- Includes children, teens and faculty in the selection, acquisition, and promotion of a wide range of enjoyable books and other media for the school.
- Allows unlimited access to materials by teachers and students for classroom and home use.
- Provides opportunities to interact with the authors of both fiction and informational texts to hear them talk about their writing process, their book(s), and their motivation using a variety of in-person and technology connections.
- Provides access to a wide spectrum of literature and informational materials in both print and digital form. Narrative non-fiction must be considered in collection development.
- Selects a variety of popular and traditional literature including a wide variety of genres: magazines, graphic novels, and YouTube.
- Provides access to a wide spectrum of materials across the various cultures, ethnicities, and languages spoken or taught in the school.
- Supports the principles of intellectual freedom in the selection and provision of both literary and informational materials.
- Provides opportunities for students to creatively respond to literature through the fine arts, writing and/or technology.
- Creates opportunities for adults to share what they are reading with students.
- Creates opportunities for teachers to discuss children's and young adult literature with one another.
- Creates genre book clubs with teachers where teachers read a book from a different genre each month, then get together and share what they read.
- Promotes sustained silent reading across the school for all learners, students and adults.
- Creates virtual and face-to-face ways for students to review materials they read.
- Works with the local public library in a wide range of literacy activities.

**Examples of this initiative:**

**Example 1:** The CCSS encourages extensive and intensive reading. In an effort to create lifelong, year-round readers, the school librarian creates online book clubs where students can share their responses to books they are reading. The librarian collaborates with language arts teachers and classroom teachers on this project, making use of several social learning platforms. Teachers respond to using Edmodo; the secondary librarian creates several groups based on genres and series. The elementary librarian creates the discussion group for the students in Moodle and uses it to discuss one book at a time. The school librarians act as the moderators of these discussion forums and participate in the discussion. The librarian invites classroom and language arts teachers to participate in the project. Teachers respond to student posts and create their own posts. These book clubs are very engaging and are active during the school year and in the summer.

**Example 2:** The school librarian and teachers want students to understand that all members of the school staff engage in reading. The librarian provides displays in the hallways by teachers' doors. Each staff member displays what he/she is currently reading. Staff members frequently change their display.

**Example 3:** The school librarian creates an evening book club for teachers. At the club's monthly dinner meetings, the librarian and teachers discuss a genre of children's books. Each month a different genre is highlighted. The librarian helps teachers make their reading selections.



### 3. Creating a school-wide participatory culture.

#### The school librarian:

- Collaborates in the construction and workings of a professional learning community across the school's faculty.
- Uses various strategies and technologies to move toward a participatory culture such as - collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking.
- Creates a participatory Virtual Learning Commons to replace the school library website.
- Participates in cross-classroom, cross-grade level, cross-schools, local community, and global projects and initiatives. For example, creates opportunities for teachers and students to participate in collaborative learning and reading projects with other schools across the district, the country and the world.

#### Examples of this initiative:

**Example 1:** The CCSS present a clear and compelling goal for students of being able to gather, assess, and integrate information from a wide variety of sources. A goal of a 4th grade collaborative team which includes the 4th grade teachers, the school librarian, and the gifted/talented teacher was to make the research process more authentic for students. They wanted students to become researchers. The collaborative team decided that 4th grade students would extend their state research project by creating authentic research opportunities. Students created questions they wanted to ask students in other states. In addition to questions about the state, students were interested in several other questions. For example, they were interested in what other students were reading. The librarian arranged for students to collaborate online with classrooms in other states using an online service such as Skype or Google Hangouts. Their authentic research became part of their state project.

**Example 2:** When the history teacher notified the school librarian that students in three different class periods would be constructing decade by decade reports, the school librarian suggested that a giant collaborative across classrooms using the various Google Suite of tools. By combining several students in each period on a single decade, the students were able to create mega-projects and presentations that were showcased during a history week and parent night.

**Example 3:** The inclusion of standards for literacy in science has highlighted the importance of reading, research, and writing in this subject. Each week, the sixth graders came to the school library during their language arts period and read and shared picture books with second graders using a science or social studies theme being studied in the second grade classroom. The pairs were encouraged to read to each other and talk about the story as they read to each other.

