
An entire book devoted to the school librarian when we only have one person in this role at our school? I honestly wasn’t sure that I wanted to spend time reading a book to expand my knowledge to improve my supervision/evaluation of just one person. But as I read this handbook for administrators, I was convinced of the impact this individual can have on an entire school.

A recent argument noted in the book is that “since we have the Internet, we don’t need librarians any longer.” In response, Church wrote this handbook to be a source for principals to understand how impactful the role of a 21st century school librarian can be on a school and understand what an effective librarian looks like.

“Librarians are the information specialists in the school as they select, curate, and provide access to quality resources and teach students to use those resources efficiently, resourcefully, and ethically,” Church explains.

In each chapter, she explains the many roles of the school librarian: teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, instructional leader, and program administrator. Church also presents specific examples of what each role can provide for a school, and offers a variety of examples and resources. Tapping Into the Skills of 21st-Century School Librarians can be especially useful to principals of schools who are transforming traditional “old-school” libraries to 21st century media centers—even if the librarian on staff is traditionally trained and learning to grow into this new 21st century role.

“As a busy principal, I appreciate that even though I don’t have expertise that my school librarian has with her degree/certification, I can share the resources from this book to help her continue to grow and help all of our students. It is so chock-full of useful resources that at one point I felt like I should just hand it off to our librarian because I didn’t want to hoard it. If I could have asked for anything more from Tapping Into the Skills of 21st-Century School Librarians, it would be that it be written for both the principal and librarian to read together as a book study, and that it include a self-assessment to make goals for improving the school’s library together.”

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