

The Changing Role of the Teacher-Librarian in the Twenty-first Century

For: Dr. Richard Schwier

EDCMM 802.6

March 24, 2000

By: Bev Scheirer

The Changing Role of the Teacher-Librarian in the Twenty-first Century

Introduction

Children today are growing up in a world that has changed significantly over the past ten years. They are comfortable around technology that they have known all their lives. The changes going on today create an opportunity and a necessity for a transformation in the education system and in the way children are taught. Children must be prepared for a future of continued rapid change.

Children are not the only ones who must be prepared for change. There have been great educational changes over the past ten years. “There is one role in education that has been forced to keep up with changes brought about by the information age, computers and the changes in society” (Baumbach, 1995, p. 248). That role is the one of the teacher-librarian, whose job is becoming more important. There are many issues facing teacher-librarians today. In the past ten years, libraries have transformed from places where students go find books, into information centres of schools. New technologies bring many opportunities and challenges to school libraries and teacher-librarians.

The purpose of this paper is to make administrators, teachers, teacher-librarians and board members aware of the important and changing role of these professionals in the school. Their mission to provide access to materials in all formats remains the same, but there has been a virtual explosion of materials and resources in the past few years. Not only must they be proficient with the wide range of information available but they also must be able to work with teachers to instill information literacy skills and to promote life-long learning in students.

What has changed in Saskatchewan education to cause the change in the teacher-librarian's role? Why would a teacher-librarian be seen as a change agent to meet the goals of Saskatchewan education? What are the new roles of today's teacher-librarian? If teacher librarians are to act effectively as change agents, what are the challenges that face them and what do they need to do? What do they need to keep in mind? And what do they need to know? Finally, how can teacher-librarians manage change in their own schools? It is the purpose of this paper to try to answer these questions and to further explore these issues.

Changes Facing Teacher-Librarians Today

This is an era of change brought about by the introduction of informational technologies. "Teacher-librarians have come along way from the time when they were considered caretakers of the book collection. Now they are information providers, consultants, curriculum activists, instructional designers, instructional leaders, production specialists and most important, teachers" (Kreiser and Horton, 1992, p. 313). Some agents of change are closely interrelated such as economic, employment, technological, and instructional trends. Economic trends impact employment. Employment trends in turn impact technology. Employment and technology trends likewise, have a serious impact on education and instruction. The economic trends that have brought changes to the role of the teacher-librarian include reduced budgets at a time of increased costs for both resources and personnel. As well, there is a declining teacher-librarian/pupil ratio at a time of increased demand for expertise in electronic information retrieval (Bens, 1999).

It is predicted that by the year 2010, ninety percent of all jobs will be computer related and that by the year 2020, twenty percent of the working force will be collecting sixty percent of

all the wages (Bens, 1999). Educators must ask themselves what kinds of skills are needed for students to be prepared for these employment trends. These jobs will require critical thinking, higher order thinking and inquiry skills. Teaching information literacy skills becomes a high priority.

There are many technological trends that impact the job of the teacher-librarian. The automation of the library, the use of CD-ROM's and the Internet have dramatically changed the role of the teacher-librarian, making their job more demanding. The use of technology has placed increased demand on teacher-librarians' time to teach information technology, to learn new technologies, to troubleshoot, and to learn which Internet resources can assist students and teachers.

Educational and instructional trends that have changed the role of the teacher-librarian include initiatives from Saskatchewan Education. There have been many changes to the Core Curriculum, which include Resource-based Learning, the Adaptive Dimension and the Common Essential Learnings. Resource-based learning is defined as a philosophy of education and a methodology of teaching and learning, "which involves the achievement of both the subject and information literacy objectives through the exposure to and practice with diverse resources making students active learners"(Lavery, 1997). The use of resource-based learning materials such as the Internet and CD-ROMS are necessary elements to increase the learning achievement of the student (Mendrinis, 1994). Resource-based learning is adaptable to individuals, groups or cooperative learning situations. Resource-base learning integrates both cognitive and physical tools of information literacy within the curriculum. Teacher-librarians are at the forefront of helping teachers use resource-based learning in their classrooms.

Another component of the Core Curriculum is the Adaptive Dimension. It is defined as a concept of making adjustments in approved educational programs to accommodate diversity in student learning needs. It includes those practices the teacher undertakes to make curriculum, instruction and the learning environment meaningful and appropriate for each student (Saskatchewan Education, 1992). The teacher-librarian position would be seen as an important factor in achieving the Adaptive Dimension by assisting teachers in planning a variety of instructional strategies to accommodate individual differences in abilities and learning styles. It can also alter the manner in which students are required to respond to information. Technology can provide a variety of resources for varying cognitive and language abilities, interests and experiences.