#### 4. Building co-taught research projects in blended learning experiences.

##### The school librarian:

- Co-creates short research projects with classroom teachers that require students to use an inquiry process in both classroom and library learning commons to answer compelling questions.
- Helps students select research topics and design questions for longer research projects that explore deeper issues and multiple points of view.
- Provides students opportunities to share their research work with their peers and teachers using online collaborative media.
- Integrates the use of Web 2.0 tools that foster genuine and sophisticated inquiry across the school.
- Provides and uses the best information sources, primary sources, multimedia, and other resources that can be used with every learner no matter their literacy level, language competence, or learning style.
- Promotes the use of real learning experiences that engage learners in topics they can be passionate about during inquiry.
- Integrates research process skills into real and blended learning experiences.
- Emphasizes the use of quality information and a sense of healthy skepticism as students encounter information sources both in print and across the Internet.
- Stresses digital citizenship as an essential skill in the world of information and technology.
- Embeds the ideas of intellectual freedom as students encounter a wide range of opinions, cultural groups, organizations, and individuals during inquiry.
- Helps students consider a variety of ways their research can be shared with others.
- Provides students with the tools to creatively share and report their research.
- Helps students evaluate their own research by providing multiple self-assessment opportunities at various stages in the research process, such as exit slips, journaling, as well as opportunities for consultation with the school librarian.
- Joins teachers and students in reflecting about inquiry projects so the group becomes more sophisticated over time.

##### Examples of this initiative:

**Example 1:** The CCSS describe expectations for the history and social studies classes, suggesting that cross-curricular work is a positive aspect of a strong, active educational environment. As part of the 4th grade social studies curriculum, the school librarian and the 4th grade teachers wanted to create a research project about the 50 states that reinforced research, writing and speaking skills and was fun and engaging. The librarian and teachers brainstormed together and decided to have students use an approach where each pair of students would select one state. The guiding questions for each pair were: What makes this state a desirable place to live? What are the challenges people who live in this state face? The pair researched these two questions about their state using a research process guided by the school librarian and classroom teachers. Each pair of students prepared an oral presentation supported by an interactive digital poster or web page such as Glogster. Two pairs of students presented their states in a face-off. After each face-off, the 4th graders decided which state was most desirable to live in and which had the most challenges and why. Students recorded their votes using an online bulletin board program such as Padlet. After all states had been presented, the librarian and teachers led a class discussion. The class discussion revolved around two open-ended questions: Why is it important to have a wide variety of unique states and why? What would the U.S. be like if there were no

separate states, just one big country?

**Example 2:** The CCSS stresses the importance of developing short research investigations. The librarian and the 9th grade social studies team wanted students to build their research skills by participating in a series of short research projects. Such short research projects give students multiple opportunities for practice. The teacher introduced a new historical time period to the students. Students were asked to generate a list of ideas they believe were true about the time period. As a class, the students reviewed the list of ideas the students had identified. Pairs of students selected one idea from the list to research. Their objective was to determine if the idea was indeed true. After their research students shared their findings using a collaborative online writing tool such as Google Apps. In addition, students shared their findings orally with their classmates. After several weeks of study about the new unit topic, students were asked to reflect on the idea they proved or debunked by determining how their findings influenced the historical period. If the students debunked an idea, they considered what would have happened if it had been true. If the students determined an idea was true, they considered if it would have changed history in any way. Ideas were shared in a class discussion where all students participated.

**Example 3:** More sustained research is also expected in the CCSS. The 6th grade collaborative team, which includes the school librarian and the reading specialist, had identified improved research skills as a goal for their students. The team decided to introduce an interdisciplinary unit revolving around deep research. The librarian suggested using a narrative non-fiction book as the inspiration for a year-long study. The award winning narrative non-fiction book the librarian selected involved the landforms studied in 6th grade social studies as well as science and math concepts covered at the same grade level. The school librarian purchased a class set of the books for each 6th grade team. As the year progressed the students were asked to determine an essential question they wished to answer in their research and a point of view from which they would write. Some wrote from the main character's point of view, while others chose an inanimate object such as a landform or an animal in the story and wrote from that point of view. The librarian and teachers helped pairs of students determine an essential open-ended question that could have more than one correct answer. Each pair of students used collaborative writing sites as well as online databases and websites for their research. The research teams were asked to share their essential question, answer, reasoning and evidence they used to determine their answer using a Web 2.0 technology.

