

Tisha S. Woo. "Critical for Teaching and Learning": The Role of School Media Specialists in Implementing Common Core Standards for Reading Informational Texts
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Informational texts have been historically underutilized in elementary classrooms. However, new Common Core Standards require an increased emphasis on informational texts across the curriculum. As leaders and instructional partners in their schools, school library media specialists (SLMSs) have a strategic opportunity to support teachers and students within this changing educational landscape. This study examined how SLMSs in elementary schools are responding to this opportunity by conducting a national survey regarding their attitudes, practices, and barriers. Media specialists held positive views regarding the new standards for Reading Informational Texts (CCSS-RIT) except its potential impact on test scores. They were highly engaged in many practices supporting student use of informational texts, though less so in promoting reading. The results may indicate that SLMSs are still adjusting to the new standards. Barriers such as fixed schedules, budget constraints, and inadequate staffing may also play a significant role in the extent of their engagement.

Headings:

Elementary school libraries

School librarians

Nonfiction

Surveys

“CRITICAL FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING”: THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MEDIA
SPECIALISTS IN IMPLEMENTING COMMON CORE STANDARDS
FOR READING INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

by
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Introduction

Reading and educational research has well-documented elementary school students' lack of exposure to informational texts in spite of such texts' significant potential benefit for learning and literacy (Duke, 2000; Mantzicopoulos & Patrick, 2011). But in today's evolving educational landscape, informational texts can no longer be ignored. Common Core State Standards now require greater emphasis on informational texts starting at the elementary school level (Hill, 2011). Indeed, the preeminent publication *School Library Monthly* recently inaugurated a new column to specifically highlight outstanding K-12 informational texts (Weisman, 2012). Similarly, publishers are marketing such texts to librarians with claims such as "aligned to the Common Core", "supports the Common Core", and so forth in professional library journals such as *School Library Monthly* and others.

School library media specialists (SLMSs) have an unprecedented opportunity – to promote student learning through informational text collections that are carefully curated for the media center and classroom use and to collaborate with classroom teachers to incorporate informational texts into subject areas and support student learning and achievement (Hill, 2011). The American Association of School Librarians' position statement on the Common Core Standards (2010) states: "The school library professional as leader, instructional partner, information specialist, teacher, and program administrator is *critical for teaching and learning* in today's schools" (emphasis mine).

Articles concerning the selection of such texts are also making appearances in professional library literature (e.g. Weisman, 2012). Yet because Common Core implementation is so recent, no research studies currently exist that document how SLMSs are responding to this opportunity, nor is there evidence-based literature concerning best practices based on new Common Core requirements. The purpose of this research is to document the attitudes, efforts, and barriers of SLMSs to support teachers and students in this new area. In doing so, this study intends to address the following:

1. What are the attitudes of school library media specialists (SLMSs) that serve elementary school students, in supporting the implementation of informational texts to meet new Common Core State Standards?
2. How are SLMSs who serve elementary school populations responding to the increased emphasis of informational texts within their schools, in terms of changed roles and practices?
3. What are the barriers facing SLMSs serving elementary school populations in supporting new Common Core State standards for reading informational texts?

Literature Review

Defining Informational Texts

Studies documenting the use and benefits of informational texts, or its more generally known term, nonfiction, have also attempted to better define and classify what is meant by informational texts. Baumford and Kristo (1998) use the terms *nonfiction* and *information books* interchangeably with a simple definition: “Books that present knowledge factually”. They classify these books in terms of the ways they are presented

or organized (concept books, photographic essays, identification books, life cycle books, experiment and activity/craft/how-to books, documents/journals/diaries, survey books, and informational picture storybooks).

Kesler (2012) defines nonfiction in terms of author's intent and avoids the term "information", quoting Gerard (1996): "*information book* does not readily trigger association with the variety of nonfiction books...that can be just as compelling, engaging, and beautifully written as good fiction" [emphasis the author's]. Similarly, Kletzien and Dreher (2004) argue that to equate informational texts with only expository (non-narrative) writing is a mistake, and suggest that educators distinguish between three types of nonfiction: narrative-informational text, expository-informational text, and mixed text.

In Standard 10: Range, Quality, and Complexity: Range of Text Types for K-5, the Common Core divides all texts into either Literature or Informational Texts. It specifies Informational Texts as *Literary Nonfiction and Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts*. Unfortunately, the Common Core use of the term *literary nonfiction* is not well defined. Also, its use of the overarching term *Informational Texts* may in fact be so broad as to mask the variety of informational texts that exist (Maloch & Bomer, 2013).

Because this study addresses practices of school media specialists related to the Common Core, *informational texts* will be used, however flawed. The Common Core lists as examples of informational texts "biographies and autobiographies; books about history, social studies, science, and the arts; technical texts, including directions, forms, and information displayed in graphs, charts, or maps; and digital sources on a range of topics." This study will also use the terms *informational text* and *nonfiction*

interchangeably while acknowledging that these categories encompass a broad range of texts that primarily intend to communicate information to the reader through a range of text structures and formats.

A Brief History of Informational Texts

In 2000, Nell Duke published a seminal study on elementary students' lack of access to informational texts. Duke's study built upon prior research that suggested young children may benefit from greater exposure to informational texts, such as gaining comfort with informational reading and writing, sparking curiosity, and connecting reading to their personal interests and home literacy experiences. Prior research also seemed to indicate that children's literacy development is genre-specific. In other words, that skills in handling a particular genre arise from experience with that genre, documented with children as young as three years of age. These studies arose from concerns that children in the United States, particularly those in underprivileged settings, demonstrated inadequate reading and writing skills, a "fourth-grade slump" in reading achievement, and low levels of achievement in science.

