Chapter 9. PA/Common Core Standards

The Common Core State Standards Initiative has been underway since 2009, and the Pennsylvania State Board of Education adopted the Common Core standards for English Language Arts, including literacy (i.e., Reading and Writing) in History/Social Studies and Science and Technical Subjects and an overarching concern for College and Career Readiness. Implementation of those standards began during the 2010-11 school year; but they will not be fully implemented until July 2013.  

English Language Arts

English Language Arts standards address reading and writing, speaking and listening, and language. At both elementary (grades 1 to 5) and secondary levels (Grades 6 to 12), these standards include mastery of literature and informational texts as well as foundational skills.

Reading and Writing in History/Social Studies and Science & Technical Subjects

For the secondary level (grades 6 to 12), there are also Reading and Writing standards for two specific content areas: History/Social Studies and Science and Technical Subjects. These standards include mastering, in those specific contexts, such matters as: discipline-specific language (i.e., words, phrases, and symbols); visual information (i.e., charts, maps, photographs, video); types of research methodologies, findings, and modes of presentation (e.g., exploration, description, analysis); and venues for communication (e.g., reviewed articles, websites, multimedia distribution).

Reading and Writing in College & Career Readiness

While English Language Arts is the librarian’s strongest general area of concern in PA/Common Core standards, and literacy in History/Social Studies and Science and Technical Subjects are particular contexts in which to master such language skills, College and Career Readiness is a general concern in the standards that cuts across these three other areas. Generally, while the specific PA/Common Core standards for English Language Arts and Reading and Writing in specific subject areas identify milestones at each grade level and individual grade, there are also corresponding “anchor” standards which describe ultimate expectations of students in the longer-term perspective of College and Career Readiness.

The three educator groups—administrators, teachers, and librarians—were asked to assess how well their library programs teach each of these standards. They were also asked about key library practices or activities and about librarian roles in their schools.

Throughout this chapter, the findings are illustrated by quotes offered by respondents to the project’s surveys.

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Library Practices & Activities

Administrators were asked how much they value key library practices associated with academic achievement and student learning. Teachers and librarians were asked how frequently they participated in selected activities related to those practices. Administrators were asked about their values, rather than actual practices, on the assumption that their beliefs about school libraries and librarians—apart from actual policies and practices—exert a powerful impact on the culture of the school. For administrators, response options included: “essential”, “highly desirable”, “desirable”, “not desirable”, and “don’t know/need more information”. Teachers and librarians were asked about the frequency of activities on the assumption that they are in the best position to know what is actually happening and how that might be affecting the learning environment. For teachers and librarians, response options included: “at least weekly”, “at least monthly”, “at least once per semester”, “at least annually”, and “rarely/never”.

Administrators on Library Practices

When asked how much they value key library practices, strong majorities of administrators assess six practices as “essential” for achieving English Language Arts standards:
- Librarian provides in-service
- Librarian meet w/principal
- Librarian appointed to committees
- Librarian & teacher co-teach
- Flexible scheduling
- Librarian-teacher collaboration addressed in teacher evaluation

Majorities of these administrators also identify the first five of those practices as “essential” for achieving Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies standards.

In addition, administrators who value appointing librarians to school committees as “essential” are also far more likely to assess the instructional role of the school library program as “excellent” for teaching Reading and Writing in Science and Technical Subjects and College and Career Readiness.

Our librarian, along with other district librarians, presented the Big 6 research model to the district’s English Language Arts curriculum committee. With their assistance and guidance, this research model has been adopted by the district as our official research model for the elementary and secondary level. The elementary level will incorporate the Super 3 research model (based on the Big 6). In our Intermediate High School, we utilize the librarian as a teacher/facilitator for the staff and students. Our librarian works closely with all content teachers so that a research project or paper can be incorporated into any area. The belief is that information literacy and reading strategies are not for the English Language Arts classroom only. I have personally observed many teachers who have incorporated various reading strategies presented on professional development days into their lessons. I know our librarian is making an impact when science and social studies teachers (are) utilizing what they have learned from a seminar our librarian has conducted.