**Example 4:** The CCSS expects students not only to collect information, but also to be able to assess its credibility and accuracy. In a senior government class, the students brought up a current issue in which a number of conspiracy theories existed along with the national government's explanation. The teacher decided that interest was so high, that she cancelled the next topical unit, notified the school librarian, and together the adults held a strategy session with the students. They discussed what issues they might address, how the various theories about the issue would be collected, what constitutes good evidence for a theory, how to identify stakeholders of a theory to ascertain motivation, how the theories could be debated, how the differing positions would be analyzed and compared, and how a synthesis could be constructed. Both of the adults agreed that by working together and tapping student motivation, that few school learning experiences could match this one for depth of understanding and development of learning how to learning skills.

## 5. Promoting interdisciplinary real problems, projects and learning experiences that take advantage of rich information resources and useful technology tools.

### The school librarian:

- Builds cross-disciplinary partnerships in the development of “real” learning projects.
- Builds both physical and virtual spaces in the library learning commons that become extensions of the classroom.
- Promotes projects that include groups within the school, across schools, across the community and across the world.
- Experiments alongside teachers with a wide variety of strategies for engaging students in real, simulated, entrepreneurial, and innovative work.

### Examples of this initiative:

**Example 1:** The CCSS note that through the extensive reading from diverse cultures, students gain cultural as well as literary knowledge. In a Chinese language immersion school, second graders were reading aloud various picture books in both Chinese and English. One boy said to the school librarian, “I wish I could read this book in Chinese to someone in China.” Talking with the classroom teacher, the two adults thought that not only a good idea but one that fit into both a language and social studies curriculum. Getting on the Internet, the school librarian found a school in China that wanted to read and share back and forth. So for the whole spring term, children in China read stories in English via Skype to their new friends in the U.S. and vice versa. In the culminating event, classes on both sides of the Pacific shared originally written picture books in both languages that formed the basis of their combined libraries.

**Example 2:** The CCSS hold that to build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must read widely from among a broad range of texts. When the eighth graders proposed to help rebuild the library in a school in a neighboring community that had been destroyed by a tornado, the school leadership team, the librarian, and interested teachers decided make this an entire school project. In every class, ideas were collected, research done on what kinds of books and other materials would be appropriate, what library suppliers might help, how funds might be raised, what community, state, and national organizations might help, how a drive might be organized, and how the materials would be acquired, delivered and organized. Using a variety of social technologies, the young people organized a system of “birthday parties” across the county where the birthday boy or girl would receive no presents: only money to donate to the library fund. The effort hit state and national news and within a year, the destroyed library was furnished and stocked with the best of the best materials that fit the curriculum.

**Example 3:** Students are encouraged in the CCSS to pay attention to all kinds of writing materials, including explanations and information. A school librarian who worked part time in two elementary schools noticed that fifth grade students did a “how things work” unit. During a district teacher planning day, the fifth grade teachers from both schools huddled with the school librarian for a brainstorming session. Out of that planning came a coordinated not only a how things work investigation but a maker fair at the local public library on a Saturday morning as the concluding event of the combined cross-school collaboration.

## 6. Using technology to boost teaching and learning together.

### The school librarian:

- Collaborates with technology leaders to insure that robust wireless is available in the school library / learning commons and the school and that systems such as Google Apps for Education are available to every learner and teacher.
- Collaborates with school leaders to provide access to broad range of appropriate online tools and social media for the school community.
- Folds social media skills over into academic skills.
- Leads a team of students who form an expert team who help implement technologies in the library learning commons and throughout the school.
- Teaches both adults and students the power of a Personal Learning Environment consisting of three parts: creating a personal entry into the Internet; developing a Personal Learning Network; and, creating a personal portfolio.
- Leads a program of digital citizenship in the school.
- Demonstrates regularly the use of technologies as efficiency tools for both adults and students.
- Promotes the use of technology to support concept building.
- Promotes the best technologies as presentation and sharing tools.
- Creates a virtual learning commons that becomes the center of the school learning community alongside the physical library learning commons space.
- Provides opportunities for teachers to learn about and become proficient in the use of Web 2.0 tools and other technologies such as Google Apps for Education.
- Uses models such as the SAMR model to integrate technology in ways that boost teaching and learning opportunities.
- Supports teachers in their use of technology in their lessons.