Technology has brought many changes to education in the past ten years and technological literacy is listed as one of the goals of the Common Essential Learnings, which is a component of the Core Curriculum. The goals of technological literacy are the following:

- To develop a contemporary view of technology
- To develop understanding that technology both shapes and is shaped by society
- To develop students' appreciation of the value and limitations of technology within society
- To provide opportunities for students' active involvement in decision-making related to technological developments (Sask. Ed., 1992).

These goals relate to the use of the computer as a tool and to developing positive attitudes and values towards technology. The teacher-librarian is important in helping students develop these skills.

Teacher-librarians can also help students to acquire other goals listed as Common Essential Learnings. The Critical and Creative Thinking CEL is developed when students select and evaluate information. A teacher-librarian can teach the following goals of Critical and Creative Thinking:

- To contribute to development of “strong sense” critical and creative thinkers
- To develop an understanding of how knowledge is created, evaluated, refined and changed within subject areas
- To promote both intuitive, imaginative thought and the ability to evaluate ideas, processes, experiences and objects in meaningful contexts
- To enable students to think for themselves, to recognize the limits of individual reflection and the need to contribute to and build upon mutual understandings (Sask. Ed., 1992).

Through the use of technology and resource-based learning, a teacher-librarian can teach the goals for the CEL of Communication. One of the goals of Communication is to enable students to use language for differing purposes and audiences. Personal and Social Values can also be enhanced by developing students’ abilities to work together in cooperative learning groups and other grouping practices using technology. The CEL that can most strongly be supported by a teacher-librarian is Independent Learning, which lists the following goals:

- To support the development of a positive disposition to life long-learning
- To develop students’ abilities to meet their own learning needs
- To develop students’ abilities to access knowledge (Sask. Ed., 1992).

The 1998 Saskatchewan Educator’s Indicators Report lists basic skills for education such as acquiring information and meaning through observation, listening and experiencing, communicating ideas through written and spoken language and aesthetic expression. There are also goals which promote life-long learning, understanding and relating to others, career decisions and growing with changes (Sask. Ed., 1998). Teacher-librarians’ expertise is needed to help teachers meet these goals and initiatives of Saskatchewan Education.

Library resources have changed from books and audiovisual resources to resources that include new technologies. Libraries have automated their book collections and have added computers that students can use to search the catalogue, CD-ROM databases, or the Internet, or to work with presentation and word processing software. (Harrington-Lueker, 1997). Support staff such as library technicians greatly assist the teacher-librarian.

The library program itself has undergone transformations. The instructional setting has also changed from the library to the classroom or the computer room. Instruction has gone beyond individual teaching by the teacher-librarian. The teacher-librarian now teaches with teachers and technology coordinators. There has been a change from a teacher requesting a theme and the librarian choosing the books. The teacher and the teacher-librarian now choose themes and resources together. The biggest change has been in the area of instruction where previously the teacher-librarian taught primarily library skills. Today, the teacher-librarian should be teaching information accessing and processing and research skills. Problem solving, creative and critical thinking, speaking, writing, representing, listening, reading, and viewing are other skills they can teach. It has been found that teaching library skills in isolation has not been as successful as when the skills are integrated into the curriculum. The program has changed so that the library skills are integrated into the curriculum to support classroom goals.

Why are Teacher-Librarians Catalysts for Change?

The movement away from the use of basal textbooks, the increased concern for learning styles, the explosion of information, advances in instructional and informational technologies, advocacy for cooperative learning and collaborative teaching are factors that increase the complexity in planning for instruction. These factors bring a need for teamwork with a teacher-librarian (Donham van Deusen, 1996). There is no one better able to bring about change than a teacher-librarian working in partnership with school administration, classroom teachers and students. "Few educators are as prepared to navigate the massive amounts of information streaming into schools or to teach others how to do so than the school media specialists. Some are definitely seizing the day" (Harrington-Lueker, 1992, p. 45).

Students today need to be able to think rationally and logically. With more and more sources of information, both print and electronic, and the increasing difficulty of ensuring that students can derive meaning from this information, the role of the teacher-librarian becomes central. Teacher-librarians are skilled in accessing and evaluating information regardless of the format and in providing leadership in the appropriate use of information. There is a significant body of research that demonstrates that a qualified teacher-librarian has a positive impact on school culture and student achievement. Several studies indicate teachers have collaborated more in schools when there is a teacher-librarian (Association for Teacher-librarianship in Canada and Canadian School Librarian Association, 1998). It has been demonstrated that when teachers and teacher-librarians work together, students achieve higher levels of literacy, reading, learning, problem- solving skills and information and technology skills (Haycock, 1995).