- An Intermediate High School Vice or Assistant Principal
Note: This and following charts focus on assessments of the library program’s instructional role in PA/Common Core standards from administrators who deem selected library practices as “essential”. Example: Of administrators who deem it essential that their librarian provides in-service opportunities to teachers, 72.3% assess their library program’s contribution to teaching English Language Arts as “excellent”.

Excellent Assessments of Library Program's Teaching of English Language Arts by Administrators Deeming Selected Library Practices Essential

Librarian provides in-service: 72.3%
Librarian & teachers co-teach: 68.5%
Librarian meets with principal regularly: 67.7%
Librarian appointed to committees: 66.7%
Collaboration addressed in teacher evaluation: 63.4%
Flexible scheduling of library: 58.8%

Excellent Assessments of Library Program's Teaching of Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies by Administrators Deeming Key Library Practices Essential

Librarian meets with principal regularly: 52.0%
Librarian provides in-service: 51.5%
Librarian appointed to committees: 51.4%
Librarian & teachers co-teach: 50.7%
Flexible scheduling of library: 50.5%
Note: This chart compares assessments of administrators who deem appointing librarians to committees “essential” and less than essential (i.e., “highly desirable”, “desirable”, “not desirable”, and “don’t know/need more information”. Example: Of administrators who deem appointing librarians to committees “essential”, 51.4% assess the library program’s role in teaching Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies as “excellent”. By contrast, of administrators who deem librarians on committees as less than essential, only 25.0% assess the library program’s role in teaching that standard as “excellent”.

**Teachers on Library Activities**

Across the four PA/Common Core standards, teachers who report more frequent engagement in key library activities are consistently more likely to assess the library program’s teaching as “excellent.”

From the perspective of teachers, as with 21st Century Learner standards, the frequency of library activities associated with excellent assessments of the library program’s teaching of PA/Common Core standards varies from one activity to another.

At least weekly activities associated with “excellent” teacher assessments of the library’s instructional role in teaching PA/Common Core standards are:

- Classes/students visit library on flexible schedule
- Librarian and teacher collaborate on instruction
- Librarian helps teacher learn new information-seeking skills

At least monthly activities associated with “excellent” teacher assessments of the library’s instructional role in teaching PA/Common Core standards are:

- Teacher accompanies students to library and remains with them
- Teacher invites librarian to classroom
Our school librarian is the most dedicated person in the building, and probably the most creative and intelligent, too... I constantly work with her to co-teach classes, to find ideas and resources for projects, and to be provided with technology support... She works tirelessly to get subscriptions for online databases and to teach the students in our 4-5-6 building the proper way to locate and apply information. She recently taught my fifth graders how to evaluate web sites we were using for a project about Mars. It was an excellent lesson that I then expanded upon in the classroom. As the budget continues to be cut, she looks for sources for more books and more information while being the librarian for a student body of 1015 students and about 100 staff members... in our building the library is really the center of the school, and most learning flows through the library.

- Elementary School teacher

Our librarian... monthly sends out a newsletter with all the new computer programs and sources available to us, and directions on how to use them. Additionally, when I bring my students to the library to conduct research, she is readily available to both the students and myself to help with the research process, technology support, and other essential tidbits of information to help the students achieve success.... at least twice a year, (we) co-teach lessons where I will provide the content knowledge for the assignment and she will teach the research piece. We plan together each year for these classes and there are always new pieces added to update the information the students are receiving.

- High School teacher

### Excellent Evaluations of Library Program's Teaching of English Language Arts by Teachers Reporting Selected Library Activities At Least Weekly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes/students visit library on flexible schedule</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian &amp; teacher collaborate on instruction</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian helps teacher learn new info skills</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
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Note: This chart focuses on teachers who report engaging in selected library activities at least weekly and how their assessments of library program “excellence” in teaching English Language Arts vary, depending on their engagement in those activities. Example: Of teachers who report that their classes or students visit the library on a flexible schedule “at least weekly”, 61.2% assess their library program’s instructional role in teaching English Language Arts as “excellent”.