Duke's analysis of informational text use among 20 first grade classrooms in the Boston metropolitan area yielded an alarming figure of only 3.6 minutes per day spent in whole-class learning activities, on average. No more than 10% of any one classroom's displayed print was informational, and the percentage of informational text in classroom libraries averaged only 9.8%, with low-SES classrooms averaging 40% less books in their collections overall. Duke observed that these socioeconomic differences may factor into the long-term issues of underachievement in reading and writing, and among low-SES students in particular, restricting them from gaining the discourse knowledge and

fluency (“semiotic capital”) needed to take full advantage of life’s opportunities and function well in society.

A more recent study replicating Duke’s methodology among second through fourth graders found only slightly improved access to informational texts, with between one minute and 16 minutes spent per day in instructional time with informational text. While Common Core State Standards recommend equal attention be given between informational and narrative texts in elementary schools, the classrooms in this study consisted of about 71% narrative print and only about 18% informational texts (Jeong, Gaffney & Choi, 2010). Promisingly, however, classrooms with teachers that had less years of experience and therefore were newer to the field had higher percentages of informational texts than more experienced teachers. This seems to indicate more effort among recent graduates to make informational texts available to young children.

Many studies have built upon Duke’s seminal work to demonstrate the potential benefits of increased access and instructional use of informational texts. Mantzicopoulos and Patrick (2010) examined science-related texts in particular. They postulated that young children need greater exposure to science texts in order to identify themselves as skilled science readers. The researchers also sought to examine young students’ interest in and ability to learn from science-themed informational texts using narrative and case-study methodologies.

Using a random sample of kindergarten students participating in a science literacy program, research read through four science-themed “informational text plates” (showing a picture and some text related to the science topic) with each child and asked him or her to retell what they had heard as if they were “telling a friend who has never heard it

before.” Children were also asked about their level of interest in and familiarity with the topics presented.

These students were able to understand and accurately retell the stories they had after just one reading, with no significant gender differences. The students made comments beyond the presented themes, which suggests that they can construct meaning from and are actively engaged with science texts. This was observed for both familiar and unfamiliar science topics, suggesting that science texts for young children should not be limited by what they are already studying in school, as children use prior knowledge of topics to make sense of new ones.

A majority of the children expressed interest in reading a longer book about some of the themes, including less-familiar topics such as simple machines. As young children typically exhibit more interest in such subjects than older students, this affirms the importance of exposing children to less-accessible science topics such as physical science even in the early years. An important implication of this study is its potential benefit for those underrepresented in the sciences – disadvantaged students and girls – in particular.

Today’s nonfiction has unmeasured potential to enhance student learning not only as information sources, but as opportunities for inquiry. Inquiry, the process of forming essential questions and seeking the answers through content area knowledge and research; using disciplinary thinking; and coming up with creative solutions, is illustrated through many informational texts. Zarnowski and Turkel (2011) highlight “books that demystify”, a arguably new emphasis in nonfiction that “presents factual information without explaining how these facts were obtained”. Instead, such texts take the reader

along on the author's own process of research and exploration, and modeling the inquiry process as a result.

In a subsequent article, Zarnowski & Turkel (2012) met with fifth grade students over several weeks to examine their responses to a nonfiction text that modeled the process of inquiry. The students were able to identify the research questions that were central to the text and connect with the author and researchers in the text as real people they could relate to (referring to them by first name, for example). They assumed a positive attitude toward solving research problems and took on the identity of a problem-solver themselves.

Such texts may align well with Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Text K-5 (CCSS-RIT). For example, second-graders are expected to “identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.” Indeed, the Common Core Standards for English and Language Arts (ELA) are built upon the premise that children need multiple exposure to texts of increasing complexity throughout their schooling in order to be optimally prepared for the level reading required for college or career studies later in life. The ACT, Inc., report *Reading Between the Lines* (2005), showed student readiness for college-level reading at its lowest point in more than a decade, and that the clear differentiator between students who met reading benchmarks and those who did not was their performance on “complex texts” (texts of highest difficulty among three different levels of complexity: uncomplicated, challenging, and complex). Informational texts that model problem-solving, engage students through a reader-author connection, and promote questioning and domain-specific thinking may provide the means through which young students are able to form

critical reading and thinking skills that will help them meet other ELA Standards such as CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8: “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.”

School media specialists (SLMSs) can offer educators and their students many avenues through which to mine the potential riches offered in informational texts while also helping them meet Common Core Standards. Research already suggests a positive relationship between schools with adequately staffing in library services and advanced reading scores (Lance & Hofschire, 2012). The American Association of School Librarians’ Position Statement on the Common Core College- and Career-Readiness Standards suggests the important leadership role of the SLMS:

The school librarian leads in building 21st-century skills by collaborating with classroom teachers to design engaging learning tasks that integrate key critical thinking skills, technology and information literacy skills with subject area content.

Sadly, fixed schedules, lack of time, and a misunderstanding of the media specialists’ role in a school often pose barriers to the collaborative and other processes by which SLMSs can resource students. Educational literature often reflects a focus on equipping teachers without mention of collaborating with school librarians, as in the case of Young, Moss, and Cornwell (2007). While the researchers address best practices for promoting nonfiction in the classroom, it makes no mention of the school library or of media specialists as resources. O’Neal (2004) found that the perception of SLMSs of their current and ideal roles at their schools differed significantly from that of administrators and teachers. Furthermore, the study suggested that neither administrators

nor SLMSs may be taking adequate measures to promote school library programs or forge learning partnerships with school staff.