The critical issue for schools in the face of these changes is implementation. Teachers have to attempt to include curriculum integration, resource-based learning, new evaluation practices and technology into their daily teaching. Teachers cannot implement such changes without support. The most effective support comes through collaborative processes. Administrators need the experiences and strengths of staff members who have knowledge, skills, and commitment to the development of independent, information-literate, lifelong learners. “Teacher-librarians can contribute to this process by drawing on knowledge and skills gained in implementing library programs. They are in a good position to nurture collaborative working relationships among staff, across the grades and the curriculum”(Hughes and Jackson, 1996, p. 20).

Many teachers and administrators have yet to be convinced that technology is useful. Teacher-librarians are ideally suited in helping them to “get it”. They have the training and the

experience to introduce new materials and make teachers comfortable using them. Teacher-librarians recognize that information sources are rapidly changing from print resources to electronic resources and the library must assume a leadership role with the teaching of these new technologies. They recognize the important roles their positions and resource centres have in preparing students for information and technology.

The Role of the Teacher-Librarian in the 21st Century

The Association of Teacher-Librarians of Canada and the Canadian School Library Association established a joint committee to define the competencies necessary for effective teacher-librarians in the twenty-first century. The project was designed to revise the qualifications for teacher-librarians and to serve the needs of both teacher-librarians and administrators. It was based on prior work of the ATLC and the CSLA and research findings (Association for Teacher-librarianship in Canada et al., 1998).

The Association for Teacher-librarianship in Canada listed the following as professional competencies for teacher-librarians:

- 1.1 places a priority on staff relationships and leadership in the implementation of change.
- 1.2 provides leadership in collaborative program planning and teaching to ensure both physical and intellectual access to information and commitment to voluntary reading.
- 1.3 knows curriculum programs mandated by the province, district and school.
- 1.4 understands students and their social, emotional and intellectual needs.
- 1.5 has expert knowledge in evaluating learning resources in different formats and media, both on-site and remote, to support the instructional program.
- 1.6 develops and promotes the effective use of informational and imaginative resources in all formats through cooperative professional activities
- 1.7 provides appropriate information, resources or instruction to satisfy the needs of individuals and groups.
- 1.8 uses appropriate information technology to acquire, organize and disseminate information.

- 1.9 manages library programs, services and staff to support the stated goals of the school.
(Association for Teacher-librarianship in Canada et al., 1998, p. 23-24).

It also listed the following personal competencies for teacher-librarians in Canada:

- 2.1 is committed to program excellence.
- 2.2 seeks out new challenges and sees new opportunities both inside and outside the library
- 2.3 sees the big picture
- 2.4 looks for partnerships and alliances.
- 2.5 creates an environment of mutual respect and trust.
- 2.6 has effective communication skills.
- 2.7 works well with others on a team.
- 2.8 provides leadership.
- 2.9 plans, prioritizes and focuses on what is critical.
- 2.10 is committed to lifelong learning.
- 2.11 is flexible and positive in a time of continuing change. (Association for Teacher-librarianship in Canada et al., 1998, p. 24-25).

So what is the role of the teacher-librarian in the face of these trends? The position is evolving with the teacher-librarian playing many parts (Bens, 1999). The way teacher-librarians go about their work and the tools that they use have changed in the past decade. Having the initial responsibility for providing resources, the role is expanding to include recommending how to use the resources and coordinating the efforts of teachers. Their role needs support from administration and clear goals must be established to provide a good working relationship with students and staff. Today's teacher-librarian plays many distinct yet interrelated roles in order to accomplish these goals - as a teacher, as a collaborator, as a curriculum leader, as an instructional leader, as an information specialist, as an instructional technologist, as a program manager, as an advocate and as an information specialist. The several differing yet important roles of teacher-librarians will further be described.

The Collaborative and The Curriculum Leadership Role of the Teacher-librarian

This position builds a community of learners with colleagues through collaborative program planning and teaching. The teacher-librarian works with other teachers to provide instruction, evaluation and production of information. It must be in conjunction with other instructional programs, and it involves planning and teamwork. Collegiality can show improvements in student achievement, behavior and attitude. Teachers are better able to consider new ideas and are better prepared to support one another.

Research evidence indicates that integrated library programs impact positively on collaboration, leadership and student achievement when the teacher-librarian has experience as a classroom teacher, qualifications in teacher-librarianship and information studies and learning resources management, preferable at the graduate level, and works collaboratively with teachers in flexible scheduled programs to integrate information problem-solving skills and strategies in the ongoing instructional plan (Haycock and Jopson, 1999, p. 18).