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Note: This chart compares assessments of teachers who report engaging in selected library activities at least weekly and those who report engaging in those activities less than weekly. Example: Of teachers who report collaborating with their librarians on instruction "at least weekly", 43.8% assess the library program’s role in teaching Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies as “excellent”. By contrast, of teachers who report engaging in that activity less than weekly, only 29.8% assess the library program’s role in teaching that standard as “excellent”.

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Note: This chart reports “excellent” assessments of teachers who report engaging in selected library activities at least monthly. Example: Of teachers who report teachers accompanying their students to the library “at least monthly”, 59.5% assess the library program’s role in teaching English Language Arts as “excellent”.

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Note: This chart compares assessments of teachers who report engaging in selected library activities at least monthly and those who report engaging in those activities less than monthly. Example: Of teachers who report collaborating with their librarians on instruction “at least weekly” or “at least monthly”, 38.4% assess the library program’s role in teaching Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies as “excellent”. By contrast, of teachers who report engaging in that activity less than monthly, only 26.0% assess the library program’s role in teaching that standard as “excellent”.

Teachers Assessing Library Program’s Teaching of Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies as Excellent by Frequency of Monthly Activity

Teachers Assessing Library Program’s Teaching of Reading/Writing in Science/Technical Subjects as Excellent by Frequency of Monthly Activity
Generally, as with 21st Century Learner standards, librarians are less likely than administrators and teachers to self-assess their own librarians as “excellent” in teaching PA/Common Core standards.

Still—across the four standards and the five activities—librarians who report engaging in key activities at least weekly are dramatically more likely to self-assess their teaching of PA/Common Core standards as “excellent” than their peers who report engaging in those activities less than weekly.

As with 21st Century Learner standards, the three library activities most strongly associated with “excellent” self-assessments on PA/Common Core standards concern the processes of collaborating with teachers on the design and delivery of instruction.

- At least weekly instructional collaboration between librarian and teacher consistently demonstrates the strongest relationship with “excellent” teaching self-assessments by librarians.

- The next strongest relationships involve teachers inviting their librarian into their classrooms and the librarian helping teachers learn new information skills, both also on at least a weekly basis.

After 17 years as a classroom teacher, I finally realized my longtime goal of becoming a teacher librarian. I always used to envy those people who said they loved to go to work each day, but I am now one of those people!! .... While I feel each day, in some way, is a small success for me in this profession, I am probably most proud of the creation of the Library's website due to its far reaching affects. By adding links to databases, student book recommendations, teacher resources, online textbooks, research projects, and many others; students, staff, and parents are all connected by this resource. Little by little, more and more staff members are buying into what I can do to make their school day easier and more successful. I love the teacher part of teacher librarian and how wonderful it is each day to be a combination of both!

- Middle School Librarian
With the pressure placed upon ‘teaching to the test,’ teachers … are consumed with teaching content that will be evaluated on standardized testing. Librarian to the rescue! I have searched our state standards to identify areas where I could be of assistance to content area teachers, and have volunteered some teaching help or grading assistance when it comes to projects that require information literacy skills. Case in point: our 8th grade language arts teachers were studying the medieval period of history with regards to language development. I was able to provide access to webpages I developed (LibGuides), actual instruction to students in both large groups and on an individual basis, and assistance in evaluating the portion of their projects that dealt with citing sources. My efforts did not go unnoticed. Now other teachers have approached me for similar help. It just took one good working relationship and project to set the tone for the school that I could be of valuable assistance while giving the teacher some breathing room in a project. - Middle School Librarian

Note: This and following charts compare PA/Common Core teaching assessments of librarians who report engaging in selected library activities at least weekly and those who report engaging in those activities less than weekly. Example: Of librarians who report collaborating with teachers on instruction “at least weekly”, 51.9% assess their role in teaching English Language Arts as “excellent”. By contrast, of teachers who report engaging in that activity less than weekly, only 34.8% assess the library program’s role in teaching that standard as “excellent”.

