

2019-20 Montana State Library Summer Library Leadership Institute Final Reports

Participants:

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[Story Map report:](http://arcg.is/1L09y)
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SLLI participants, facilitators and MSL staff

Chani Craig, Whitefish High School Librarian

School Library Social and Emotional Support Programming to STOP Suicide

Description:

With depression, anxiety, and suicide rates on the rise (and social services and mental health professionals in schools and communities underfunded) leveraging libraries, especially school libraries, as a tool for social, emotional, and mental health supports is vital. This project works to provide a template for libraries to utilize specific tools and strategies to help curb the epidemic of suicide. From SEL-based programming to physical space design and structures librarians can utilize this tool as a resource to choose the strategies that best fit their programming and populations.

The student population of the district is growing and approaching 2,000 with over 700 in the elementary and nearly 600 each in the middle and high school. The most recent data from the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey recently released from the Montana Office of Public Instruction shows over 20% of both high school (23.4%) and middle school (20.5%) students have “seriously considered attempting suicide in the past 12 months” and that nearly 20% of high school (19.5%) and middle school (18.3%) students have “made a plan about how they would attempt suicide” (Montana Office, 2019, p. 59). Additionally, at the high school over 35% reported feeling “sad or hopeless.” This data is for our specific school district.

Outcomes/deliverables:

- Starting with one training in the spring of 2018, the Whitefish High School library has offered six more Youth Mental Health First Aid trainings (2 each in the fall of 2018, spring of 2019, and fall of 2019) which have certified over 100 adolescents in YMHFA, a National Institute of Mental Health supported curriculum.
- The school has approximately 60 students, over 10% of our student population, who are currently trained in this peer to peer "triage until treatment" model.
- During finals testing first semester, the library coordinated with Intermountain Animal Therapy to bring in six therapy dogs (three each testing day) during lunches for student visits. We had over 100 students between the two days visit to see the dogs.

Geographic Impact:

Whitefish School District 44

Andrea Eckerson, Lewis & Clark East Helena Branch Librarian

Outreach to East Helena Schools (Grades K-5)

The goal of this project was to increase outreach to the East Helena public elementary schools, of which there are three: Eastgate Elementary (PreK-K), Prickly Pear Elementary (1st-2nd), and Radley Elementary (3rd-5th). Approval had to be given by the superintendent of schools, who shared an email letter with the librarian of Radley Elementary. Mrs. K.D. Jones replied to my email and I was invited to attend Radley's Family Literacy nights for the 3rd-5th grades. For each Literacy night, we had a table set up with the library's monthly schedule, a flyer of the hours and services provided, stickers, pencils, and a few other handouts. Other outreach opportunities included a Read Aloud to Radley's entire student population and a visit by the Bookmobile. All of Radley's classrooms toured the Bookmobile and each student received a bag which included a library card application and information about the East Helena Branch (EHB) Library.

A relationship has been fostered between the staff at Radley Elementary and the EHB Library staff. The third grades classrooms toured the library shortly after the Family Literacy nights occurred. Several families of Radley students came into the library and applied for library cards. The EHB Library has seen an increase in 3rd-5th grade student patrons after school hours and on the weekends. It has been fun to go to various businesses in East Helena and have the Radley students recognize me as the librarian. Future ideas for outreach include contacting the librarian for Eastgate and Prickly Pear Elementary schools and coordinating visits during appropriate school functions. Continuing to foster collaboration and grow the outreach opportunities with Radley Elementary are also in the plans. It has been a successful project. I am excited for the growth of East Helena and increased outreach with all East Helena public schools.

Outcome/deliverable:

- Establish rapport and collaborative activities with East Helena Schools to promote literacy

Geographic impact:

East Helena, MT

Maren Engen, Chouteau County Public Library Assistant Director

Developing a Teen Program or, Get Those Dang Teens into the Library

Description:

The Chouteau County Library in Fort Benton has a strong adult following and an even stronger children's following but there is not a whole lot for teenagers. To remedy this, Maren threw out a huge net of programs and library offerings to see what worked and what didn't. By collaborating with the high school, she started to bring the library to the students once a month to check out books not available at the school library. She developed a Teen Advisory Group that meets monthly to create after school events. Through trial and error, she found how to work with "teen time," that time when the stars align and teenagers are actually available for volunteerism and event participation. So far, the most popular teen programs have been the weekly Dungeons & Dragons meetings and the occasional Mario Kart 64 party. Currently, Maren and her team of creative teenagers are working on how to revamp the Young Adult section of the library, which is squished between Adult Nonfiction and Adult Fiction. She plans to workshop a Summer Reading program this summer which will hopefully go into effect next year.