Prior to the advent of the Common Core, articles such as Trinkle (2007) disseminated best practices to SLMSs in teaching students to access, evaluate, and use informational texts. Now, articles such as Hill (2012), Shook (2013), and Weisman (2013) are making their appearance in professional school media publications such as *School Library Monthly*, *Teacher Librarian*, and others. Such articles, while drawing on earlier studies such as those previously discussed, are themselves highly practical in their focus. Their intent is to guide the media specialist in understanding what the Common Core is and what implications there are for his or her library program in various areas: collection development, teacher and faculty collaboration, and in the media specialist's role in his or her own instruction of students, for example. Yet, there appears to be no empirical research on how media specialists are actually engaging their schools with these new challenges.

New Common Core standards incorporating increased use of informational texts, then, offer a two-fold opportunity: increased student learning and achievement, and increased opportunity for SLMSs to support students and teachers through best practices in their library programs. This study will attempt to examine SLMS attitudes, practices, and barriers in light of these new opportunities.

Methodology

This study attempted to measure the attitudes, expectations, and practices of school media specialists in response to the new curricular requirements of the Common Core State Standards regarding informational texts. The survey method was chosen in

order to obtain both a quantitative and qualitative sampling of a large number of respondents so that the results can be used to make estimations about school media specialists' beliefs and practices based on the responses of a sample of the population (Wildemuth, 2009).

A national online survey of school media specialists in various parts of the country was implemented in order to reach a large number of possible respondents in a relatively brief amount of time. To recruit participants, the study utilized professional listservs; thus, the population surveyed was a sample of those who responded to an invitation to participate. However, the survey involved some limitations. It is likely that media specialists participating in professional listservs are more invested in their work and may have more positive attitudes than those who do not. Those inclined to respond to a survey regarding professional practices and attitudes may be even more so. Additionally, the response rate and demographic differences between responders and non-responders may limit the generalizability of this study.

The American Association of School Librarians listserv (aaslforum@ala.org) has 649 members as of October 2013 and is populated by school media specialists. LM_NET (listserv@listserv.syr.edu) is "the original listserv for the world-wide school library community". It is hosted by Syracuse University's School of Information Studies and has over 12,000 members. These listservs were selected in order to target school media specialists on a national scale. Additionally, the AASL forum's affiliation with the American Library Association increased the likelihood that listserv members are credentialed library professionals.

Many state-level studies have been conducted to survey the practices and attitudes of media specialists. The researcher consulted a number of these as well as previous Master's Papers (Masterson, 2012; Brasfield, 2013) as a resource for descriptive variables. Examples of descriptive variables commonly used included years of experience, the level of staffing in the school library, and the socioeconomic demographics of the student population as indicated by the percentage of students on Free and Reduced Lunch. These were incorporated into the survey. Identifying variables such as personal names and schools were omitted.

The joint action brief of Achieve, Inc. and the AASL on the role of school librarians in implementing the Common Core (2013) served as a helpful model for structuring questions related to library practices. The action brief proposes “the school library program move away from providing a traditional warehouse of materials to adopting a proactive role in student learning” through a three-step process: 1. Understand It (the Standards), 2. Create a Plan, and 3. Act on It. Survey questions derived from these three steps offered Likert scale response choices to survey participants, thus attempting to describe levels of implementation, in the case of practices; in the case of SLMSs perceptions or attitudes about the Common Core Standards, it allowed the survey to measure responses on a spectrum with levels of agreement or disagreement with statements about the CCSS-RIT or informational texts. In order to collect deeper information on these practices, several questions include the option to provide further information in the form of a fill-in response or checking specific practices that apply.

The Qualtrics program was used to administer the survey over a reasonable period of time in order to allow for adequate opportunity to respond. As Qualtrics can be

administered online and offers a simple interface with options to customize the survey experience (skip patterns, branching, the option to stop and resume later, etc.), it was hoped that respondents would be motivated to start and complete the survey. No identifying information was gathered from the participants, preserving their anonymity and confidentiality. The “Prevent Ballot Box Stuffing” feature was employed so that respondents could only take the survey once.

Data collection was conducted over a two week period, as is optimal for Internet-based surveys and attempted to increase the response rate through a structured framework (Wildemuth, 2009). AASL forum and LM_NET listserv members received an initial email briefly explaining the study and inviting them to participate by clicking on a link to the survey. The solicitation email also mentioned the possibility of cross-posting for those who subscribe to both listservs. Second, a reminder and second invitation to participate was sent midway through the data collection period. After the analysis was completed, a follow-up email was sent to the listservs with a link to a summary of the research results and an opportunity to receive a full copy if desired.

The researcher piloted the proposed survey with a small number of local media specialists. As no identifying information was collected in the survey and the questions posed were of an innocuous nature, no ethical issues were anticipated, nor were they experienced.

Results

Characteristics of Respondents

One hundred fifty subjects started the survey during the two-week window that it was made available. Because participants were solicited from professional listservs of

which only an approximate membership was known, it was not possible to calculate the response rate of the survey. One hundred thirty-six participants actually completed the survey, for a completion rate of 91%.

