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The following paper is an abridgement of an address to the Ontario Library Association, School Libraries Division fall seminars in Peterborough, Thunder Bay and Windsor in 1972. Mr Haycock is Educational Media Consultant, The Wellington County Board of Education, Guelph, Ontario.

1972 seemed to be the year of contradiction and uncertainty. 1972 was International Book Year when UNESCO sponsored penny campaigns for the funding of book projects in developing nations. 1972 was also International Book Year in Canada where governments and governing boards sponsored penny-pinching campaigns to cut back budgets for print and non-print materials in our libraries. 1972 was the year when the progressive board, which always knew that the teacher-librarian and the library media centre were the very heart of the school program, chopped at personnel time as well as materials while the slower board was just adopting standards for personnel albeit at a snail's pace. 1972 was the year when more and more school librarians finally came out from behind their charging desks and entered the mainstream of the educational experience, yes, even made themselves a force for educational excellence. Then, that same school librarian found the public beating down the door to use the curriculum collection which is now in constant demand, the facilities which are now taxed to the limit, and his services when he can't find enough hours in the day to meet the demands already placed on him. 1972 was a year of inflation, a year of citizen outrage at high taxes and a year of shrinking funds. And it's going to get worse rather than better; Ontario salary incre-

ments at the secondary level, not including pay raises, are larger than percentage grant increases this year.

The school librarian

The school librarian is on the go all day long from eight in the morning until five at night and then at home in the evening. What does he do all day? Is he able to articulate to the layman just what is meant by "library work?" If he is able to do this, does the list indicate the role of a professional teacher with additional education in school librarianship? Or does the role apply more to that of a library technician? We must be absolutely certain of our teaching role and our place in the school's program in order to explain what we are doing, exactly, to others. A director of education of a county board noted for its affluence and innovative approach recently explained his conception of the role of a school library media centre to a group of library and media consultants. He wasn't satisfied with a keeper of the books; he wanted the dynamic promotion of materials to all students and teachers. This director even illustrated methods of selling the product; namely, have the library club run a courier service through the school, entering classes for five minutes at the beginning of the period to introduce new materials and programs. Members of the audience commented on how well-informed the speaker was; however, I don't think that he understood at all. There was no teaching role involved. Indeed, a teaching certificate and classroom experience were not seen as very accurate criteria for the position. Of course, qualifications for school libraries have been a sore point with professional librarians for years. I

guess it boils down to your conception of a school media centre and the role of the teacher-librarian as resource teacher.

Whenever a public group makes noises about using the school media centre the public librarian and the teacher-librarian point out that the collection is curriculum-oriented and thus of no interest to the adult. The public doesn't buy this, however. They are looking at economy such as the savings in overhead costs of the building, heating, lighting and custodial duties which one is inclined to think is meant to include the services of the librarian. So, we throw back the problems of the school's out-of-the-way location which doesn't always apply, administrative conflicts (which that same director of education felt could be solved by hiring an attractive divorcee as school librarian and a handsome bachelor as public librarian) and a myriad of technical and mechanical considerations. It does appear foolish to have school libraries and keep them closed to students in the evenings and on week-ends; we recognize this. Most of us have been through an experience where the school library was open in the evenings. Did we provide a trained, experienced teacher-librarian at night school salary to plan and develop a program and give individual attention? Of course not – we hired a clerk or, as in one school, let the library club members volunteer for duty – and then we wonder why we have to close this study hall, which happens to be situated in the library, for a pathetic lack of use. When will we learn to pay for service? We know that a professional teacher-librarian is essential in the school and a professional public librarian at some level is essential for public library service worthy of the name.

