

INTRODUCTION

As an English teacher and reading specialist, I have assisted with the county and school-level implementation of the Maryland's Common Core state standards. The more I learned about the English standards and literacy expectations in other content areas, the more convinced I became that media specialists were a critical part of implementation.

This past June, I asked presenters at our state Common Core educator effectiveness academies how media specialists were be utilized to help support these new standards, and there seemed to be no formal plan. I spoke with two media specialists about their role as experts on research and resources related to the Common Core, and they said they were not very informed about the connections between Common Core and media specialists. Unfortunately, this is not just a state or county issue. School Library Journal has written several articles about the lack of media specialists being involved with Common Core.

Despite lacking knowledge, the two media specialists I spoke with enthusiastically asked for more information. I briefly shared the new research requirements and the shifting focus on literary nonfiction and complex texts. I emphasized how the media specialist can help facilitate these goals. We all thought it would be valuable to develop an advocacy project that would highlight how the media specialist's expertise can help teachers and students meet their research and text needs. By linking media specialists with the Common Core standards that revolve around literacy, research and texts, their role as instructional leaders is further legitimized.

Not only would this campaign connect media specialists with Common Core and other teachers, it would also address administrative, parent, student and community misperceptions about the role of the library and media specialist. According to Rebecca Hill, this is a great opportunity to increase the visibility and value of media specialists. "With Common Core's emphasis on reading across the entire curriculum, including areas such as math, science, and social studies, many librarians believe that it's the perfect time to step up their involvement as text and inquiry specialists, using the information literacy and critical thinking skills that they've advocated all along." (Hill 2012)

IDEA DEVELOPMENT

Brainstorm key issues:

- Increasing the value of the media center as an essential piece of the student achievement puzzle
- Increase staff collaboration the media specialist
- Increase meaningful, student use of digital tools in the media center
- Securing the media center as a place for all users, from students and staff to coaches and community members

Priority goal:

The most important goal is to increase the value of the media center as an essential piece of the student achievement puzzle, especially with the implementation of the Maryland Common Core State Standards. By focusing on this objective, collaboration with staff should also increase as well as meaningful use of digital tools by students.

This goal also fits in with the ideas presented in AASL's *Empowering Learners* (2009) because within every content area, students must use different resources and technologies to collect, analyze, evaluate and synthesize information and ideas.

Key Messages:

- In order for staff to successfully implement the Common Core Standards, they need access to the best resources, which includes a highly trained media specialist.
- The Common Core Standards ask a lot of teachers and students. A highly-trained media specialist can be a lifesaver.
- Drowning in a river of information and flood of Common Core standards? A highly-trained media specialist can be a lifesaver.
- Every content area teacher will be responsible for promoting discipline-specific reading and writing skills. Media specialists are specially trained to help them.
- Our teacher evaluation system may be based on how well students master the Common Core Standards. We must work together to ensure the best for our students and ourselves,
- As media specialists, we must help our teachers make sense of this flood of information about literacy, research and complex texts.
- Literacy, critical thinking and research are emphasized by the Common Core. Luckily, it's what we do every day in the media center. We can help.
- The Red Cross: Preparing Communities for an Emergency and Keeping People Safe. Our Slogan: Preparing Staff for Common Core and Keeping People Sane.

GENERAL OUTLINE OF OBJECTIVES

(Pink highlights those activities that the media specialist is most likely to be leading because the county has some control over Common Core professional development and information sharing, which should occur first.)

WHAT	WHO LEADS/DEVELOPS	HOW
LITERACY STANDARDS (1st target)		
<p>1. All stakeholders must be educated about the literacy standards connected to the content areas.</p> <p>Parents and students</p>	<p>Curriculum Specialists Department Chairs Reading Specialist Media Specialist Common Core Transition Team (Each school has one made up of principal, English, Math, STEP representatives.)</p> <p>Although there have been county-wide informational meetings for parents and students, many parents and students didn't attend. To address this lack of awareness, the media specialist and reading specialist may want to find out how these stakeholders will be informed and if he/she can play a role.</p>	<p>County and school based professional development sessions. Currently, FCPS is developing a plan for informing staff. The school-based transition team will provide supporting follow-up sessions. <i>The media specialist should consider being a volunteer on this committee or other PD planning groups.</i></p> <p>If the county or school does not have a plan for informing parents and students, the media specialist and reading specialist may want to host several informational sessions during Back-To-School night or parent conferences. Information may also be shared through student newspaper, morning announcements, TV scrolls, FindOut First announcements, parent newsletters, tweets, updates, school webpage, blogs, etc.</p>
<p>2. All stakeholders must be educated about how the media specialist can support the literacy standards.</p>	<p>Common Core Connection Committee SLM curriculum specialist Media Specialist Reading Specialist</p>	<p>Faculty meetings Department meetings Learning Lunches Promotional materials such as parent newsletters, emails, tweets, fliers, "lifesavers," etc. Part of the Common Core Lifesaver Wiki</p>
<p>3. Teachers, media specialist and reading specialist will collaborate on lessons and activities designed to reinforce literacy standards.</p>	<p>Media Specialist Reading Specialist Teacher volunteers (These could form a PLC)</p>	<p>Media specialist and reading specialist will seek out volunteers who would like to collaborate on a lesson. All parties will use a Common Core Collaboration form to track information, plan for the lesson and assess.</p> <p>"Stories" about the collaboration will be shared in newsletters, emails, the Friday Flier, SIT meetings, wiki page, etc.</p>