**Examples of this initiative:**

**Example 1:** Just as the CCSS expects students to be able to assess the quality of resources, so too must teachers. When math teachers became interested in experimenting with the flipped classroom concept, they called on the school librarian to help in the assembling of a wide variety of short videos that could be used for homework. The goal was to have several videos available on each concept so that students would have a choice in preparing for math workshops during daytime classroom activities. The school librarian found a way to have students rate the videos they watched and brought the data to the math teachers' department meeting where all the adults assessed the kinds of videos that seemed to be contributing to success during class workshops.

**Example 2:** The CCSS identify collaboration and teamwork as a skill to be taught. The principal of a middle school asked the school librarian what could be done to provide inservice training for the faculty as the school went into a 1:1 program. Assembling the iTeam of students, the students brainstormed ten of their favorite collaborative Web 2.0 tools and to demonstrate them in a faculty meeting showcase. The faculty circulated around the various showcase booths set up by the students; selected a technology to try and scheduled the iTeam to come and teach that technology to their class at an appropriate time. In 15 minute demonstrations, enough of the kids in the class could use the tools well and promised to be mentors if the others needed help. The teachers appreciated not having to be a master of every app that had potential of making a difference.

**Example 3:** In terms of the production of writing, the CCSS advocates strongly the use of technology in all of its forms, but understands that the mere substitution of a keyboard for a pen does not improve skills. When the school librarian began to notice that teachers were moving the same assignments from paper and pencil to technology, she predicted in a school leadership meeting that the research was showing that no gains would be made in either understanding or in learning how to learn skills. This realization caused the leadership team to rethink their implementation plans and to set up a challenge for various action research projects that teachers could use across the first year of implementation to ferret out best practices.

## 7. Creating cultural experience across the school, community, and across the world.

### The school librarian:

- Uses the library learning commons as a performance and display space.
- Stimulates global learning experiences as part of the local school learning environment.
- Respects and promotes a wide variety of cultural programs, experiences, demonstrations, and interactions both in physical and virtual space.
- Collaborates with local public libraries, museums, colleges, universities, businesses, and community organizations to provide collaborative partnerships that provide educational programming for students involving reading and inquiry.
- Respects and promotes a wide variety of cultural programs, experiences, demonstrations, and interactions both in physical and virtual space.

### Examples of this initiative:

**Example 1:** The importance of being able to analyze how texts addressing similar topics can vary in their points of view is clearly noted in the CCSS. In a junior world history class, the classroom teacher and school librarian were discussing the singular point of view of the textbook and began wondering together how a variety of perspectives could be integrated in a weekly current events “seminar” created by the students themselves. Together, they set up a collaborative Google document and each Monday, a current event was announced. The school librarian would list two or three possible sources on the document for differing perspectives, and the classroom teacher and the students would add others as the week progressed. Each student was expected to read, view or listen to at least one item and choose a different perspective each week to bring to the current events seminar. Each six weeks, the adults would conference about the resulting use of various perspectives and discuss how to encourage better and better resources that would stimulate the conversations.

**Example 2:** The CCSS encourages students to use digital media and visual displays to express information. In a new job, the school librarian discovered that the children came from a variety of ethnicities with almost a half dozen languages spoken at home while the children struggled with English at school. Combining forces with the ESL specialists and classroom teachers, a year-long digital storytelling and story writing project was planned. The children took a combination of cell phones, tablets, and inexpensive video cameras home and videotaped their parents or other acquaintances asking them to tell nature stories from their culture. These videos were uploaded to a school website and then the children would retell and then write the stories they could understand in English. The various classes wrote and illustrated their stories with authentic nature pictures from the country of origin. This digital collection was added to the online library of the school.

**Example 3:** The CCSS expect students to not only be able to research topics, but also to be able to present their findings in a multitude of formats chosen and developed to enhance understanding. When a teen prankster brought bugs to school and ate them in front of a health class, the news spread rapidly throughout the school. When discussed in faculty meeting, the school librarian wondered aloud if the normal cultural celebration done each year might be replaced with research, writing, telling, and perhaps even tasting foods made from insects or other “yukkie” food sources around the world. And, so the project began. The emphasis was on authentic, well written, well told, well demonstrated, and well edited video presentations.

