



Arlington
Public
Schools

LIBRARY SERVICES

BRIEFING REPORT

DECEMBER 2018





LIBRARY SERVICES

School libraries are an essential piece of the school learning community. School librarians and library staff support all learners in achieving educational and personal success. School librarians curate high-quality, diverse information resources and literature in a variety of formats and provide inquiry-rich learning experiences while fostering critical thinking skills, innovation, and creativity in our students.

The Library Services Office articulates the mission and vision for APS libraries and designs and facilitates professional learning for librarians and library assistants in order to ensure that all students in Arlington Public Schools (APS) will possess information literacy skills that allow them to find and critically evaluate information and build a lifelong appreciation of reading.

MAJOR SERVICES PROVIDED

Librarians are uniquely positioned in school-wide leadership roles to positively impact student achievement. Librarians impact student learning through six major avenues:

- Teaching with an **inquiry**-model that helps learners find and critically evaluate information in an ever-changing, digital world. Paired with rich, numerous resources found in subscription academic databases, librarians teach students how to successfully read and analyze nonfiction text and synthesize this information for a variety of presentations and products.
- Nurturing an environment in the library that is **inclusive** and welcomes all members of the school community.
- **Collaborating** with all content area teachers to create rich, authentic learning experiences. Additionally, librarians are instructional leaders in providing digital citizenship experiences to students, collaborating with Instructional Technology Coordinators (ITCs) to implement these crucial 21st-century skills.

- **Curating** physical and digital materials that meet the reading and information needs of all students and staff. APS libraries across the county have over 700,000 print titles and an ever-growing digital collection of 7,500 titles. The Library Services Office cataloging staff maintain and update the district catalog and circulation software in several ways, including adding 10,000 new records so far this school year.
- Helping students **explore** a variety of topics, literature genres, and creative interests.
- **Partnering** with librarians from Arlington Public Library (APL).
- Articulating and educating students and staff to **engage** with information safely, ethically, and legally. Librarians have the unique skills to empower students to be efficient and safe information users as they navigate the digital world.

FOCUS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Librarians continue to be instructional, learning-focused leaders in the school community. Some of the highlights of this work include:

- This school year at Discovery, librarian John Re is facilitating a “teachers as researchers” group with fellow staff. Research topics range from reading and writing workshop implementation to student conferencing strategies to literature choice.
- Swanson librarians Amy Hailey and Tammy Metz coordinated a book club for English learners and their families. This targeted book club brought families together to build comfort with their reading skills and to experience the school library.
- At Campbell, librarian Beth Decker collaborated with the first grade team and the Instructional

- Technology Coordinator (ITC) to develop a series of lessons about animal habitats. In the end, they worked together to design and create nests for the birds around Campbell.
- At Kenmore, librarian Holly Ousley connected her readers in her Girls of Color book club from the page to the screen this fall. Students read and then viewed *The Hate U Give* and discussed the book both in-person and digitally. Students shared that they had never felt more connected to a book before and that their voices and experiences were validated.
 - At Wakefield, librarians Donna Felsenheld and Gina Glassman collaborated with a HILT Science class to teach students how to access research databases to support their learning. During instruction, the librarians teach students the importance of vocabulary and model for students how to successfully paraphrase what they are reading for use in their work.



BRIGHT SPOTS

During the 2017-18 school year, APS libraries hosted 67 author visits across the county, connecting students to the love of reading and exposure to the process and skills it takes to be a writer. Highlights of the authors include: Hena Khan spoke about the Muslim experience in America through her wildly popular book, *Amina's Voice*; Dhonielle Clayton, author from D.C., spoke to Langston students about her fantasy hit, *The Belles*; local favorite, Kwame Alexander, spoke to students at Kenmore and Tuckahoe about the importance of identity; and Reshma Saujani, founder of the national organization Girls Who Code, spoke to Gunston girls about how girls need to find their voice in the world of coding and technology.

Digital citizenship is a natural fit within the school library, infusing critical thinking skills and authentic access to information. In the upcoming months, four librarians from across the county will collaborate with ITCs to develop a new digital citizenship curriculum that will consist of modules within Canvas for elementary, middle, and high school students. These modules, team taught with the librarian, ITC, and classroom teacher, will teach students about online safety, privacy, cyberbullying, online self-image, and copyright issues.

Partnership and collaboration continues to be strong between APS and the Arlington Public Library. In September 2018, public library cards were created for Kindergarten, 1st, 6th, and 9th grade APS students through the APL Library Card Month Drive. Librarians from APL paired with APS librarians to sign students and parents up for public library card at a variety

DATA THAT PROVIDES INSIGHT

- 954,678 print books, eBooks, and eAudiobooks were checked out during the 2017-18 school year. eContent usage (126,344 eContent checkouts) increased 40% from the 2016-17 school year.
- 3,213,559 searches were made across all APS subscription academic databases.
- 11 elementary school libraries facilitated student-led book clubs; all 6 middle school libraries participated in the APL/APS collaborative book club, Teen Advisory Board; two of our high school libraries facilitated student-led book clubs
- 4,747 elementary school students enrolled in the APL Summer Reading Program 2018; 2,665 of these students completed the program. 1,401 middle and high school students enrolled and 590 of these students completed the program.