Outcome/deliverable:

- Increase teen engagement with the library

Geographic impact:

Fort Benton and Fort Benton School District

Molly Hudson

Revamping the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program at Lewis & Clark Library

Description:

Lewis & Clark Library established a 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Program in 2017, but the set up was proving to be inaccessible to both patrons and library staff. Not much had been written down regarding how the program was expected to function, and institutional knowledge regarding the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program was lost during the four months that Lewis & Clark Library was without a Children's Librarian in 2019. I reached out to library staff at all branch locations for their feedback regarding the program and created an online survey for patrons. Public Services Staff and the Branch Librarians wanted to have a definitive understanding of the program, and written instructions or expectations to ensure continuity. The 52 survey respondents wanted the program to be better promoted within the community, to be consistent and easy to use, to encourage a love of reading, and to reinforce nurturing relationships between the child and caregivers.

In December 2019, the Lewis & Clark Library Foundation purchased a subscription to Beanstack at the request of the Programming Librarians. Beanstack is a web-based platform where readers can track their reading and participate in reading challenges. The Library Foundation understood that Beanstack would be used for various reading challenges sponsored by the library – including the revamped 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program. To date, I am migrating the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten participant information from an unwieldy Excel spreadsheet into Beanstack, redefining the milestones and rewards, and planning a mural for the new Children's Area and our branch locations that allows 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten participants to track participation in the program without compromising patron privacy or the safety of minor children. The revamped 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program will be officially introduced when the Downtown Helena Library is reopened after our remodel is finished.

Outcomes/deliverables:

- Revamp the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program to make it enticing to children and caregivers
- Design the program so that it is easy for library staff to understand and promote, and consistent at all library branch locations (Helena, Augusta, Bookmobile, East Helena, and Lincoln)

Geographic impact:

Lewis & Clark County

Karen Ketchu, Madison Valley Library Director

Emotional Curriculum Support for Parents

Description:

This project was designed to support parents with students experiencing emotional wellness curriculum at the Ennis Elementary School. You could also call it a support group, a learning group, or a non-judgmental investing in your child's well-being group. My thought was to provide a place for parent education with the curriculum.

As a parent, community and school board member, I receive quite a bit of feedback regarding wishes, wants, and needs from the community. Each time the school launches a new curriculum, a common topic is that instead of just receiving the information, they wish they could participate more in how it affects their child's development. I thought the library could propose a potential solution to aid in parent involvement.

This year, the school started a social-emotional curriculum, and I would have very much liked to provide a venue for parents to talk and evaluate the curriculum on a very personal level.

My project never got past the talking stage; I truly believed it would be beneficial for all parties, including the library, to engage in these conversations. At first the idea was well received with school administrators, and just as quickly, it wasn't. And, conversations to either modify or revamp the project were not productive.

Even though I'm still convinced the project would have provided great benefit, I learned quite a lot about open and honest communication—talking and listening. I believe now, that if I would have been really listening, I would have heard that this project was a bit intimidating to someone who moves and processes details slowly and cautiously. And, if I hadn't been so wrapped up in my defined project outcomes, I would have taken full advantage of the opportunity to build a relationship instead of looking for ways to fulfill my project requirements—because it's not comfortable for me to fail. In this case, redefining failure has been more valuable to me personally than completing the project as planned. One specific challenge was this: if I weighed my personal with gains helping a group of parents and their children socially and emotionally—it wasn't a win on the proverbial scale. But I'm working hard to convince myself that using what I've learned next time will help balance the scale. Most importantly, I may need to let go of the desired outcome for the best outcome.

Outcomes/deliverables:

- The Public Library provides a neutral space for parents to further their interest and education about their child's social and emotional needs.
- By providing a space for this group, parents will support their children and each other regardless of background, or current economic or social dynamic.

Geographic impact:

Madison County, MT

Stephan Licitra, Montana State Law Library Technical Services Librarian

Serial Insanity

Description:

The task of the Serial Insanity project was to develop a series of short movies discussing serial description and control in a library setting. Serials are some of the most confusing materials to manage in a library. It is not unusual for one record to control and describe hundreds of issues of a given title. Examples of materials issued as serials are: newspapers, journals, magazines, and annual reports. Complications happen because serials can go on for a long time and can develop complicated relationships, or life events, that need to be considered. Well managed serial records help users identify the correct material and discover all related materials. This project was successful because of the broad, cross institutional support and input it received.

Outcomes:

- Montana Librarians will be better able to understand and describe serial publications.
- Librarians will be better able to assist patrons discover and locate all relevant serial material.

Deliverables:

This project resulted in two Vimeo tutorials:

An introduction to serials (10 minutes) <https://vimeo.com/372981858/d468a9a945> [vimeo.com]

MARC serial records (15 minutes) <https://vimeo.com/375033028> [vimeo.com]

These tutorials were evaluated by three other Montana Librarians. The reviews received were positive and encouraging. One reviewer said, "You took something really confusing and boring and made it simple, fun, and useful."