Teachers and teacher-librarians collaboratively plan and teach in order to develop and implement curriculum and to try new teaching strategies. Teacher-librarians provide leadership in bringing about some of the major curriculum changes in schools today. They become teaching, learning and assessment partners who maintain strong curriculum and instruction involvement. "Teacher-librarians interface and intertwine with the schools broader instructional programs" (Baule, 1999, p. 43). They can design, implement and evaluate a plan for teaching information skills. Teacher-librarians can use cooperative planning and teaching to develop curriculum.

Teacher-librarians can exhibit leadership skills that move schools forward in addressing the complex issues of the information age. They have strong values and a vision for their school. They are positive role models for other teachers and students because they understand the school and the curriculum as well. They have contact with all teachers and administrators and they can

promote communication within the school. Teacher-librarians can lead professional development activities and be involved in many ways with teacher education.

The Instructional Role of the Teacher-librarian

Teacher-librarians help instruct students, staff and parents in their schools. They become instructional consultants who are involved with all grades in all subjects and who bring a unique perspective to curriculum development. They become coordinators of activities, events and curriculum because they can make connections between grades and subject areas. Working with teachers, they are instructional designers. Their expertise with information resources can assist teachers' exploration of curriculum topics and help them in locating the materials they need. As instructional leaders, they help create resource-based learning activities with a team of teachers in the schools, using a variety of teaching methods. The teacher-librarian takes the initiative, places a priority on cooperative program planning and teaching with colleagues and encourages team planning (Association for Teacher-librarianship in Canada et al., 1998). They work with educators to design learning strategies to meet the needs of individual students (Baule, 1999). Teachers and teacher-librarians need to work more closely than ever before. "They need to design meaningful activities, to incorporate thoughtful processing time throughout the experience, and to modify their instruction. In a way, this approach means more work but it can be intellectually stimulating, learning can be richer and more original" (Farmer, 1999, p. 11).

The Instructional Technologist Role of the Teacher-librarian

Teacher-librarians must have a broad knowledge of resources, hardware, networks and trends in technology. Troubleshooting hardware such as laser printers and VCR's, and serving on

technology committees have become a part of many teacher-librarians' job description. The changing role of the teacher-librarian has been described as being a jack of all trades (Harrington-Lueker, 1997). Teacher-librarians "who have embraced technology can be key leaders in integrating technology in to the instructional programs of their schools" (Baule, 1999, p.43). Ongoing professional development is an important part of their role so that " they contribute their expertise to the design and delivery of technology enhanced inservice programs" (Hancock, 1997, p. 62). They need to become technical leaders in their schools.

Without an understanding of how technology can and should be used, the addition of technology by itself will not work. To be successful in the future, library programs will need to continue to emphasize the integration of informational technologies and electronic information access. Teacher-librarians can be leaders by keeping up-to-date with the latest in computer hardware and software applications and by working with the teachers to integrate technology into the schools curriculum. They could seek out and take advantage of every opportunity for training in current and emerging education. It is essential that teacher-librarians and technology staff maintain an ongoing dialogue and have an extremely close working relationship to be successful.

The Library Management Role of the Teacher-librarian

Automation of library clerical functions has been increasing in schools and teacher-librarians have had to adapt to these changes in technology, simplifying their role. School libraries now have online catalogs, and access to district wide networks and presentation software. The use of this new technology by staff and students has to be demonstrated and procedures put onto place. Besides this, teacher-librarians manage a budget, a support staff and a

set of learning resources. Collection development has become an increasingly more complex task as teacher-librarians must not only familiarize themselves with the latest and best in children's literature. They must also know how to evaluate software and web sites to recommend to students and staff. There are issues regarding the circulation and inventory of a wide range of print, nonprint and electronic learning resources that teacher-librarians need to address (Doiron, 1999).

Though libraries have gone through tremendous physical transformation in the last ten years, their basic purpose as providers of information has not changed. Teacher-librarians provide intellectual and physical access to materials in all formats. They ensure that a balanced collection of learning resources exists to meet the needs of the school population. "In the past fifteen years, libraries have tried to transform themselves from places where students came to use books, to the information centres of the schools, where information access is the first priority no matter what the format of the material" (Baule, 1999, p.42).