## 8. Fostering creativity, innovation, play, building, and experimentation.

### The school librarian:

- Creates maker spaces for learners of all ages to experiment, construct, design, play, invent and interact with inventors and entrepreneurs.
- Promotes the idea that children and teens are as much teacher as they are learner.
- Promotes the use of library as the center of after school programs and other informal learning initiatives of the school.
- Invites various experts as “in residence” staff such as inventors in residence, artists in residence, authors in residence, and tutors in residence among others.
- Ensures the library is the center of new technologies that stimulate invention and creativity.
- Builds with others a program of self-directed learning for the school.

### Examples of this initiative:

**Example 1:** The CCSS suggests that the ability to integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media formats is a major life and learning skill. The elementary school librarian and the 4th grade teacher wanted to introduce students to a variety of websites. The librarian and teacher used the AASL Best Websites lists to help them choose a variety of websites from which they let students select. The librarian and teacher modeled how they learned how to use Youngzine <http://www.youngzine.org>. Students worked in groups of two to learn how to use all the features of their website. Each pair of students taught another pair of students how to use their website. Students rotated through all of the website presentations. Student pairs then taught 3rd and 5th grade teachers to use the websites.

**Example 2:** The call of the CCSS to engage with complex literary and informational texts requires both incidental and direct instruction. When a particularly difficult and complex text was encountered by a group of students, the classroom teacher was grieving aloud in the faculty room. Overhearing the challenge facing the teacher, the school librarian suggested that the students be allowed to curate around the literacy text using the normal setting, plot summary, vocabulary and other emphases. Combining expertise, the teacher and the school librarian introduced the idea to the class and asked them to develop a variety of strategies to understand the text. Some suggested and created a graphic novel about the plot, others constructed the setting in Minecraft, and still others created a Google document where various phases of the text were linked to definitions or explanations. As teams completed their creative products, they were jigsawed to “read” the text together combining their expertise to deeply understand the text. The adults helped the entire group understand how a variety of attack strategies will often work in unpacking a text.



## 9. Assessing the results of collaborative learning experiences.

### The school librarian:

- Designs and uses methods to measure the impact on learners when co-teaching happens.
- Measures the influence of databases and wide information sources on the products learners create.
- Makes judgments about the impact of technology on teaching and learning.
- Uses multiple assessments on research and projects including personal expertise, cooperative group work, and collaborative intelligence.
- Works with administrators to measure both hard and soft skills across the curriculum.
- Reports the percentage of students who meet or exceed expectations when co-teaching happens in the school library.
- Builds ways to insure that technology used across the school actually is boosting teaching and learning. Example: implementation of the SAMR model.

### Examples of this initiative:

**Example 1:** Research is a primary emphasis in the CCSS throughout the grades and academic areas. The high school librarian and the language arts teachers wanted to help senior high school students engage in more authentic research and evaluate their own research skills in order for them to assess their readiness for college. Students were asked to select a research topic that related to an issue in their own community. After using online and print resources to gain background knowledge for their work, students began to gather their data. Working with a local newspaper journalist, the students each interviewed five persons of various backgrounds and analyzed and synthesized the results with the help of the reporter to be published in the newspaper. Each student led a conference with the teachers and librarian that allowed students to share their research techniques and reflect on their success.

**Example 2:** During the planning of a collaborative unit, the classroom teacher and the school librarian not only selected objectives from the content but also from the area of inquiry and technology. Together, they selected several CCSS standards that fit their purpose and then co-designed an assessment strategy that examined all the standards selected. Both adults divided up the assessment to insure that all the bases had been covered. What they discovered was that from the assessment point of view, two heads were better than one.

**Example 3:** When the teacher and school librarian were collaborating on a complex text and the students were curating around that text, they discovered that peer assessment was a very powerful incentive for individuals to do their best work. When students were expected to share their work with their peers, the quality of their work improved.

**Example 4:** The school leadership team was interested in some type of impact measure of technology on teaching and learning in the school. Using the SAMR model, an action research project was designed to examine a sample of teaching units in the school to determine the level of each intervention on the levels of the model and the progress being made over time in climbing to the next level of the model.

