Building the Capacity of School Librarians to Facilitate the Success of English Language Learners

Daniella Smith[a]

[a]University of North Texas, United States

Daniella.Smith@unt.edu

Tandra Tyler-Wood[b]

[b]University of North Texas, United States

tandra.wood@unt.edu

Xian Zhang[c]

[c]University of North Texas, United States

xian.zhang@unt.edu

Ijeoma Kaz-Onyeakazi[d]

[d]University of North Texas, United States

ijeomakaz-onyeakazi@my.unt.edu

ABSTRACT

Outcomes from the recent United States (U.S.) census indicate that the country continues to grow in diverse populations. At least 4 million English Language Learner (ELL) students are enrolled in the U.S. public school system. Frequently, ELL students are faced with complete immersion into classes with teachers who may not have specialized training to assist them. According to the American Association of School Librarians' National School Library Standards, school librarians actively engage the entire school population and its stakeholders to facilitate academic achievement. As such, they can provide educational experiences to supplement the classroom curriculum.

Given these circumstances, a pilot study was conducted with pre-service and recently certified school librarians regarding their ELL training. Results showed that most participants were interested in learning more about how to assist ELLs. A majority of them responded that they experienced some level of difficulty with using technology to enhance learning for ELLs and understanding how to develop a multicultural lesson plan for ELLs. These results suggest that librarians need more training in this area.

In response, this poster reports preliminary results from an IMLS funded project developed to build the capacity of school librarians to provide services for ELLs. During the project, a multidisciplinary group of experts, including the school library community and ELL stakeholders such as linguists, ELL community members, public librarians, educational technologists, teachers, and school administrators, are collaborating to identify research-based strategies for providing learning opportunities. Best practices and resources for educating school librarians will be shared.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Community engagement; School Libraries; Children's Services; Curriculum.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

English Language Learners; School Librarians; School Library Services; Community Partnerships; School Librarianship Education.