The Information Specialist Role of the Teacher-librarian

The teacher-librarian is the keeper and distributor of instructional media for the school. As an information specialist, they help assure equity of information by working with teachers to help them and their students learn the necessary skills to identify, access and use the appropriate resources. Being a provider of teaching resources means anticipating of needs and improving the quality of resources in the library. "The role of the teacher-librarian as an information specialist and a technology resource is becoming increasingly evident as it becomes increasingly important"(Baumbach, 1995, p.252). Resource-based learning is an educational model which, by design, actively involves students, teachers and teacher-librarians in the meaningful use of a

wide range of appropriate print, nonprint and human resource. Libraries are no longer quiet places; they are the centres of activity. The library is the centre for this kind of learning and teacher-librarians are the facilitators. Teacher-librarians coordinate the sharing of resources with other information centres in the school system (Hughes and Jackson, 1996). They can ask the initial questions that help students develop focus for inquiry. They are familiar with district and school resources and have the technology skills to expose students to resources in a variety of media as well. They can assist students in their efforts to develop technology-enhanced products and presentations.

The Advocate Role of the Teacher-librarian

The teacher-librarian, teachers and the school administration must work closely together and it is the teacher-librarian who must take the lead in fostering this relationship. They champion the cause of school libraries through various advocacy programs to promote the library and resources. They can communicate news about the school library through newsletters, web sites and memos to parents and staff. Their job is to keep principals and teachers up to date on what is happening in the library and to promote school library activities and special projects. “Schools are learning communities encompassing students, teachers, administrators and parents”(Baule, 1999, p.42). Teacher-librarians must communicate the mission, goals, and objectives of the school resource centre to the entire school community. It is appropriate to play a role in public education because the library is the only part of the school that cuts across all discipline areas.

The Information Literacy Role of the Teacher-librarian

Information literacy will have a central role in the curriculum programs of the future. Technology innovators are recognizing that this concept needs to be integrated into their goals of having learners use technology in more meaningful ways. Teacher-librarians are very comfortable with the concept of information literacy and recognize it as a natural progression in our understanding of resources-based learning, research and information skills (Doiron, 1999).

“The modern day teacher-librarian must not only be proficient with the wide range of information technologies available today, but they must still be able to work with teachers to instill information literacy skills in their students. Information literacy is the key to life long learning” (Baule, 1999 p.42). Information literacy is the ability to access and evaluate information that promotes both independent learning and social responsibility. Today’s students must possess information skills or research and study skills that will lead to critical thinking, effective problem solving and decision-making. Information skills taught in isolation are of little value. They must be integrated with subject specific skills and content in resource-based programs in which teacher-librarians are working partners with the classroom teachers and administrators to plan, develop, implement and evaluate units of study. It is the teacher-librarian’s job to show students how to analyze information critically and use it wisely. Students must know how to plan, locate, and retrieve information. They process what they find to create a product and the final step is evaluation (Lighthall, 1990).

Electronic resources are second nature to many young people. That is the dilemma. The kids are technologically literate from the manipulative sense and technologically illiterate from the process point of view. They can get to it, print it, highlight it, clip it, and regurgitate it. But have they owned it? Have they learned it? Have they embraced it? Do they really know the process of searching for it? (Miller, 1997.p. 16).

Students must be taught to use the library and the computer for research and to find answers. They must also be taught when a book or the Internet is the most appropriate resource. Teachers need to be shown other possible assignments to give students to ensure that they are not merely copying and pasting together their assignments from CD-ROM encyclopedia or online sources. They need projects that do not lend themselves to copying from resources. Students confuse data with knowledge. Now Internet resources seem to have replaced print as an infallible resource. “Internet increases the likelihood for unquestioning acceptance of “facts” as it brings vast quantities of data into every library. We need to teach the overriding literacy skill: the ability to reflect on information, to select what is useful, and evaluate its value” (Farmer, 1999, p. 11).

Teacher-librarians must work closely with students to design, implement, and revise research skills. The classroom teachers cannot keep up with all the search strategies and the best resources.

There is so much we can do to assure our students are using electronic resources as a part of a processed completed product. We are ever evolving in our profession. And, one of the most evolving components is the total commitment and physical involvement we must establish with our students. The most important part of the job is the kids. (Miller, 1997,p. 16).

The ability to access, evaluate and use information from a variety of sources is central to successful learning.

Challenges Facing Teacher-Librarians

The implications for teacher-librarians suggest a reexamination of their roles and responsibilities. The teacher-librarian must fulfill many varied roles and responsibilities. (Assiniboine South School Division, 1996). There are many challenges facing teacher-librarians

as they strive to develop their multifaceted role. They must ask themselves the following questions:

- Are you familiar with the many emerging technologies?
- Are you fully aware of the potential the emerging technologies have for schools?
- Are you ready to provide the leadership necessary to take full advantage of these and other information programs? (Assiniboine South School Division, 1996).

It is also important for teacher-librarians to keep up with developments in following fields:

- Telecommunications
- Information storage and retrieval
- Computer applications
- Instructional design (Assiniboine South School Division, 1996).