		<i>Thank you</i> notes will be sent and participants will be publically acknowledged and celebrated.
NONFICTION RESOURCES (2nd target)		
<p>4. All stakeholders must be educated about the role of rigorous literary nonfiction and complex texts in the content areas.</p> <p>Parents and students</p>	<p>Curriculum Specialists Department Chairs Reading Specialist Media Specialist Common Core Transition Team (Each school has one made up of principal, English, Math, STEP representatives.)</p> <p>If parents and students are not being adequately informed, the media specialist and reading specialist may collaborate to share these details.</p>	<p>SAME as NUMBER 1 above</p> <p>The reading specialist and media specialist may conference with students after they complete their Scholastic Reading Inventory assessment, which is taken at the beginning and end of their English courses.</p>
<p>5. All stakeholders must be educated about how the media specialist can provide access to different rigorous resources, digital, nonprint and print.</p>	<p>Common Core Connection Committee SLM curriculum specialist Media Specialist Reading Specialist</p>	<p>Faculty meetings Department meetings Learning Lunches Promotional materials such as parent newsletters, emails, tweets, fliers, "lifesavers," etc. Part of the Common Core Lifesaver Wiki</p>
<p>6. Teachers and media specialist collaborate to collect complex nonfiction resources, digital, nonprint and print, that will support content-area learning.</p>	<p>Media Specialist Reading Specialist Teacher volunteers (These could form a PLC)</p>	<p>Media specialist and reading specialist will seek out volunteers who would like to enhance their lessons by incorporating more nonfiction texts.</p> <p>The media specialist and reading specialist will locate and evaluate resources. They will create an annotated bibliography for the teacher and assist with incorporating the resources into the lessons.</p> <p>Assessment will occur before, during and after the resources are used.</p> <p>The media specialist and reading specialist will create a "bank" of complex nonfiction texts linked to different content area objectives.</p> <p>"Stories" about the collaboration will be shared in newsletters, emails, the Friday Flier, SIT meetings, wiki page, etc.</p> <p><i>Thank you</i> notes will be sent and</p>

		participants will be publically acknowledged and celebrated.
MINI-RESEARCH UNITS (3rd target)		
7.All stakeholders must be educated about the research expectations connected to the content areas.	Curriculum Specialists Department Chairs Reading Specialist Media Specialist Common Core Transition Team (Each school has one made up of principal, English, Math, STEP representatives.)	County and school based professional development sessions. Currently, FCPS is developing a plan for informing staff. The school-based transition team will provide supporting follow-up sessions. <i>The media specialist should consider being a volunteer on this committee or other PD planning groups.</i> If the county or school does not have a plan for informing parents and students, the media specialist may want to host several informational sessions during Back-To-School night or parent conferences. Information may also be shared through student newspaper, morning announcements, TV scrolls, FindOut First announcements, parent newsletters, tweets, updates, school webpage, blogs, etc.
8.All stakeholders must be educated about how the media specialist can support the literacy standards.	Common Core Connection Committee SLM curriculum specialist Media Specialists	Faculty meetings Department meetings Learning Lunches Promotional materials such as parent newsletters, emails, tweets, fliers, "lifesavers," etc. Part of the Common Core Lifesaver Wiki
9.Teachers and media specialist collaborate to employ miniresearch unit connected to Common Core and content.	Media Specialist Reading Specialist Teacher volunteers (These could form a PLC)	Media specialist and reading specialist will seek out volunteers who would like to collaborate on a miniresearch project that lasts 2 to 3 days. All parties will use a Common Core Collaboration form to track information, plan for the lesson and assess. The media specialist and reading specialist will help co-teach essential components of the inquiry and research process. They will support instruction of comprehension and evaluation of information, along with the use of appropriate digital tools. Assessment will occur before, during and after the miniresearch project. The media specialist and reading specialist

		will create a “bank” of miniresearch projects linked to different content area objectives.
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PARTICIPANTS AND KEY PLAYERS

Essential Starter Audiences:

Curriculum specialists, school staff, School Improvement Team members and administrators (The SIT and administrators must approve the plan before moving forward.)