Librarians Assessing Library Program's Teaching of
English Language Arts as Excellent by
Frequency of Library Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Less than weekly</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>At least weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes/students visit library on flexible schedule</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher accompanies students to library</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher invites librarian to classroom</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>51.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian &amp; teacher collaborate</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian helps teacher learn new info skills</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>32.8%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Administrators, Teachers & Librarians on Library Practices & Activities

The three educator groups—administrators, teachers, and librarians—express considerable consensus about how school library programs strengthen teaching of PA/Common Core standards. Generally, “excellent” assessments of the librarian’s teaching of English Language Arts and Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies are more likely when the three educator groups associate them with key library practices and activities. Also, administrators tend to concur with the other two educator groups about the association of “excellent” standards teaching by librarians and librarians serving on key school committees. For teachers and librarians, “excellent” assessments of library teaching of all four PA/Common Core standards are more likely when they report more frequent library activities.

- When administrators value flexible scheduling of library access and teachers and librarians report it happening more frequently, members of all three groups are more likely to believe library programs do an excellent job of teaching PA/Common Core standards—especially English Language Arts and Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies.

- When administrators value collaboration between librarians and teachers and those educator groups report working together more frequently (i.e., co-teaching as well as working together generally in both library and classroom), they also tend to believe the library’s instructional program does an “excellent” job in teaching PA/Common Core Standards.

- When administrators value librarians as providers of in-service professional development for teachers in their schools and when teachers and librarians report librarians providing this kind of leadership more frequently, assessments of the library program’s role in teaching standards are most likely to be “excellent.”
Librarian Roles

All three groups of educators were asked about the roles librarians play or should play in their schools. Administrators, as key leaders, were asked what roles they desire that librarians play. Teachers were asked what roles their librarians actually play. And librarians were asked in what roles they believe their principals and teachers perceive them.

Administrators on Desired Librarian Roles

- Librarian roles desired by administrators are associated with only two of the four PA/Common Core standards: English Language Arts and Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies. Most likely, given the survey results, similar associations do not exist for Reading/Writing in Science/Technical Subjects and College/Career Readiness because respondents were more likely to decline to assess library teaching of those two standards that are less obviously associated with library programs. The fact that standards for Reading/Writing in Science/Technical Subjects are limited to secondary level (grades 6 to 12) may also be a factor.

- Majorities of administrators assessing English Language Arts teaching by the library program as “excellent” identify six librarian roles as desirable:
  - Reading motivator
  - Co-teacher
  - In-service provider
  - School leader
  - Technology instructor
  - Curriculum designer

- Majorities of administrators assessing the librarian’s teaching of Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies as “excellent” identify two librarian roles as desirable: in-service provider and curriculum designer.

A research initiative at our three middle schools is a model of the librarian as teacher. Our three librarians decided upon a topic for our 7th grade students. [The topic] serves as a vehicle through which to teach sound research skills. Putting the librarian at the center of the Common Core skills delineated as Integration of Knowledge ensures that classroom teachers and students alike have a shared understanding of the strategies and goals of valid research…… With the closing of many of our county libraries, many of which were in walking distance for students, it is critical to have certified librarians in each school. I’ve watched very personal relationships grow between our librarians and the kids they serve. And when they quietly say to a child, "I think this book is for you," they have done real and permanent good.

- An English and Library District Coordinator

Our school librarian provides essential instruction in reading, research skills, and technology. On a daily basis she works with students to not only understand, but to experience how technology can assist them with daily functions in various careers, how to use technology to tell their own stories and the stories of other people. … Each month students read various books by specific authors and provide written responses … regarding the books they have read and the authors being studied. Our librarian has written the authors and received feedback regarding the Writing process [to be] shared with the students.

- An Elementary School Principal
Throughout this section, the focus is on educators who assess the library program’s role in teaching PA/Common Core standards as “excellent”. This and following charts for the three educator groups report the percentage of respondents from the group who assess the library program’s role in teaching a particular standard as “excellent” and selected a certain librarian role. Example: Of administrators who assess the library program’s role in teaching English Language Arts as “excellent”, 92.1% identify reading motivator as a desirable role for a librarian.

Administrators associate “excellent” school librarian teaching of English Language Arts Standards with six roles—reading motivator, co-teacher, in-service provider, school leader, technology instructor, and
curriculum designer. These relationships suggests that administrators who experience strong library programs and highly effective librarians understand the foundational nature of these librarian roles, and the extent to which they affect all teachers and students, the entire curriculum, and how well technology is integrated with curriculum and instruction.