A challenge exists for classroom teachers to alter their perceptions of teacher-librarians and what they do. A challenge also exists for teacher-librarians to act as catalysts for the alterations of the perceptions. Professionalism implies taking ownership for change and actively joining in professional activities. It demands a paradigm shift on the part of professionals who are charged with the responsibility of leading students into the 21st century (Assiniboine South School Division, 1996).

Traditionally, school libraries have been vulnerable to budget cuts. This is another challenge facing teacher-librarians. As schools move technology into the classroom, there may be fewer funds available for the resource centre. There is also a perception by some administrators and teachers that there is no longer a need to develop the school library collection because of the use of the Internet and CD-ROM encyclopedias. They must highlight the importance of books, magazines and encyclopedia sets. Another threat with decreased in funding is that the position of teacher-librarian could be reduced or eliminated.

A further issue facing teacher-librarians in Saskatchewan is access to library courses. There are no classes available for the teacher-librarianship in Saskatchewan universities. Only

recently, under the Western Deans' Agreement, classes have become available online from the University of Alberta to teachers in this province. Because there has not been an emphasis in the training of teacher-librarians in Saskatchewan, there are fewer qualified teacher-librarians to replace those who are retiring and the ones being placed in school systems may not be adequately trained. One more challenge is for the teacher-librarian to work together with the library technician as a team to make staff and students knowledgeable about resources in the library. When both a teacher-librarian and a technician are not in place, many schools turn to parent and student volunteers for help (Harrington-Lueker, 1997). Teacher-librarians then must spend most of their time with clerical duties and they do not have sufficient time to spend working with teachers and students.

Many are handling technology in addition to their traditional responsibilities. "Some teacher-librarians have jumped enthusiastically into becoming "Cyberians", others find that it takes away from what they enjoy most about being a librarian (Harrington-Lueker, 1997, p.49). They all don't have "the ability to deal with the software and hardware. It's being foisted on people because of tight budgets"(Harrington-Lueker, 1997, p. 49). People skills are a must for teacher-librarians as their position may place them in conflict with the technology coordinator. Not all staff members will appreciate the rapid introduction of technology. Teacher-librarians introducing technology will need strong interpersonal skills to get staff to participate (Harrington-Lueker, 1997).

Teacher-librarians are expected to have technological expertise, and to share that expertise with teachers as well as students. Managing student access to work stations adds new demands because students are using technology not only for information retrieval but also in the creating and presenting stage of their research work. (Oberg, 1999). For teacher-librarians, the

changing technology has made locating resources much harder task. It is possible to pull books and magazines from a library collection for a teacher in a short amount of time. Incorporating electronic resources takes longer, because it takes more time to identify worthwhile sites. The selection tools for electronic resources are not as well developed as those for print (Oberg, 1999).

What can Teacher Librarians do to Manage Change?

Managing Change at a Personal and Professional Level

There are numerous ways for teacher-librarians to manage the changes they see in their day to day activities. They can develop a professional growth plan that may include some of the following activities. Professionally, there are many web sites created by teacher-librarians that contain resources and information on authors. Through discussion groups, they can provide opportunities for themselves to share new ideas and trends in education. They can be involved in continuing education in order to learn effective ways to use technology in their teaching, to access new resources, and to collaborate and communicate with peers outside the classroom.

Teacher-librarians could offer to make presentations at conferences for administration, such as superintendents, principals and curriculum directors. Teacher-librarians can make presentations at conferences for teachers and teacher-librarians to promote the changes in their profession. Another beneficial way to share professionally could be to meet regularly with other teacher-librarians in the school division. Teacher-librarians could consider writing for professional journals and manuals to share valuable resources and ideas related to library issues. Joining professional organizations such as the Saskatchewan School Library Association and The Association for Teacher-Librarianship in Canada can be an effective way to keep up to date

in the field. Reading professional journals such as Teacher-Librarian and Book Report are also excellent ways to learn what is happening and current.

Managing Change at the School Level

At the school level, teacher-librarians can continually seek input from staff regarding what they are doing and what the staff, student and curriculum needs are. Keeping current with changing technology and providing access to all formats of information that will reinforce and update the curriculum is also important. Teacher-librarians can be seen as a lifelong learners and their knowledge and experience should be shared with other educators. They can sharpen teaching skills and promote inservice training in using and integrating technology in the curriculum.

Teacher-librarians must continue to seek and develop administrative support by demonstrating the educational needs of students and staff. All professional activities could be documented and a monthly report submitted to the principal. Teacher-librarians should be aware that they could assist administrators in achieving their goals for the school. The principal and teachers should be aware of activities occurring in the library. Teacher-librarians could regularly recommend recently acquired materials to teachers and consult staff when ordering new materials. They should create a library that is a physically inviting place for students and staff (Mendrinós, 1994).