Surely, the media centre is primarily a structured learning centre inseparable from the instructions program. The collection consists of carefully selected multilevel print and non-print materials which are designed to be integral to a specific unit of work and to provide specific learning experiences. To say that the collection is curriculum-oriented is a misnomer. All that means is that the material has relevance in that it supports something

somewhere in the hundreds of units taught in the school. That is not nearly good enough. The resources will only be vital when they have been selected after the classroom teacher and the resource teacher have planned a program using the media centre. Unless the methodology for that unit involves the use of learning media the materials should not be purchased. The media centre may very well have 200 pieces of material on the Russian Revolution and nothing on the French Revolution. However, after planning with teachers, the resource teacher would know that the French Revolution was going to be taught using the Socratic method and materials would only sit on the shelves.

The resource teacher must be involved; the role must be one of co-operative teaching to individualize and personalize instruction with the help of media. A public library balance cannot be a goal; even a curriculum-related balance cannot be a goal. The materials must have a planned purpose beyond an uncertain destiny subject to the whim of teachers. The resource teacher must be a leader in curriculum planning and development and be a specialist in education, not just materials. This role of the teacher-librarian meeting and even creating needs is only dimly perceived by administrators and teachers and understood by relatively few school librarians. Teachers are rarely committed to the extent that they support increased budgets and staff at their supposed expense, and trustees are rarely aware of it or they wouldn't chop library budgets first and without question. We must demonstrate the value, the necessity of our services to our colleagues and the community now more than ever before.

If there is anything positive in the recent rash of budget cuts it must be that we are now defining objectives, discussing techniques for reaching professional goals and evaluating programs. With this background, we should be able to meet with the media and sell the need for individualized instruction through school media centres and teacher-librarians. There is a great difference between whining and complaining, and the airing of problems in public and openly and honestly discussing and ex-

plaining to, not at, parents, teachers, students and administrators the perplexities and complexities of the situation. We have many publics to deal with and a school newsletter on the media centre will satisfy few of them. It is almost impossible to oversell at this stage of the game; every tactic should be employed including television programs on cable TV, slide/tape presentations, and picture stories in the local papers. Parents are not as interested in the school system as a whole as they are in what is going on in their school and their school media centre. Only with this public consciousness can we develop a political clout. Make no mistake about it – unless we develop strategies for worthwhile change, we will regress to the closed classroom, closed mind, situation of yesteryear.

The adult volunteer

One of the best ways to translate the philosophy and program of the school media centre to the community is to use adult volunteers. This old and somewhat unpopular alternative to the lack of paid personnel is most successful in schools where the addition of free labour is secondary to very necessary public relations. When adequate ground rules are followed in the recruitment, selection and training of adult volunteers, the experience will be mutually beneficial. Adult volunteers are never used in place of a professional teacher; indeed, this is contrary to Ministry of Education regulations. Volunteers must be treated as additional members of your staff, entitled to similar status within a defined role but subject to the same rules and regulations. You are, in effect, hiring a nonprofessional for a role slightly below that of a clerk/typist. In other words, the volunteer must come at a specified hour for a specified period of time such as one half day per week, arriving punctually at the assigned time. If unable to come to work on time or at all, the volunteer must call in the reason – if the volunteer misses three times in a row, for whatever reason, the position is declared open. Also, the volunteer should be identified by an attractive name badge. Unless there is a continuing need for two or more duties to be carried out at

the same time, only one adult volunteer should be used at one time. Prevent the "good catch" from becoming the "coffee klatch." In my experience, the single most important reason for the failure of adult volunteer programs is the mistake of treating the volunteer as a guest in the media centre, able to come and go at will, rather than as another staff member. From my experience too, I know that this seemingly harsh approach works, and works well, with a high rate of return and a waiting list of applications.

The recruitment of volunteers provides an excellent opportunity to explain what the media centre is doing and why additional personnel is necessary. Volunteers can be recruited at home and school meetings, at social functions such as coffee parties in the media centre, through publicity in the media, through paid advertising or direct mail such as a school newsletter and on a person-to-person basis. From the applications potential volunteers can be screened for suitability. The same criteria should apply to applicants for a volunteer position as to applicants for a paid position – don't destroy a program and be misrepresented in the community by a disastrous volunteer. What are the applicant's qualifications and experience? Why does she want the position? What is her attitude? Is she resourceful, stable, personable? An open-ended interview will be essential before accepting a volunteer.