Additional Audiences:

Reading specialist, HSA specialist, special education case managers, curriculum specialists, administrators, department chairs, other media specialists, parents, students, volunteers, administrative interns

Essential Common Core Connection Committee (CCCC):

- Media specialist(s)
- Reading specialist
- Department chairs or teacher representatives (English, SPED, Social Studies, Science and Math, although others are certainly invited)
- Assistant principal

Roles of CCCC

For the staff, the CCCC members will:

- Use their leadership to support the integration of literacy and research goals into their content areas
- Encourage and support teacher participation in utilizing the resources provided by the media specialist (and reading specialist)
- Serve as experts and models, if comfortable
- Act to represent staff concerns, interests, questions and basic “go-between”

For the media specialist (and reading specialist), the CCCC members will:

- Give honest feedback and suggestions for developing appropriate communication tools and creating meaningful activities that appeal to staff
- Help collect and share content-related resources
- Provide advice, insight and curriculum expertise to help guide development of resources
- Evaluate plans, possible lessons, miniresearch units and ultimately, the value of the media specialist as an instructional leader

TIMELINE

Summer

1. Create the “business plan” and prepare model materials.
2. Meet with reading specialist to finalize plan.
3. Meet with curriculum specialists (Media and English) and discuss project. Get advice and buy-in. Determine what the county plans for educating staff about: literacy standards, nonfiction text resources and research standards.
4. Meet with administration to get approval and buy-in. Ask about the school’s professional development plan and School Improvement Plan to see where this Common Core Connections plan fits in. Ask about creating a PLC.

August (first week back for teachers – no students)

5. Meet with SIT to gain approval and buy-in. Ask for volunteers who may want to serve on the Common Core Connections Committee.
6. Email or meet with department chairs to discuss project and ask for volunteers who may want to serve on the Common Core Connections Committee. Share responsibilities and meeting schedule.
7. Email or meet with Ms. Dapsauski (NHS club advisor) and discuss the possible use of NHS members to be digital assistants and help with research.
8. Send Ms. Sampson newsletter article for parents. Include information about upcoming Common Core sessions during parent conferences. Ask Ms. Sampson for deadlines for future newsletters.
9. Roll out message and plan at opening faculty meeting. Solicit volunteer members interested in working on the Common Core Connections Committee.
10. Attend opening department meetings (English critical)
11. Prepare copies of information and introduction for parents to take at Back-To-School night. Include information about upcoming Common Core sessions during parent conferences. One session will look at the literacy standards in general and another session will examine the idea of complex nonfiction, lexiles, etc.

September

12. Meet with CCCC. Finalize timeline and set calendar. Examine materials. Develop PLC proposal to send to principal. (This can’t be completed until the team is somewhat finalized because of budgeting.)
13. Train CCCC on using the Lifesaver Wiki, a place where team members can review and provide feedback about the PLC and Common Core Connections. Members can then direct their department members to use this as a resource.
14. Approach teachers open to collaborating and adding nonfiction resources to units of study or employing a minresearch unit (English and social studies teachers may be logical places to

start). Use the Common Core Connection Collaboration form. Get at least two teachers willing to collaborate. Complete activities by the end of September. Reflect and assess (all participants, including students). Encourage participants to share experiences. Take pictures. Thank participants. Celebrate! Post.

15. Meet with 9th and 10th grade English students after they take the SRI and get their lexiles. Explain lexiles, the new realigned lexile levels set by Common Core and how students can find materials based on lexiles.

16. Create bulletin board display.

October

17. Meet with CCCC. Review the two collaborative activities. Reflect and assess progress. Evaluate use of the Lifesaver Wiki. Discuss staff and student needs. Plan for parent conferences and examine promotional activities, if necessary.

18. Attend math and science department meetings. The media specialist will attend one and the reading specialist will attend a different one. Show how the literacy standards are embedded in the content area. Offer support.