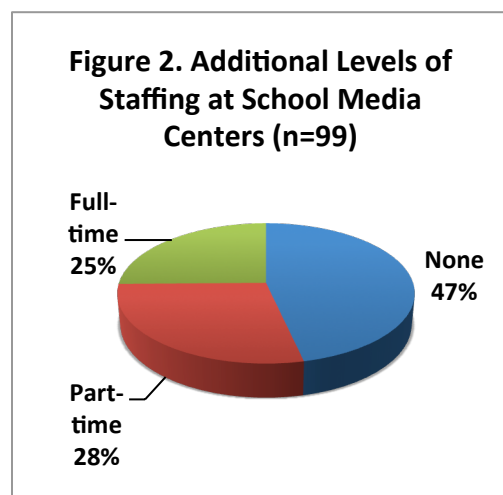
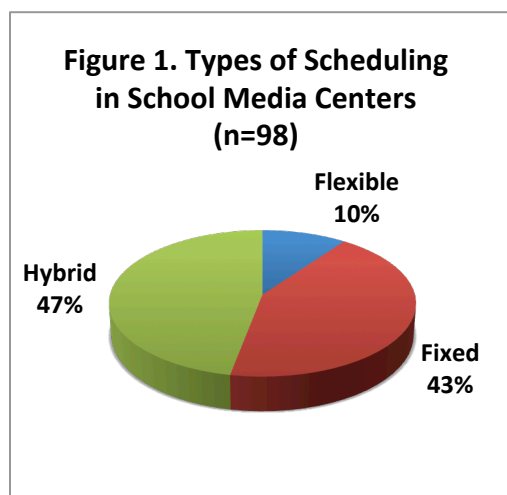
The survey employed two filtering questions (Q1, “Has your school adopted the Common Core State Standards?”, and Q2, “What grade levels do you serve at your school?”) to weed out respondents that did not fit the desired demographic of the study, namely, school media specialists serving elementary school age students (defined as any grades between Kindergarten and sixth grade) in schools adhering to the Common Core State Standards. Out of the 150 started surveys, 46 were filtered out through these questions, and two respondents only completed the first two questions, leaving 102 response sets for analysis. Excluded surveys also included respondents who indicated through a text entry response that they *only* served *primarily* middle school students (such as 5th-8th grade or 6th-8th grade).

Nearly half (45%) of included respondents selected “Other” for Q2 and submitted a text entry response. Several respondents indicated that they worked at K-8 or K-12 schools, (n=11). Another common response among this group indicated working at schools that included preschool students, e.g. “PreK-5th” or “pre-K-8th” (n=16). The remaining 55% percent conformed to the fixed responses for Q2, indicating they worked at schools serving K-2nd grade, K-5th grade, or K-6th grade.

The overall tenure of the group was an average of 7.28 years of experience at their current schools (n=98), and 10.9 years of experience as school librarians overall (n=99). Outliers included 12 respondents in their first year at their current schools, and 14 respondents who had over 20 years of overall experience. Additionally, slightly more

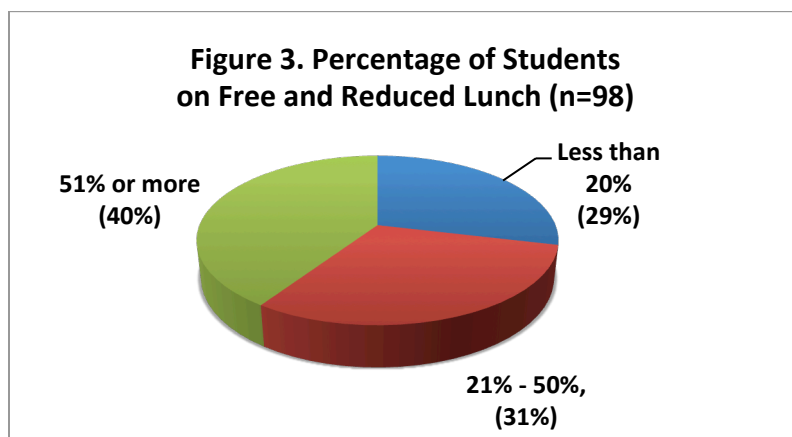
than half (52%) of respondents had prior experience as a classroom teacher. Teaching experience varied widely across all grade levels and subjects, from traditional elementary classroom teaching to specialized subjects such as ESL and Drama, to the community college.

More significantly, only 10% of respondents indicated having a fully flexible schedule in the jobs (n=8). Nearly half had an entirely fixed schedule (43%, n=42), while the remaining 47% had some combination of fixed and flexible scheduling (Figure 1). Similarly, over half the group reported having no additional staff in their media center (47%; Figure 2); of those who reported having additional full or part-time staff, the most common scenario was only one additional person (see Appendix B).



Finally, the largest group of respondents (40%) reported working in schools with low socio-economic levels as indicated by the number of students on Free and Reduced Lunch (more than 51% of the student population; see Figure 3). Respondents working in schools with low to moderate percentages of the student body on Free and Reduced

Lunch, 0-20% and 21%-50%, were 29% of respondents and 31% of respondents, respectively.