Before the volunteer begins work in the media centre there should be a social meeting of all the volunteers with the principal. Following this, all volunteers must be involved in a complete in-service program on what the school is doing and why it is doing it that way. Such a program should involve the school administration and last at least two half days. This is absolutely essential to any understanding of the school and the philosophical place of the media centre in it. With this in-service background, the volunteer will provide a most useful service by contributing in a more informed manner to popular discussions in the community about the school.

The successful applicant will serve as a channel of communication with parents and

trustees. She will interpret the needs of the media centre in staff, quarters, and collection to the community. Indeed, the volunteer will be explaining the entire school program to the community whether you want her to or not – and this interpretation will be from a rather unique perspective with only the knowledge that you have provided. In the school media centre the adult volunteer will see the best and the worst school programs possible. As well, with mutual feelings of confidence, the volunteer will provide feedback on the interests and concerns of the community.

The use of adult volunteers is a most necessary but extremely serious undertaking of the school media centre. It is only at this point that one begins on-the-job training for the many clerical tasks to be performed. A booklet or manual outlining policy and procedures would reduce a number of potential problems. The adult volunteer must be very clear about her role, not her place, in the media centre. Just as important, though, the volunteer must be familiar with the role of all paid members of the media centre staff and how these functions are quite different, yet complementary, from the resource teacher in charge to the clerk/typist. The adult volunteer should see you teach and realize, to some extent, what is involved in curiculum planning and development and co-operative teaching, so that she understands why some of your work takes place outside of the media centre.

Care must be taken to nurture the self-confidence of the volunteer. She, too, has needs and interests. There is her need for recognition as an individual, need for status, need for accomplishment and the need of a sense of belonging to a team based on co-operative teaching programs. The teaching staff in the school must be familiar with the volunteer program to facilitate this. For the volunteer, suggestions which sell the job are more effective than direct orders.

The last thing that is being suggested here is a subservient role for the adult volunteer; rather a complementary role of media centre staff member is being proposed; given a differentiated situation, the only differences are

the hours of work and the absence of pay. With meaningful duties, staff trained in their use, and continuing in-service education, the adult volunteer will provide a valuable service to the media centre, the school and the community.

Resources beyond the media centre

Other worthwhile resources are available to us in virtually every community but they are often ignored or used minimally because no one has bothered to compile lists of them that may be used by administrators, students and teachers. We can stretch limited budgets by entering information about community organizations in the card catalogue by main entry and subject and including this data in resource lists and bibliographies. Let the student know the address of the consul or embassy if he is studying that country in History; let him know how to contact the Canadian National Institute for the Blind if he is researching the eye and blindness in Health; let him know where to call social welfare agencies for interviews for Man and Society. The resources of the media centre can extend beyond the four walls and, indeed, should when material is available at little or no cost and, better still, little or no processing time.

Resource lessons involving the introduction of learning materials and research on a given topic can be enhanced by bringing in a resource person to answer questions for the period. If the physical education teacher and you are co-operatively designing a unit on skiing or golf, plan to invite a local sports shop manager to come with a sample of equipment for display and for discussion with students. The resource person can often be encouraged to stay during the noon hour as well, to answer questions from a random audience and broaden your services. If the students are researching birth control, arrange debates in english, health, and sociology and have one or two representatives from the Planned Parenthood Federation come for research periods. Have you approached a senior citizens group in the community to tell stories in the media centre, to give individual atten-

tion, or to discuss life forty years ago during the Depression if it is being taught using resources in history? If student clubs meet in your media centre you might do well to invite resource people for them. What better way is there to give guidance to the newspaper staff than letting them question a reporter from the local paper after his presentation.