19. Approach teachers open to collaborating and adding nonfiction resources to units of study or employing a minresearch unit. Use the Common Core Connection Collaboration form. Get at least two teachers willing to collaborate. Complete activities by the end of October. Reflect and assess (all participants, including students). Encourage participants to share experiences. Take pictures. Thank participants. Celebrate! Post.

20. Prepare for parent conferences. Ask Ms. Sampson to send FindOut First announcements. Include fliers at parent conference sign-ups. Get Franco to post on webpage. Include on morning announcements. Finalize presentations with reading specialists.

21. Get on the faculty meeting agenda for a 3-minute update. Reiterate mission. Have a lifesaver favor handout that draws attention to the Lifesaver Wiki.

November

22. Meet with CCCC. Review the collaborative activities. Reflect and assess progress. Discuss staff and student needs. Revisit the wiki and ensure materials are posted and useful.

23. Attend two more department meetings. The media specialist will attend one and the reading specialist will attend a different one. Show how the literacy standards are embedded in the content area. Offer support.

24. Approach teachers open to collaborating and adding nonfiction resources to units of study or employing a minresearch unit. Use the Common Core Connection Collaboration form. Get at least two teachers willing to collaborate. Complete activities by the end of October. Reflect and assess (all participants, including students). Encourage participants to share experiences. Take pictures. Thank participants. Celebrate! Post.

25. Send Ms. Sampson newsletter article for parents.

26. Plan and deliver learning lunches that focus on building awareness of the Lifesaver Wiki and collaborative activities connected to text resources and research.

PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES & PROJECT MATERIALS

Audience	Activity/Material
Parents	Parent newsletter
	FindOut First text messages and email/Twitter
	Back-to-School Night
	Parent Conferences
	PTSA meetings
	School webpage
	Brochures, bookmarks and business-card sized resources that contain information
Students	All of the above
	Classroom visits
	Library visits
	Learning Lunches
	Common Core Connections Contests
	Bulletin Board
	Digital experts/coaches club
	Facebook/social media
	Student resources wiki
	Lifesaver give-aways
Staff	Lifesaver favors
	Wiki page
	Morning announcements
	SIT meetings
	Department meetings
	Learning Lunches
	Mini-messages (drive-by staff development I did last year by posting information in the restrooms)
	PLC meetings
	School TV scroll/computer scrolls
	Staff development sessions
	Faculty meetings
	Fliers, bookmarks and business-card sized resources
	Livebinder Resource Collection
	Diig, Delicious, Pinterest bookmarking sites, etc.
Twitter/FindOut First	

SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Lifesaver Twitter Account



shawn lees carr

@CCLifesavers

Media and reading specialists helping educators survive and thrive while implementing Maryland's Common Core standards.

Common Core Lifesavers

☆ home

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Common Core Connections

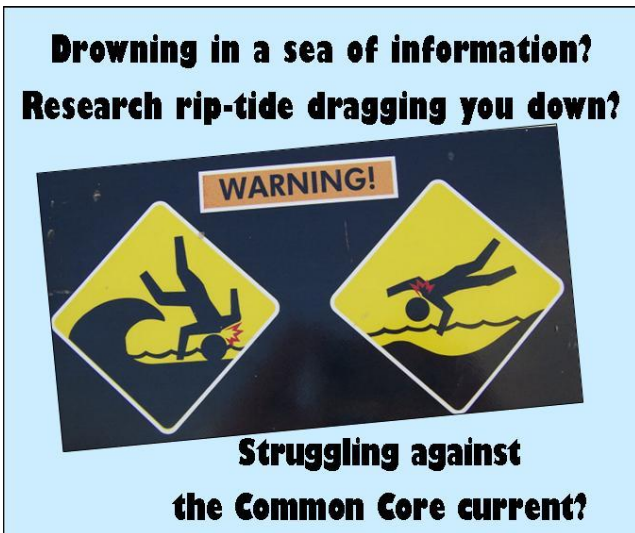
Media and reading specialists helping educators survive and thrive as they implement Maryland's Common Core state standards in literacy and research.

Rationale:

Maryland's Common Core state standards ask a lot of teachers and students. Every teacher will be responsible for promoting discipline-specific reading, writing and research skills. They must integrate more complex nonfiction texts. In order for staff to successfully implement the Common Core standards, they need access to the best resources, which includes highly trained media and reading specialists. Complex literacy, critical thinking and research skills are emphasized by the Common Core. Luckily, these are skills media and reading specialists wrestle with every day.