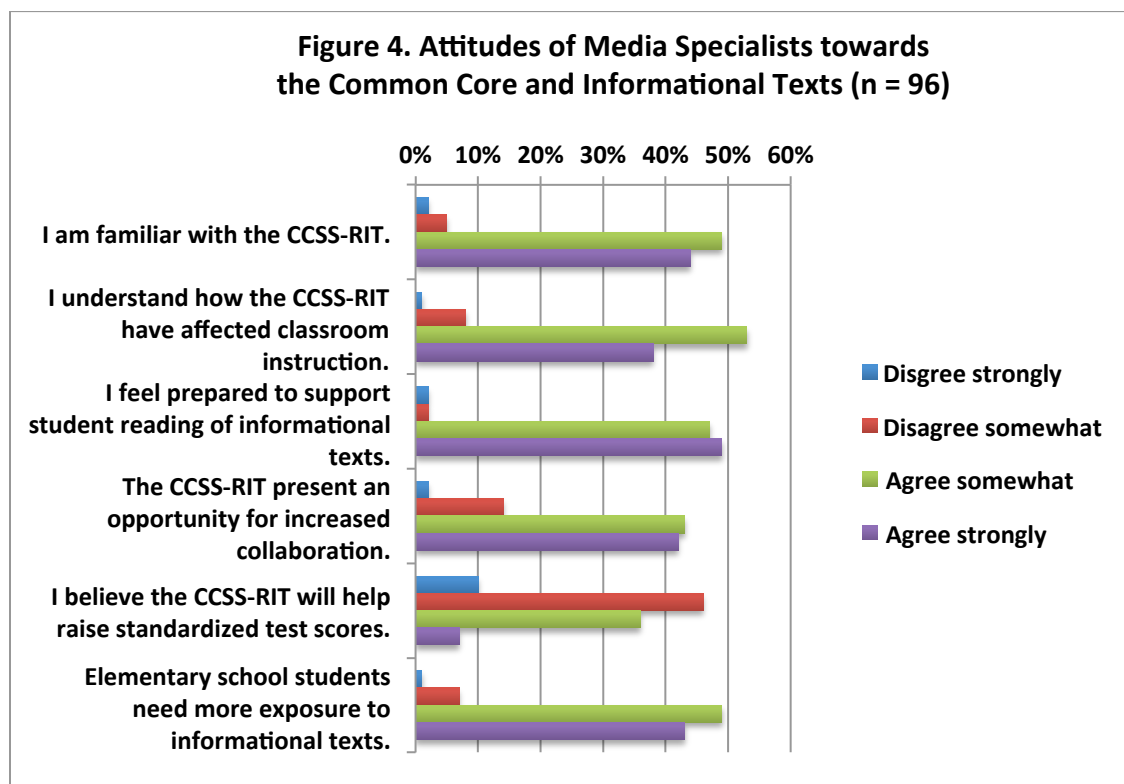
Thus, the 102 responses analyzed come from a diverse group of professionals, many of whom have accumulated some years of experience in the media center and in the classroom. While no “typical” respondent can be identified, it is important to note that the largest number of respondents in each question were those reporting having a hybrid schedule (partially fixed and partially flexible scheduling), no additional staff, and a majority of the student body on Free and Reduced Lunch. Of those having 51% or more of the student body on Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), 50% also had no additional staff and only 10% indicated having fully flexible scheduling.

Respondents’ Attitudes toward the Common Core Standards

Survey participants were asked to respond to six statements gauging their thoughts and attitudes towards the Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts (CCSS-RIT). These questions sought to examine SLMS’s level of familiarity with the CCSS-RIT and how they have affected curriculum and instruction at their schools, whether the CCSS-RIT present opportunities for increased collaboration with teachers, and whether they will improve students’ performance on standardized

testing. Two additional questions probed SLMS’s own sense of preparedness to support students with informational texts and whether they felt informational texts were valuable for teaching and learning at the elementary school level. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with the six statements on a four-point Likert scale. They were also given further opportunity to respond via a text entry question soliciting their additional comments.

Responses to these statements were generally positive, with over half of media specialists indicating agreement (marking “Agree somewhat” or “Agree strongly”) (Figure 4) for all statements except one. Responses were especially high to Statement 3, “I feel prepared to support student reading of informational texts,” with 96% of media specialists in agreement. This may indicate a high level of confidence in using informational texts for teaching and learning in general.



Slightly more media specialists (16%) disagreed either somewhat or strongly to Statement 4, “The Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts present an increased opportunity for collaboration with teachers in my school.” While this percentage is relatively low, it contrasts with disagreement percentages of less than 10% with the other statements. This may point to issues with collaboration in general for some media specialists. One respondent commented, “Teachers have very little planning time and they don't ask or are not willing to participate when offered with help.” Another respondent stated,

Our district cut our librarians to part-time leaving us with two schools. The CCSS emphasize research and technology schools which is what a full-time librarian could do. We are barely able to get through each day. [We receive] no help and expect to have each class each week.

Difficulties that SLMSs are already experiencing in regards to collaboration due to schedule constraints, part-time status, or an environment that is not conducive to collaboration may cause a negative outlook for the potential for collaborating when it comes to informational texts.

Another notable exception to the generally positive trend in attitudes was media specialists’ responses regarding the CCSS-RIT’s potential for improving students’ performance on standardized tests. Over half of media specialists (56%) disagreed with Statement 5, “I believe the Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts will help raise standardized test scores.” Only 7% of media specialists agreed strongly with this statement, contrasting sharply with the other five statements in which 38% to 47% of media specialists agreed strongly. Text responses indicated that some respondents find that testing of younger students is inappropriate. As one explained,

I am glad to see a shift to more non-fiction at the elementary level as when students are adults, they will read more non-fiction. However, I don't believe the new SBAC testing is developmentally appropriate for the youngest students being tested (3rd, 4th, and 5th) so I don't think CCSS will raise test scores.

Yet another potential reason was supplied by another participant: “Students are tested too much as it is. Changing the type of test is not going to improve things.”

These responses seem to indicate a lack of faith in the value of testing at the elementary school level. Another rationale may be that media specialists attribute a variety of factors, not just the use of informational texts, will lead to improved test scores, as a third respondent emphatically stated: “I think that more reading of any kind will raise reading scores!”

Further comments seemed to indicate that student interest in nonfiction is at least equal to that of fiction, as one respondent observed: Another respondent observed, “In my experience, circulation of informational texts is higher at the elementary level.”