The desirability to administrators of a librarian being an in-service provider and a curriculum designer and the association of these roles with excellence in teaching Reading and Writing in the context of History and Social Sciences further underscores the value of librarians in key leadership roles which impact all classrooms in a school.

Teachers on Perceived Librarian Roles

As with 21st Century Learner standards, strong majorities of teachers associate school librarian “excellence” in teaching PA/Common Core standards with five perceived librarian roles:

- Co-teacher
- Instructional resources manager
- Instructional support
- Reading motivator
- Teacher

School librarians are essential to the development of a good school library. … There is so much information to manage, only a specialist can provide the expertise that is needed, and continue to keep the information fresh and accurate. A school without a librarian is like a kitchen without a chef….Without the librarian, it might just be a room full of books.
- Elementary School teacher

I have numerous examples of successful collaborative instruction that has had a direct impact on student learning. Our librarian knows the curriculum for each of the subjects within each grade level, which is no easy task. She is familiar with the state standards and eligible content for the PSSA….Our Social Studies curriculum is project based - there are no textbooks for the students or teachers to use….Our librarian is considered an instructional leader in the school.
- Elementary School teacher

Our librarian … promotes reading for pleasure, and often gets students excited about newly-acquired novels she has purchased for the library. She is very accommodating whenever I schedule my classes in the library. She jumps right in with helping students and their computer/technology needs (formatting, citing, inserting pictures, etc.) She teaches lessons on plagiarism and citations and using information ethically. We have DEAR time in our school weekly (Drop Everything And Read), and our librarian helps students choose books that fit their interests and ability.
- Middle School teacher
Librarians on Librarian Roles Attributed to Principals & Teachers

When asked to report how they believe their principals and teachers perceive them, librarians who self-assess their teaching of PA/Common Core standards as “excellent” agree with each of these educator groups about different roles.

Where librarians have self-assessed their instruction as “excellent” in teaching all four PA/Common Core standards, librarians consistently believe that principals & teachers perceive them as:

- In-service provider
- Instructional resources manager
- Instructional support
- Reading motivator
- School leader
- Teacher
- Technology instructor

For principals and administrators themselves, these associations between librarian roles apply only to English Language Arts and Reading/Writing in History/Social Studies. Teachers and librarians, on the other hand, are in substantial agreement about librarian roles for all four standards.

As for 21st Century Learner standards, librarians who self-assess their PA/Common Core standards teaching as “excellent” are slightly more likely to attribute most librarian roles to teachers than to administrators, with the same noteworthy exceptions:

- Librarians believe that teachers, more so than principals, see them as co-teachers and technology troubleshooters. Perhaps this discrepancy points to what these librarians perceive as a reality gap between principals and teachers. Principals might be expected to value these roles; but teachers are the ones their librarian colleagues can be sure will value them highly, as they might have the strongest and most frequent impact on the teacher’s own work experience. Indeed, when responses from administrators and teachers making similar assessments were examined, that tended to be true.

- Conversely, these librarians expect that their administrators are more inclined to see them in certain roles than their teacher colleagues. Those roles are school leader, in-service provider, and curriculum designer. Again, when responses from other educators making similar assessments were examined, that was found to be true.

Also, as with the other set of standards, isolated role results for librarians prove not to be statistically significant (NS, appearing after the percentage, in the following charts), but this is most likely because of the aforementioned fact that librarians are the least likely of the three groups to assess library teaching of PA/Common Core standards as “excellent.” These rare failures to achieve statistical significance can most likely be traced to the small numbers of librarians self-assessing their teaching as “excellent.” In the case of this set of standards, this situation is further complicated by relatively high “don’t know/need more information” responses about the more specific standards—likely due to the fact that some of the standards apply only to secondary grades.

- For all four PA/Common Core standards, librarian assessments of teaching excellence related most consistently to beliefs that principal and teachers perceive them as:
- Instructional resource managers
- Instructional support
- School leaders

Librarians’ beliefs that they are perceived as teachers are related to English Language Arts teaching, while beliefs that they are perceived as co-teachers are related to other Common Core standards.