Lifesaver "favors" using lifesaver candies

Staff Announcement Postcard



Front of postcard

Back of postcard



Ocean City Lifeguard Joel Keefe gave permission to be used in this campaign. Images provided by Shawn Carr.

RESOURCES USED TO DEVELOP PLAN

"3.0 Where School Is Cool! Frontline Advocacy for School Libraries Toolkit." American Library Association.

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity/frontline_advocacy/frontline_school.

"3.3.a Ten Action Steps for Frontline School Advocacy." American Library Association.

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity/frontline_advocacy/frontline_school/ten.

"Crosswalk of the Common Core Standards and the Standards for the 21st-Century Learner." American Library Association.

<http://www.ala.org/aasl/guidelinesandstandards/commoncorecrosswalk>.

"Crosswalk Connects Common Core State Standards." American Library Association.

<http://www.ala.org/news/pr?id=10696>.

Dowd, N., Evangelista, M., and Silberman, J. *Bite-Sized Marketing: Realistic Solutions for the Overworked Librarian*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2010.

Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Programs. Chicago: American Association of School Librarians/American Library Association, 2009.

Fontichiaro, K. "Common Core Standards." *School Library Monthly*.

<http://www.schoollibrarymonthly.com/curriculum/Fontichiaro2011-v28n1p49.html>.

Hill, R. "All Aboard!: Implementing Common Core Offers School Librarians an Opportunity to Take the Lead." *School Library Journal*. http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/slj/articles/education/893928-346/all_aborad_implementing_common_core.html.csp.

MacDonell, C. *Essential Documents for School Libraries: I've-Got-It Answers to I-Need-It-Now Questions*. Worthington, Ohio: Linworth Publishing, 2005.

Ratzer, M. "Standards Based Vision."

<http://standardsbasedvision.wikispaces.com/Common+Ground+Background+Knowledge>.

"Speaking Up for Library Services for Teens: A Guide to Advocacy." American Library Association.

http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/advocacy_final.pdf

Starkey, C.J. "School Librarians and the Common Core Standards: Resources."

<http://www.livebinders.com/play/play/84777>.

"Teens 13–18." American Library Association.

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity/additup/13to18/anntk_school.

"The YA Advocacy Action Plan Workbook." Young Adult Library Services.

<http://yalsa.ala.org/presentations/AdvocacyWorkbook.pdf>.

FACTS AND EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT PLAN

Cut and pasted from "Teens 13–18." American Library Association.

http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity/additup/13to18/anntk_school.

Ninety percent of the students recognized that the school library had helped to boost their confidence as proficient information seekers and users, enabling them to work independently; 91.8% of the students appreciated the school library's help regarding working out the most important information, and sorting and analyzing information. | ([Todd 2005](#))

Students whose library media specialists played an instructional role—either by identifying materials to be used with teacher-planned instructional units or by collaborating with teachers in planning instructional units—tend to achieve higher average test scores. ([Lance, Rodney and Hamilton-Pennell 2000a](#))

[T]he results indicated that the way libraries were used differed between successful and unsuccessful schools. Successful schools schedule more class time in the library, spend more time allowing students to check out materials, have more individual student research hours, offer more time for reading incentive programs like Accelerated Reader, are used more frequently by faculty members for professional growth and classroom support, and are open more hours beyond the school day. ([Roberson, Schweinle and Applin 2003](#))

When library media specialists work with teachers to support learning opportunities with books, computer resources, and more, students learn more, get better grades, and score higher on standardized test scores than their peers in schools without good libraries. ([Scholastic 2008](#))

When library staff spends more time on these activities, ACT scores increase an average of three to four percent over the scores for schools with less collaborative library staff. ([Lance, Rodney and Hamilton-Pennell 2005](#))

Like elementary schools, high schools tended to have better test results where teachers reported that they initiate collaboration with LMSs on the design and delivery of instruction at least weekly or monthly. ([Lance, Rodney and Russell 2007](#))

Key to a truly exemplary library program was that the teacher-librarian took on a broader educational role within the school, providing support for classroom teachers through partnering and collaboration, supporting all students through shared teaching and cross-curricular support or integration of curriculum. ([Klinger 2009](#))

Vitally important is the vision of the library as a classroom and a welcoming place of learning. The teacher-librarians are leaders in their school and outstanding teachers. Both the library and the teacher librarian are recognized as playing a critical role in supporting the educational outcomes of the school. In schools with these types of libraries, students reported high levels of satisfaction and engagement with their libraries and they were active readers. The majority wanted to have more opportunities to use the school library. ([Klinger 2009](#))