Another stated:

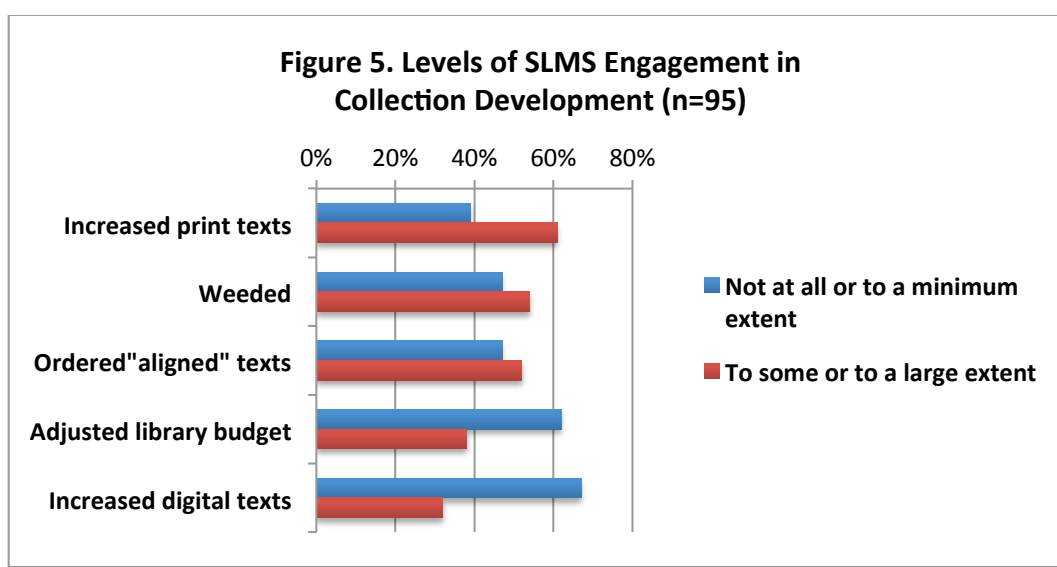
It seems that non-fiction and fiction have about the same check out rate per week at my school. Teaching students to find and use information from the non-fiction sources is what is needed; they are already interested in the information and don't need extra prodding.

With the exception of attitudes towards the CCSS-RIT's likelihood of raising standardized test scores, the school media specialists who participated in the survey showed a high level of agreement (84% or more agreeing somewhat or strongly) with statements indicating confidence in their ability to support students, familiarity with the standards and their effects on classroom instruction, a sense of nonfiction's value for elementary school children, and willingness to collaborate with teachers.

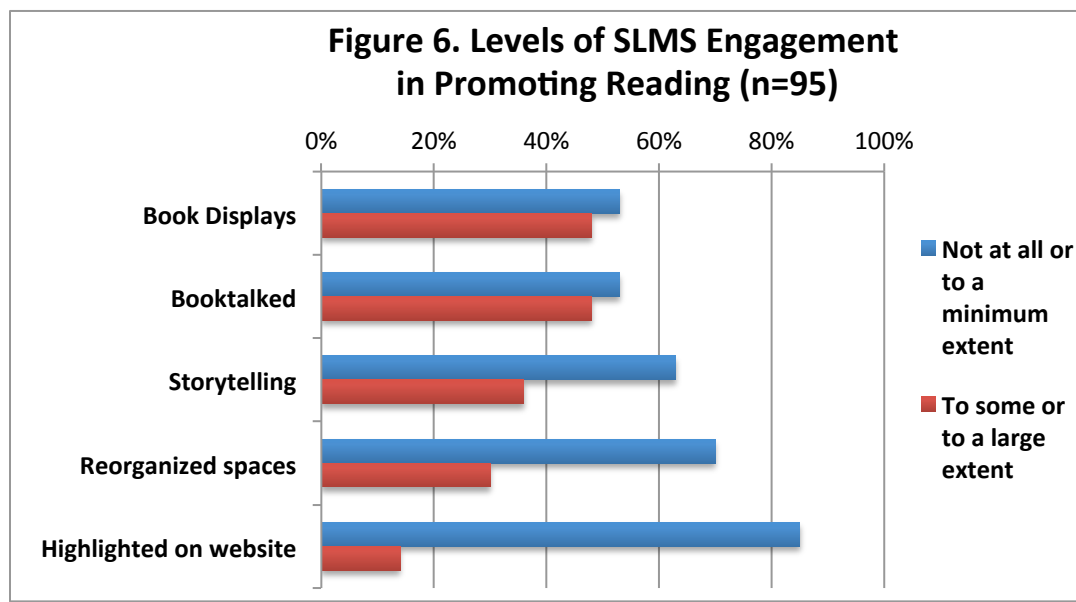
Respondents' Practices Regarding Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts

Respondents were asked to share their level of engagement with a variety of practices that may support the Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts. These practices encompassed several critical areas of responsibility on the part of SLMSs, including collection development, promoting reading of nonfiction, resourcing teachers, and planning/professional development. Respondents rated their level of engagement with each practice on a four-point scale, from “Not at all” to “To a large extent.”