It is important that the teacher-librarian becomes a trusted part of the school staff to be effective. Some ways for teacher-librarians to become involved in the school are to participate in school committee activities and extracurricular social gatherings. Displaying diplomas on office walls is a way for students and teachers to recognize that advanced degrees were acquired to

receive a library position. Teacher-librarians must know three things about their school: the current teaching practices, the culture of the school and the teachers' skills, knowledge and attitudes. Taking the time to develop an understanding of the school will assist them in deciding where, with whom and at what pace to proceed in incorporating technology and in encouraging collaborative teaching. It will also help teacher-librarians to participate in building their schools a capacity for change (Oberg, 1999).

One of the most important ways for teacher-librarians to make a difference in their schools is to work with teachers, technology coordinators and administrators to create a team in the school. An action plan outlining the specific needs of the school, how technology will extend resources, and how it will facilitate resource sharing can be developed through this partnership (Bens, 1999). They can assist the computer teacher to think creatively about technology and its educational use in the school. Teacher-librarians can provide lists of web sites geared to a season, a special holiday or a theme. They can also acquire valuable information regarding school library and technology issues. They can help provide training that is school-based on professional development days or during after school workshops. The teacher-librarian who is trained on the use of the Internet, e-mail, and web site evaluation can be a mentor to the staff.

Managing Change at the School System Level

An effective way to manage the changes facing teacher-librarians is to become a policy maker. Teacher-librarians can help develop a vision statement for both school systems and individual schools. There are practical benefits to having written policies and procedures and teacher-librarians have a professional mandate to keep them as current and as complete as

possible. They must develop and implement a mission statement that reflects the mission, goals, and objectives of the school.

The first stage of this process involves locating existing policies. Teacher-librarians should try to locate all relevant policies and procedures and decide whether they meet the needs of a twenty-first century school. Existing policies from other school divisions across Canada can be researched and documents can be referred to such as the competencies for teacher-librarians. Once a framework of policies has been located, they must be evaluated to see if the mission, goals and philosophy of the school or school division are reflected in these policies. When this has been updated, the teacher-librarian should reflect on how change has affected the library and existing policies should be reviewed for their timeliness. Next, issues such as the following that are pressing for today's library should be considered:

- Student technology use, including the acceptable use of computers
- Faculty technology use, including acceptable use of computers
- Circulation issues
- Copyright and new technology issues
- Personnel hiring
- Personnel evaluation
- Facility use
- Acquisition of materials
- Access of materials (Repman & Downs, 1999, pp.9-10).

Older policies should be weeded and the revision of a policy should be completed at a division or local school level. A division-wide approach allows the work to be distributed among other colleagues with differing areas of expertise. The greatest benefit of this is the ability to achieve consensus and consistency across all schools in the division and it should be accepted and adopted from the local board of education to carry authority and to ensure it is followed (Repman & Downs, 1999). The policies and procedures should then be shared with all stakeholders.

Conclusion

There are many aspects to the role teacher-librarians. Teacher-librarians are curriculum development leaders as well as a collaborative teaching and planning partners for the classroom teacher. They can be leaders into integrating technology into instruction in the school. They are the information specialists who provide both physical and intellectual access to material through teaching the knowledge, skills and values required to use information and to communicate knowledge ethically and effectively. Teacher-librarians must also be involved in revising and rewriting policies and procedures that are important to meet the needs of the twenty-first century. They are resource managers and must be up to date in reviewing new materials in order to develop their collections.

The teacher-librarian must be a catalyst for change and be involved in their changing role by continuing to provide quality resources for teachers and by becoming a positive role model for using technology. They can both support and help to train teachers. They have the knowledge of the school, the school collection of learning resources, what is best and how to use it. They have gained the trust and confidence of the teachers in the school and they can become the human touch that is needed from integrating technology in schools.

Teacher-librarians have an important role to play in helping schools meet the challenges of the next century. They need to be lifelong learners who seek out new answers and solutions to educational problems and to put their vision into practice. “They must keep it simple to act as a catalyst for change, but to retain the human touch...change is about people” (Brown p. 28). The role of a leader and change agent may not be one for which many teacher-librarians feel prepared, but assuming such a role may be critical for the future of the school library program. “Teacher-librarians will need to reach and collaborate with all sectors of the school community

in planning, implementing and evaluating programs” (Shannon, 1996, p.41). By choice and demand, technology is restructuring education, and changing teaching and learning in ways that impact on everyone. Roles are changing, new expertise is required, and new skills must be learned all at a faster pace than ever before.