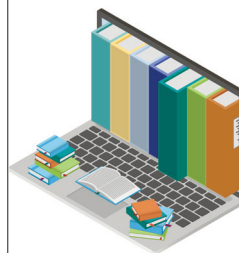
2017-18 CIRCULAT



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40% increase in
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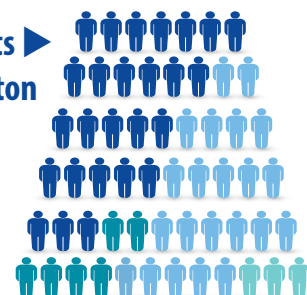


◀ 3,213,559 searches
across APS databases

19 APS schools ▶
facilitated student-led
or collaborative book clubs



6,148 APS students ▶
enrolled in Arlington
Public Library
Summer Reading
Program



of family literacy nights, school library orientations, visits to APL branches with HILT classes, and additional outreach events. The APL Summer Reading Program 2018 was also a smashing success thanks in large part to the month long sweep of school visits from APL librarians into all elementary schools across the county that included book talks and summer reading sign-up.

Finally, the Library Services Office has collaboration at the heart of the work, successfully collaborating with other content area offices within the Department of Teaching and Learning. Working with Gifted Services and the Science Office, an inquiry framework (Kuhlthau's Guided Inquiry) is being developed that will be linked to the inquiry model within project and problem-based learning as well scientific inquiry. Further, the Library Services Office is partnering with the Office of Equity and Excellence to create a elementary school community read for Spring 2019 that will bring together K-2 students and parents from across Arlington to engage in a conversation about diversity through a shared picture book. Library Services is also working closely with the English Language Arts Office to review and update the titles in the mentor texts lists from the *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project* resources. We will be gathering a group of ELA teachers and librarians in the Spring to help with this revision work. Finally, Library Services is working with the Career, Technical, and Adult Education Office to brainstorm and define the possibilities of makerspaces within schools and school libraries that allow students the opportunity to plan, design, and create low- and high-tech maker experiences.



WHAT WE LEARNED

The data continues to show that students prefer print books to digital books when reading for leisure. While continuing to focus on strong print collections, the Library Services Office will purchase new and diverse eBooks and eAudiobooks for all schools in order to encourage access to high-quality reading materials.

Student conducted research relies heavily on the resources in our 30+ APS subscription academic databases. Costs for these databases increase each year, but their demand and usage continues to rise dramatically. However, more librarians are also prioritizing the teaching of evaluating and filtering information from general Internet searches,

reflecting the world's hyperfocus on "fake news" and other media literacy skills. This high needs area is the perfect chance for librarians to continue showing their instructional and information literacy expertise while supporting student learning.

We continue to benefit from a strong legacy of collaboration between APS Library Services and the Arlington Public Library system. These partnerships are further strengthened through the Library Services Supervisor's monthly attendance at the APL Youth Services working meetings. In the future, we plan to focus more on building the bridge between APS and APL by strengthening the connections with parents as well as students.

Author visits this past year and into this school year are building momentum in terms of the diversity of the authors and books to which our students are exposed. Librarians are more cognizant of how powerful it can be for students to see authors who look like them and write about experiences they can relate to.

MOVING FORWARD

The theme of professional learning for the Library Services Office this school year is "Going Further". This theme encompasses the vision for Library Services that will support librarians as instructional leaders in the school community, meeting the personal and academic needs of all students. Professional learning for librarians this year is built around the American Association of School Librarians National School Library Standards that was published in November 2017, standards that continue to articulate how librarians can impact student learning in a digital age. Professional learning is being built around choices for three main areas: Inquire (research inquiry), Explore (wide range of interests and topics), and Engage (digital citizens who know how to ethically find and use information).

Additionally, in all discussions about future school library construction, the Library Services Supervisor continues to reiterate the importance of a flexible, collaborative learning commons for students and staff in the school community. Shelving must be mobile; access to print and digital content must be streamlined and accessible to all; the library must be seen as the hub of the school.

Lastly, we will also be "going further" by focusing on our school library collections to include a more diverse representation of experiences and voices as well as more currently published materials. By the end of this school year, all APS libraries will have an average print collection publishing age of 2008 or more recent. Our students deserve the most current fiction and nonfiction resources and this goal helps to ensure that. In addition, a balance of digital and print materials will continue to stay on the radar of the Library Services Office in terms of budget planning and promotion to students.