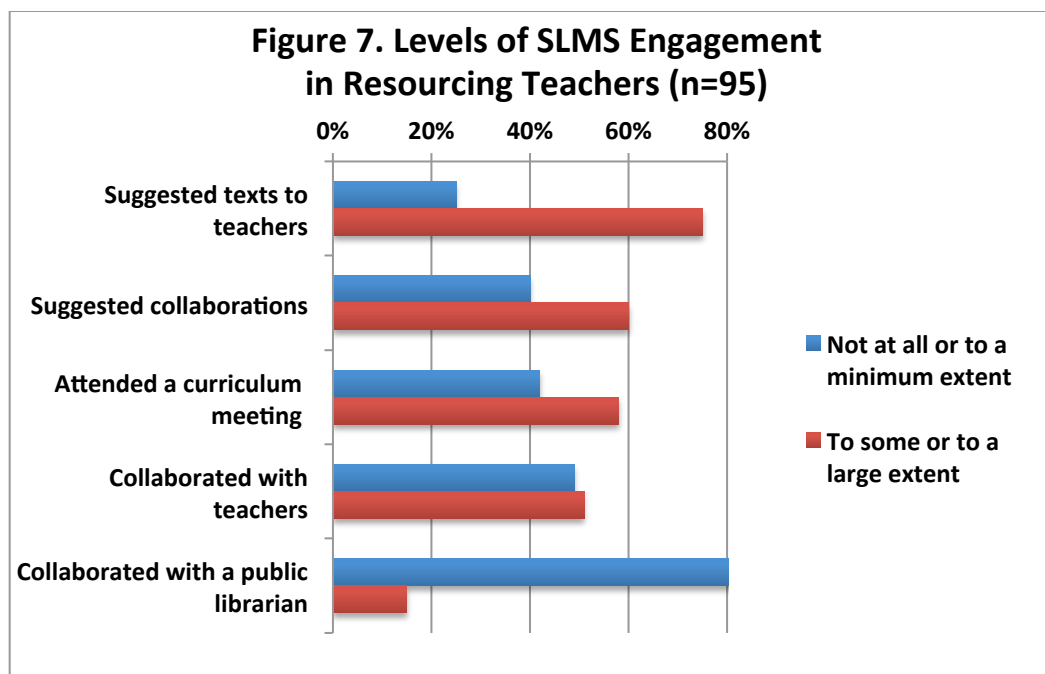
Media specialists registered a moderate to high level of engagement in collection development in several areas (Figure 5). The purchasing of print materials was implemented by a majority of the respondents (61%), as was weeding materials (54%). Interestingly, slightly more than half (52%) purchased texts because they were marketed as “aligned to” or “supporting the Common Core.” Notably, media specialists were less likely to have adjusted their budgets (only 38%) or to have increased their collections of digital texts (only 32%).



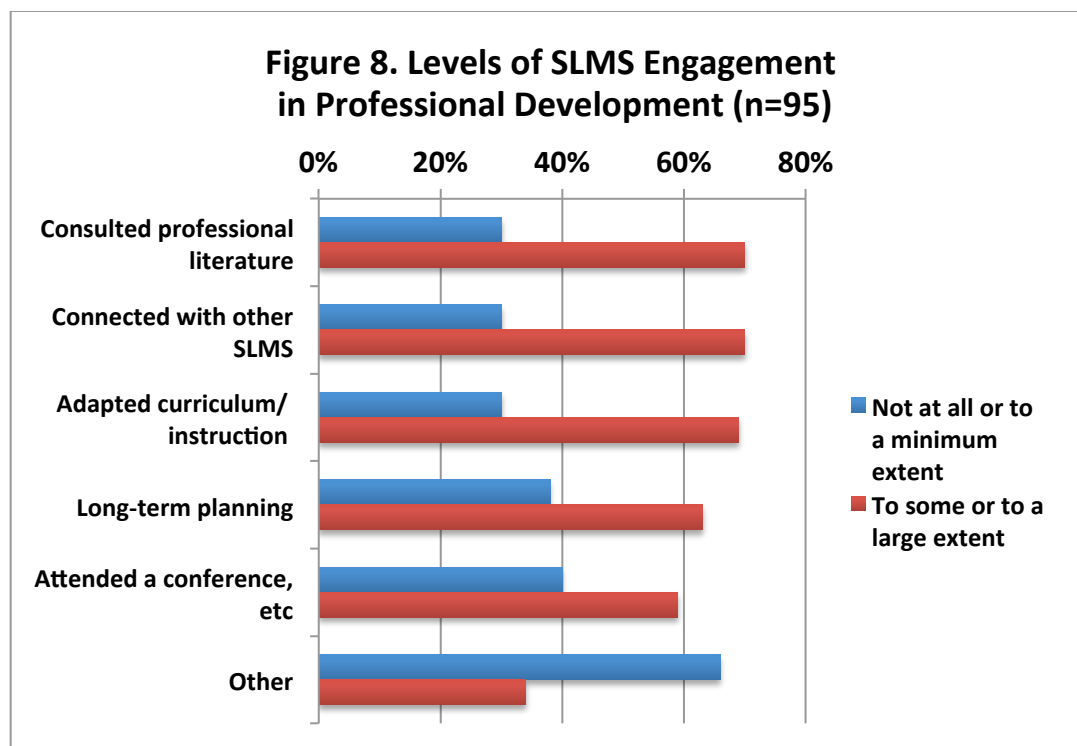
In regards to promoting the reading of nonfiction, less than half of media specialists registered a moderate to high level of engagement overall (Figure 6). These include making book displays (48%), booktalking (48%), storytelling with nonfiction (36%), reorganizing the library space or shelving (30%), and highlighting informational resources on the library website (15%).



In the area of resourcing teachers, a majority of media specialists suggested texts to classroom teachers for instruction (75%), suggested collaborations to teachers (69%), attended a curriculum planning meeting (69%), and actually collaborated (at any level) with a teacher (51%; Figure 7). A marked exception to these higher percentages of engagement was collaborating with a public librarian, with only 15% having done so to a moderate or large extent. This low percentage may point to a low frequency of collaboration between school and public librarians in general (Masterson, 2012).