## 10. Managing the integration of classroom, library learning commons, and technology tools.

### The school librarian:

- ❑ Examines and integrates the best ideas from national standards documents, research, and models of best practices.
- ❑ Uses the school library commons as the place to experiment with new ideas, best practices, technologies, and other school improvement proposed initiatives before they are implemented across the school.
- ❑ Organizes the special staff of the school as part of the school library staff including teacher librarians, teacher technologists, reading teachers, curriculum supervisors, or other professionals who have whole school responsibilities.
- ❑ Ensures that the school library is at the heart of school improvement across the school, such as implementation of the Common Core State Standards or other state standards.

### Examples of this initiative:

**Example 1:** Using the Knowledge Building Template they found on Google, the group of specialists in the school including the school librarian used the template to create collaborative learning experiences with teachers. After each learning experience, the website was archived. Twice each year, the leadership team of the school did an analysis of the archived projects to document what kinds of learning experiences were supporting the CCSS or other school-wide initiative. They examined which teachers had participated, what curricular areas had been affected, and what percentage of students was benefiting from the collaboration with the various specialists. From this information they created goals for the next semester.

**Example 2:** When the school principal began discussing moving to a flipped classroom environment, the school librarian decided apply a flipped approach by creating videos that demonstrated the research process and the use of specific online resources. These videos were posted on the library website. This freed the librarian to spend more time engaging with students in discussions about how to structure research projects that were more authentic, rather than only reviewing the research process and resources.

## Summary

The transition to the CCSS will challenge schools most directly in terms of implementation. In placing every student on a pathway to college and career readiness, our schools are embarking on a journey into uncharted waters that will challenge our willingness to learn and our resolve to persist in the face of adversity.

Underlying this Action Brief is a belief in the power of collaboration and collective action. No one person alone can possibly affect the kind of transformation in school culture necessary to successfully implement the CCSS. In today's schools the school librarian is uniquely poised to influence the CCSS implementation process by envisioning the school library program as the center of teaching and learning. School librarians must work to build a participatory and collaborative community of learners.

Used separately, each of the ten recommended initiatives suggested in this Action Brief will positively affect student achievement. Employing all of the high-leverage initiatives in concert will produce a synergistic effect that will transform the school library program and its role in a learning culture that supports each student, regardless of zip code or circumstances, in their effort to become college and career ready.

## Resources

These resources have been compiled to assist librarians in states, districts, and schools with the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The lists are not intended to be exhaustive, nor are they an endorsement of particular resources.

**Achieve:** [www.achieve.org](http://www.achieve.org) — a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization supporting states as they implement policies to ensure students graduate prepared for college and career. Achieve is guiding states in their implementation of the CCSS.

**American Association of School Librarians (AASL):** [www.ala.org/aasl](http://www.ala.org/aasl) — a division of the American Library Association (ALA), AASL promotes the improvement and extension of library services in elementary and secondary schools as a means of strengthening the total education program. Its mission is to advocate excellence, facilitate change and develop leaders in the school library field.