I have spent (much) effort trying to convince our teachers and administrators that we need to broaden the options we offer our students in their required reading. The existing list of “approved” titles is old and stale when it should be a continuously evolving resource. This year, on my recommendation, one of our Special Education teachers introduced The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins to her students as a required read. These students had previously been resistant to Reading but, in this case, the response was excellent! Students from this class would ask NOT to be distracted by their classmates so that they could focus on the book. The teacher in the class received an e-mail from a “reluctant reader” in which he confessed that he knew he wasn’t supposed to read ahead but he couldn’t help himself–he had to find out “what happened to Peeta.” This would not have occurred if students had been forced to read the “moldy oldies” to which they do not relate. I’m planning to use this example to encourage my administrators (again!) to allow updates to our district’s “approved” book list. This is just one small example of the efforts of librarians everywhere to foster a love of reading!
- Middle School Librarian

Perceived Librarian Roles Attributed to Principals & Teachers by Librarians Assessing Library Program’s Teaching of English Language Arts as Excellent

Note: In this and following charts, the focus is on librarians who assess their teaching of a standard as “excellent” and which roles they believe their principals and teachers will identify with librarian. “NS” after a percentage indicates that it is not associated with a significant difference from librarians assessing standards teaching as less than excellent (“good”, “fair”, or “poor”). Example: Of librarians who assess their teaching of English Language Arts as “excellent”, 83.7% believe teachers identify them as reading motivators, while 91.4% believe principals identify them in that role.
Educators on 21st Century Learner & PA/Common Core Standards

School librarians believe there are very strong connections between Standards for the 21st Century Learner and the Pennsylvania/Common Core standards. Indeed, the organization that promulgated the 21st Century Learner standards, the American Association of School Librarians, also provides a Crosswalk of the Common Core Standards and the Standards for the 21st Century Learner. This document is available online at: http://www.ala.org/aasl/guidelinesandstandards/commoncorecrosswalk/.

This study took place early in Pennsylvania’s adoption and implementation of the Common Core standards. In addition, the 21st Century Learner standards are less familiar to administrators and teachers. Consequently, the assessments of the library program’s teaching of these standards by the three educator groups are necessarily impressionistic. Still, these impressions from the perspectives of the three educator groups are quite valuable as indicators of the extent to which they share a consensus about the connections between the two sets of standards.

Educator assessments of the library program’s instructional role in teaching of 21st Century Learner & PA/Common Core standards are strongly related to each other. If educators believe library programs excel at teaching PA/Common Core standards—English Language Arts and Reading and Writing in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects, and College and Career Readiness—they tend also to believe that school librarians excel at teaching each of the 21st Century Learner standards— inquiry-based learning, informed decision-making, knowledge sharing, and pursuing personal growth.

- Across administrator, teacher, and librarian survey respondents, those who assess as “excellent” their school librarian’s teaching of each PA/Common Core standard also tend to assess as “excellent” the library program’s instructional role in teaching each 21st Century Learner standard.

- For administrators and teachers, strong majorities of those who assess their library program’s instructional role as “excellent” for Common Core standards also assess as “excellent” the library program’s role in teaching 21st Century Learner standards.
Librarians, as noted earlier, are more modest in their self-assessments on both sets of standards. Strong majorities of librarians who self-assess their teaching of PA/Common Core standards as “excellent” also self-assess themselves as “excellent” on three of the four 21st Century Learner standards. Only large minorities of librarians who assess their teaching of English Language Arts as “excellent” also assess their teaching of three of the four 21st Century Learner standards as “excellent.” By contrast, of librarians who assess their teaching of English Language Arts as “less than excellent”, only single-digit percentages self-assess their teaching of this standard as “excellent”.

Thus, despite the relative modesty of librarians, the three educator groups express consensus that the connections between 21st Century Learner standards and PA/Common Core standards are strong ones.