Library Resource centers and teacher-librarians are really at a crossroads. They are called on to play an increasingly important role in information literacy and electronic information retrieval, analysis, and synthesis. The teacher-librarian must become a technology role model and leader. Failure of the library Resource Center to meet this new mandate and failure of teacher-librarians to embrace the challenge of this new role will inevitably lead to obsolescence. (Bens, 1999).

To meet these changes, a school depends upon the expertise of a teacher-librarian. “Being a change agent means not being content with the status quo, it requires personal commitment and hard work...we are in a unique position to offer individualized and ongoing instruction to teachers” (Hughes & Jackson, 1996, p. 21).

REFERENCE LIST

Assiniboine South School Division (1994). Assiniboine South Information services planning report. Available on the World Wide Web at:

[<http://www.mbnet.mb.ca/~assdnews/policies/jan96infoserv.html>]

Association for the Teacher-librarianship in Canada, Canadian School Library Association (1998). Competencies for Teacher-librarians in the 21st Century. Teacher Librarian, 26(2), 22-25.

Baule, S. (1999) Information power: Building partnerships for learning. Book Report, 18(3), 42-43.

Baumbeck, D. (1995). The school library media specialist's role in instructional design: past, present and future. In G. Anglin (Ed.) Instructional Technology past present and future. (pp. 248-253). Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited.

Bens, S. (1999). Technology and the Changing Role of the Teacher-Librarian. Available on the World Wide Web at:

[http://www.s95.schdist43.bc.ca:8000/district/lrc_tech.htm]

Brown J. (1990). Navigating the '90's-The teacher-librarian as change agent. Emergency Librarian, 18(1), 19-28.

Doiron, R. (1999) Activating new partnerships in support of school libraries. Teacher Librarian, 26(3), 9-15.

Donham van Deusen, J. (1996). The School library media specialist as a member of the teaching team: "Insider" and "Outsider". Unknown Journal, 11(3), 229-248.

Eisenberg, M., Lowe, C. (1999). Call to action: Getting serious about libraries and information education. Available on the World Wide Web at:

[<http://www.infotoday.com/MMSchools/mar99/eisenberg.htm>]

Farmer, L. (1999). Setting policy from technology standards and other practices. Book Report, 17(5), 30-32.

Farmer, L. (1995). Information Literacy: More than pushbutton printouts. Book Report, 14(3), 11-13.

Hancock, V. (1997). Creating the information age school. Educational Leadership, 55(3), 60-63.

Harrington-Lueker, D. (1997). The powered -up library. Electronic Learning, 16(6), 44-49.

Haycock, K. (1995). Research in teacher-librarianship and the institutionalization of change. School Library Media Quarterly, 23(4), 227-233.

Haycock, K., Jopson, G. (1999). Propositions for informational technology: Planning for success. Teacher Librarian, 26 (3), 15-20.

Hughes, S., Jackson, B. A. (1996). The Teacher-librarian in transformational change. The Canadian School Executive, 15(8), 20-21.

Kreiser, L., Horton, J. (1992). The history of the curriculum integrated library media program concept. International Journal of Instructional Media, 19(4), 313-319.

Laverty, C. (1997). Resource-Based Learning. Available on the World Wide Web at: [<http://stauffer.queensu.ca/inforef/tutorials/rbl/rblintro.htm>]

Lighthall, L. (1990). Pivotal role of teacher-librarians. The Canadian School Executive, Sept. 35-36.

MacPhee, J. (1995). Teacher-librarians: Facing the challenges of the 1990's. The Medium, 35(2), 8-10.

Mendrinis, R. (1994). Building information literacy using high technology: A guide for schools and libraries. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited.

Miller, S. J. (1997). Technology to the rescue of senioritis victims. Book Report, 16(2), 16-17.

Oberg, D. (1999). High stakes: Technology and collaborative teaching. Available on the World Wide Web at: [<http://www.ualberta.ca/~doberg/hista.htm>]

Repman J., Downs, E. (1999). Policy issues for the 21st century library media center. Book Report, 17(5), 8-11.

Rux, P. (1994). Listening to the music. Book Report, 13(20), 15-16.

Saskatchewan Education (1992). English language arts: A curriculum for the elementary level. Available at: [<http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/ela/intro.html>]

Saskatchewan Education (1998). Saskatchewan education indicators, Kindergarten to grade 12. Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Saskatchewan Education (1999). Technology literacy assessment. Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Schultz, C. (1999). Developing an advocacy plan for the school library media center. Book Report, 18(3), 19-22.

Shannon, D. (1996). Education Reform and school library programs: perceptions of Kentucky's school library media leaders. School Library Media Quarterly, 25(1), 35-41.