- **A 21st-Century Approach to School Librarian Evaluation:** This workbook uses the AASL *Empowering Learners* program guidelines as a basis for a school librarian evaluation rubric—one that can be adapted or duplicated by school librarians and shared with school administrators. [www.ala.org/aasl/evaluationworkbook](http://www.ala.org/aasl/evaluationworkbook)
- **AASL Best Apps for Teaching & Learning:** A recognition program honoring apps of exceptional value to inquiry-based teaching and learning. [www.ala.org/aasl/standards-guidelines/best-apps](http://www.ala.org/aasl/standards-guidelines/best-apps)
- **AASL Best Websites for Teaching & Learning:** A recognition program that honors websites, tools, and resources of exceptional value to inquiry-based teaching and learning. [www.ala.org/aasl/standards-guidelines/best-websites](http://www.ala.org/aasl/standards-guidelines/best-websites)
- **AASL Learning Standards and Common Core State Standards Crosswalk:** Presented in table format, this crosswalk helps school librarians align the AASL *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* with the Common Core State Standards. [www.ala.org/aasl/standards-guidelines/crosswalk](http://www.ala.org/aasl/standards-guidelines/crosswalk)
- **AASL's Standards for the 21st-Century Learner:** AASL's learning standards offer vision for teaching and learning to both guide and beckon the profession as education leaders. They will both shape the library program and serve as a tool for school librarians to use to shape the learning of students in the school. [www.ala.org/aasl/standards](http://www.ala.org/aasl/standards)
- **A Planning Guide for Empowering Learners:** An online program assessment and planning module for school libraries, this interactive tool saves and converts user entries into worksheets, charts and graphs, saving librarians time while delivering data to schools and districts. <http://www.ala.org/aasl/standards-guidelines/planning-guide>
- **Empowering Leadership: Developing Behaviors for Success:** This book takes the mystery out of leadership by illustrating the visible and invisible components of leadership <http://www.ala.org/aasl/publications-journals/books-products>
- **Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Programs:** Built on a strong history of program guidelines published by AASL, *Empowering Learners* helps school librarians establish effective library programs that meet the needs of the changing school library environment. [www.ala.org/aasl/guidelines](http://www.ala.org/aasl/guidelines)
- **Instructional Partnerships: A Pathway to Leadership:** This *Best of Knowledge Quest* monograph, is a collection of seminal articles to support pre-service and in-service school librarians in developing and strengthening the instructional partner role. <http://www.ala.org/aasl/publications-journals/books-products>
- **Learning4Life (L4L):** The ability to think, create, share, and grow in school and beyond is called Learning4Life. L4L provides a national plan to implement the AASL *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* and *Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Programs*. [www.ala.org/aasl/learning4life](http://www.ala.org/aasl/learning4life)
- **Learning4Life Message Box:** Use this school library message box and tip sheet to deliver focused and compelling messages that resonate with your stakeholders. [www.ala.org/aasl/learning4life/resources](http://www.ala.org/aasl/learning4life/resources)
- **School Libraries Build Strong Students infographic:** Using research on student achievement and college and career readiness, this infographic depicts the message that strong school libraries build strong students. [www.ala.org/aasl/advocacy/tools](http://www.ala.org/aasl/advocacy/tools)
- **Standards for the 21st-Century Learner:** AASL's learning standards offer vision for teaching and learning to both guide and beckon the profession as education leaders. They will both shape the library program and serve as a tool for school librarians to use to shape the learning of students in the school. [www.ala.org/aasl/standards](http://www.ala.org/aasl/standards)

- ***Standards for the 21st-Century Learner Lesson Plan Database***: The Lesson Plan Database is a tool to support school librarians and other educators collaborate in teaching the essential learning skills defined in the AASL *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner*. Lessons submitted as part of the database contain an automatic crosswalk between AASL learning standards and the Common Core State Standards.  
[www.ala.org/aasl/lessonplandatabase](http://www.ala.org/aasl/lessonplandatabase)

**Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)**: [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org) — a global community dedicated to excellence in learning, teaching, and leading. ASCD develops innovative programs, products, and services that empower educators to support the success of each learner.

**Common Core State Standards (CCSS)**: [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org) — the standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers.

**Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)**: [www.ccsso.org](http://www.ccsso.org) — a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues.

**Doing What Works**: <http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/methods/whatworks/edpicks.jhtml> — a collection of videos, slideshows, and tools for using proven teaching practices based on findings from the What Works Clearinghouse.

**International Reading Association (IRA)**: [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org) — a nonprofit, global network of individuals and institutions committed to worldwide literacy.

**International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)**: [www.iste.org](http://www.iste.org) — a membership association for educators and educational leaders committed to empowering connected learners in a connected world. ISTE developed National Educational Technology Standards for students, teachers, administrators, and computer science educators and educational coaches.

**MetLife Foundation**: <https://www.metlife.com/metlife-foundation> — the foundation believes that affordable, accessible and well-designed financial services can transform the lives of those in need, and has built a vision for global financial inclusion on three powerful pillars: Access to Knowledge, Access to Services and Access to Insights.

**Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)**: [www.parcconline.org](http://www.parcconline.org) — an assessment consortium of 19 states building a common assessment system aligned to the CCSS.

**Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21)**: [www.p21.org](http://www.p21.org) — a national organization that advocates for 21st century readiness for every student.

**Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)**: [www.smarterbalanced.org](http://www.smarterbalanced.org) — a second assessment consortium of 26 states building a common assessment system aligned to the CCSS.

**Student Achievement Partners**: [www.achievethecore.org](http://www.achievethecore.org) — a nonprofit organization supporting implementation of the CCSS.

**The Next Generation Science Standards**: [www.nextgenscience.org](http://www.nextgenscience.org) — K–12 science standards are rich in content and practice, arranged in a coherent manner across disciplines and grades to provide all students an internationally benchmarked science education.

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