Geographic impact:

Worldwide

Cara Orban, Montana State Library Statewide Projects Librarian

Board engagement for statewide library programs

Description:

Last year at the Montana Shared Catalog spring meeting, staff organized a round robin discussion to gather feedback from the membership on several different topics, including their expectations for the MSC Executive Board. The board intended to incorporate that feedback into a work plan, but for various reasons they were not able to move forward with those plans. At times the board has struggled with work plan goals that seemed too large, undefined, and unmeasurable, which would lead to inactivity on those goals. Also, the boundaries around “board responsibilities” and “staff responsibilities” was unclear to both staff and Board members.

Following the Summer Library Leadership Institute, I asked the MSC staff and the board to think back on that discussion about board expectations at the membership meeting and provide input on what they think the roles and responsibilities of the board should be, and what was going well and what was not going so well for the MSC. Then I organized this information into a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis for the board and sent it to them along with this collective input prior to their planning meeting for their retreat.

From this feedback, we identified a couple of strong themes that we agreed should be priorities for the board’s work plan this year: improving our communication among board members, between the board and the staff, and to and from members; and also developing resources for the board so that they feel very clear about their role as board members and understand what their priorities are when they join. This is meant to reduce the frustration of having an ambiguous role and not any clear work to accomplish.

At the board retreat we worked together along with the staff to develop a detailed list of what we think is in scope and what is out of scope for board members. This led to a good discussion in which staff and board were able to clear up some misunderstandings. For those things that are out of scope, we identified those responsible parties, whether it was the staff or other committees or members. Then we outlined the first project in the board communication plan, which is to reach out to members with the desired outcome of increasing member engagement in the consortium. We worked together to create a list of questions for the Board to ask members on a regular basis. The board completed work on the survey, to begin outreach starting in the spring. In addition, I updated contact lists for those library representatives so that they can proceed with their other communication goals. Finally, the MSC board chair and I have established a routine of meeting a week in advance of the meetings to go over the agenda. We have also made an effort to craft the agendas in a way that will prompt discussion and input.

Questions I have been asking myself as I consider how we can make the best use of the board’s time include:

- When can we send updates via email and use meeting time for follow-up questions, instead?
- Why does the board need to know about this at the meeting?
- What do we need from the board on this topic? What insight or assistance can they provide?
- What follow-up is necessary, and how can the board participate?
- What is the board’s expectation of State Library staff on this topic? Does this need to be raised?

- How will the board hold us accountable on this topic?

This continues to be a work in progress. By encouraging boards to focus on one or two measurable goals in a fiscal year's time, by improving communication and planning, and by deliberately creating reasonable expectations for engagement that honors the time and expertise of our board members, I hope that we can make board membership a meaningful and rewarding experience.

Outcome/deliverable:

- The MSC Executive Board drafted a board procedures document and job description using the information gathered in discussion with staff at the board retreat.

Geographic impact:

Montana

Laura Tretter, Montana Historical Society Technical Services Librarian

Metadata workflow for Montana Historical Society Digital Content

Description:

The goal of this project was to develop a highly efficient workflow to generate quality MARC records for digital content produced by the Montana Historical Society (MHS). In the current workflow, MHS photograph archives staff add content to the Montana Memory Project while creating Dublin Core records. The OCLC Digital Collection Gateway (DCG) service harvests those records to produce MARC records in WorldCat. However, these DCG MARC records lack certain description and do not meet local cataloging standards. The added automated workflow enhances these DCG MARC records to allow for local import and use.

Outcomes/deliverables:

- Improved discoverability and access to MHS produced digital content
- Increased understanding in how MHS staff can transform and re-use metadata
- A test batch of completed MARC bibliographic records.

Geographic impact:

Worldwide

Jane Young, Century College Technical Services Librarian, White Bear Lake, MN

Engaging Non-Native English Speakers in the Library

Description:

I planned to look at the physical environment of a number of libraries to see how they incorporated representations of culture in the library. I believe that by creating opportunities for students to see their cultures reflected in the physical space of the library, they will feel more welcomed. Libraries are often daunting spaces for students and this is especially so for non-native speakers of English. I visited 6 libraries, 2 public and 4 academic and it was helpful to see how simple changes, such as signs in multiple languages and humorous touches made the spaces feel less intimidating. I was also impressed by the frequent use of student artwork in the libraries. This is a simple way to connect students to the space. I plan to incorporate these ideas into our library at the end of my sabbatical. Additionally, I will engage with the ESOL faculty to gather ideas for programming in the library. Historically we have not used the library space for public events. It seemed that since there were so few quiet study spaces on campus, it was important to maintain a “zone of silence” in the library. Our initial experiment in programming, however, changed our minds on that point. We held a Native American blessing ceremony in the library and it was a resounding success. We also hosted a panel discussion on Fake News and that had the unexpected outcome of exciting faculty and students. I will be organizing more programming in the coming year.

Outcome/deliverables:

- Change the physical environment by the use of new signage in multiple languages
- Develop programming to highlight the cultures of our students

Geographic impact:

White Bear Lake and Mahtomedi, MN