...I have maintained a close instructional connection with (our) librarians. I rely on the expertise of their extensive Reading, resourcing, and research knowledge to coordinate the curricula I've been responsible to teach. Collaboratively, we've provided what core/standards have been needed not only in the Language/Communicative Arts areas, but also in content areas...specifically science and/or social studies…. the librarian is a resource that is essential for the 21st Century instruction of our students… It is essential that our public schools continue to have effective librarians in each school to ensure that our students will succeed with the demands of the 21st century.

- Intermediate School teacher

Working closely with the library staff has transformed my classroom environment and curriculum. Collaborative co-planning with the library staff provides clear understandings between us and provides an opportunity to co-teach the lessons. The library staff embeds 21st century skills into my curriculum, ensuring that the Common Core Standards are being met. I return to collaborate in the library for all of my research and multimedia projects, and not just the research paper, because the quality of the lessons far surpasses the kind of lessons that I can provide myself… My biggest success while working with a librarian is receiving the 2010 ISTE SIGMS Technology Innovation Award, which highlights successful collaboration between a school librarian and classroom teacher.

- High School teacher

![Excellent Assessments of Library Program's Teaching of 21st Century Learner Standards by Administrators Assessing Library Program's Teaching of PA/Common Core Standards as Excellent](chart.png)
Note: In this and following charts, the focus is on respondents from an educator group who assess the library program’s instructional role in teaching selected PA/Common Core standards as “excellent”. For each PA/Common Core standard, the chart reports the percentage of respondents who also assessed the library’s role in teaching a 21st Century Learner standard as “excellent”. Example: Of administrators who assessed the library’s role in teaching English Language Arts as “excellent”, 70.1% assessed the library’s role in teaching inquiry-based learning as “excellent”.

**Excellent Assessments of Library Program’s Teaching of 21st Century Learner Standards by Teachers Assessing Library Program’s Teaching of PA/Common Core Standards as Excellent**

- Inquiry-Based Learning: 75.8%, 88.6%
- Informed Decision-Making: 69.8%, 77.0%, 83.9%, 78.0%
- Knowledge Sharing: 71.3%, 77.7%, 82.9%, 83.0%
- Pursuing Personal Growth: 69.1%, 75.2%, 80.8%, 79.5%

**Excellent Assessments of Library Program’s Teaching of 21st Century Learner Standards for Librarians Assessing Library Program’s Teaching of PA/Common Core Standards as Excellent**

- Inquiry-Based Learning: 47.4%, 64.1%
- Informed Decision-Making: 35.4%, 47.1%, 55.6%, 51.3%
- Knowledge Sharing: 45.9%, 65.7%, 63.9%, 61.5%
- Pursuing Personal Growth: 50.7%, 58.6%, 58.3%, 64.1%
Note: This chart illustrates what a dramatic connection librarian respondents perceive between how well they teach English Language Arts and how well they address each of the 21st Century Learner standards. Example: Of librarians who assess their teaching of English Language Arts as “excellent”, 47.4% assess their teaching of inquiry-based learning as “excellent”. By contrast, of librarians who assess their teaching of English Language Arts as less than excellent (“good”, “fair”, or “poor”), only 8.5% assess their teaching of inquiry-based learning as “excellent”.

Summary

The findings of the surveys of administrators, teachers, and librarians are clear and very consistent. When these three groups of educators believe in the value of key library practices and frequently experience activities associated with those practices, they are likely to assess the library program’s instructional role as “excellent” in the teaching of both 21st Century Learner and PA/Common Core standards. The same is true when educators identify librarians with key roles relating to school leadership and instruction. And, not surprisingly, as these close relationships suggest, assessments of the instructional program of the school library by all three educator groups suggest that the two sets of standards are strongly related to each other.

As these assessment data are self-reported and based on perceptions, not hard data, how seriously should they be taken? Perhaps all three groups of educators are telling the researchers what they want to hear. That is unlikely though, or all survey respondents would have given answers indicating that they believe the “right” things about library practices and activities and librarian roles, and that is not what happened.

Ultimately then, how can one know how seriously to take these qualitative data about the library’s, and the librarian’s, contribution to teaching these two important sets of standards? The next chapter answers this question by looking at the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Reading and Writing test results of the schools of the librarians, teachers, and administrators who provided the qualitative data reported in this chapter. Will the test scores validate their opinions? Read the next chapter.