We talk so much about educating for the effective use of leisure time, we change the terminology from extracurricular to co-curricular activities to emphasize importance, but we rarely develop exemplary programs in this direction. Why shouldn't a school media centre develop an alternate school program using adult and student volunteers? Offer mini-courses on the occult, chess, media use, hobbies, travel or whatever suitable topics for which "instructors" and students are available. These could be offered during the noon hour, before or after school or during the students' spare periods. A continuing careers program offered in co-operation with the Guidance Department could be very popular and valuable for students. In conjunction with all of these the appropriate materials would be promoted.

Your leisure reading section would probably lend itself very well to a bearpit or "rap" program. Every Friday afternoon you could have a different but current topic for discussion. Invite a doctor to discuss VD, a lawyer for the student and the law, the police chief for law enforcement, the director of education on relevance and the curriculum, a women's libber on the feminist movement; the list is endless, worthwhile, and exciting. Who knows, these sessions may have an impact on the school for some time to come. As a matter of fact, why not advertise these services and invite the community? In all likelihood few will come, but the media centre program will receive coverage and comment.

A resources list

A booklet of resource places in the community would tie in with assignments from the classroom teacher. The media centre staff need not do all of the work in these projects but may have to be the instigator. A com-

mittee of teachers, volunteers, local school librarians, or school and public librarians could co-operate in a joint venture. You would then be a fund of ideas for the notoriously popular "Project days" and "Do your own thing days." A manual would include a description of the place, its value, the times at which it is available, limits, if any, on the number of visitors accepted at one time, the name of the contact person for arrangements, procedures, location and transportation. One might include such places as stores, the fire department, the board of education, the town council chambers, the post office, the motor vehicle bureau, the Canada Manpower Centre, the newspaper plant, the public library, research laboratories, individual factories, and museums. One of the best co-operative teaching programs I've seen involved a grade five class studying animals. The classroom teacher and the resource teacher planned their objectives, chose their content and selected suitable learning materials and other resources. The lesson was introduced; the class divided into groups of three; the materials were introduced and the necessary skills reviewed; the children applied these skills to research an animal they had chosen with some guidance. The classroom teacher and the resource teacher worked with the groups. A trip to the zoo was planned for the day following the end of the initial research. The children were given specific things to watch for and had some knowledge of their animal. The next day the resource teacher had the animal keeper come to the media centre for questions. Following this, the children, still in groups, made their own books on a primary typewriter, illustrated them and made a tape with narration and sound effects. The talking books were co-operatively evaluated by the classroom teacher and resource teacher and bound for inclusion in the media centre collection complete with catalogue cards and borrowers cards. The grade fives then introduced the books to grade twos in a lesson involving communication and judgement skills. Believe it or not, those books are never on the shelves because they are so popular. That classroom teacher and those kids will do more

to sell the media centre and the role of the resource teacher to the school and the community than a thousand newsletters and open houses.

The differences between a public library and a school media centre should be a starting point for discussion not the end of it. There are several mutually rewarding ways to co-operate besides the resource file compilation. We must keep in mind that although we serve different purposes the school media centre and the public library are facilitating the development of the same children with the same diminishing tax dollar. We must work together in complementary roles to gain full value from this investment. Co-operative efforts will only work when there is a philosophical commitment to them. Discussing the problems of circulation and damaged books with the children's librarian is an utter waste of time. Get to know the librarian down the road. Explore the possibility of a Telex hook-up between some schools and the public library. Is a joint selection centre feasible? Joint in-service? Joint curriculum-related media lists? Invite the librarian to book talk at the school. Plan a field trip to the public library for "story time" in the lower grades. It could be persuaded to run for the Board of Education and the resource teacher apply to be one of the Board's representatives on the Public Library Board.

We must recognize and demonstrate the distinct role of the resource teacher and the media centre in co-operative teaching to individualize and personalize instruction and underline again and again the need to evaluate what we are doing and sell it to the school and the community. We must stand up and be counted as members of a dynamic group of very specialized teachers providing a unique and valuable service which is essential to quality education. The taxpayer must be made aware that investments in media centres and resource teachers are investments in our children which will yield enormous benefits in happy, confident, creative, inquiring and intelligent citizens tomorrow. This is our potential and must be our promise. □