Finally, a majority of respondents had engaged in planning, in their own professional development, and in resource sharing with other SLMSs, from consulting the professional literature (70%), to connecting with other media specialists (70%), to attending a conference, workshop, or other professional development event (59%; see Figure 8). Media specialists have consulted a variety of sources such as *School Library Journal*, ALA and AASL resources, the LM_NET listserv, *Library Media Monthly*, and *Knowledge Quest*. Coupled with these training and preparation activities, over half of media specialists had adapted their curriculum and/or instruction to align with CCSS-RIT (69%) and engaged in long-term planning to adapt their library services to include more information texts (62%).

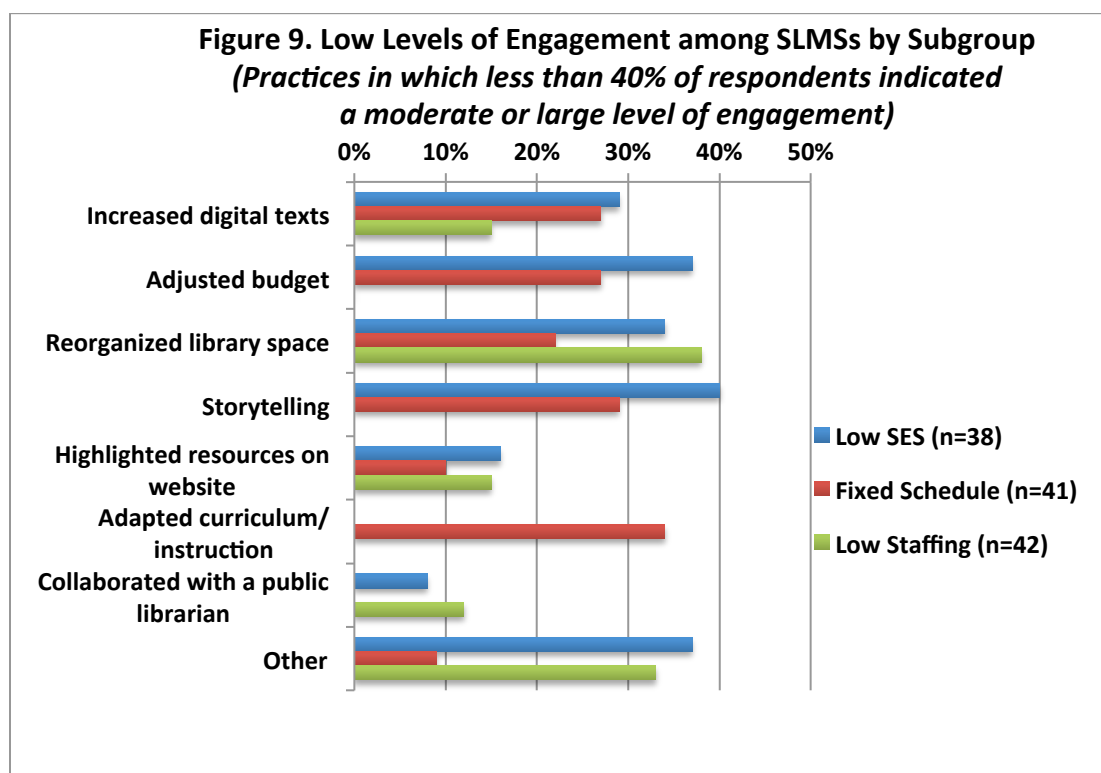


Among all general areas of practice, respondents reported the lowest levels of engagement in the area of promoting reading of nonfiction, especially on their library websites; in purchasing more digital texts and resources; and in collaborating with a public librarian. Some librarians offered explanation for these lower engagement levels in that they were already promoting and using nonfiction in their schools before the Common Core was adopted: “Since the prompt asked ‘as a result of CCSS’ many answers were marked as minimal as nonfiction units of study were already in place and only needed small modification to align with CCSS.” Another pointed to having already developed his or her nonfiction collection: “I am fortunate to already have a strong collection in depth and breadth supporting our curriculum.” Finally, some may be still planning and developing their response to CCSS-RIT: “I am just in the early stages so I predict my responses will be changing next year.” Indeed, the high percentage of respondents engaging in moderate to high levels of professional reading, resource

sharing, and professional development seems to indicate that many media specialists are attempting to prepare or further arm themselves to support the CCSS-RIT. Additionally, several respondents who provided a text response to the prompt “Engaged in other activities related to the CCSS for RIT (Please specify)” also indicated they had participated in professional development of some kind: “joined newsela.com and readworks.org for online informational texts”; “Read lots of articles about it and done research about the upcoming tests”; and, “District professional development on CCSS”, for example.

Librarians on fixed schedules, with low levels of staffing, or in schools with a relatively low SES as indicated by the percentage of student on FRL registered lower levels of engagement (over 60% of respondents) in several areas of practice. These included adjusting the library budget to reflect an increased emphasis on informational texts, reorganizing the library space or shelving, highlighting resources on the library website, and other non-specified practices (Figure 9). The Fixed Schedule and Low SES subgroups registered low levels of engagement in more areas of practice among the three subgroups, with only 34% making adjustments to their curriculum and instruction and only 10% highlighting resources on their websites in the Fixed Schedule subgroup, for example. In each subgroup, their particular challenges may leave them swamped with managing the library’s basic operations, or possessing inadequate resources for taking further action beyond them. Be it running the library program alone or with minimal help, serving a particularly needy student population, or being tied to a set schedule, there is a tangible cost in terms of teacher and student support. It should be noted that some

respondents belonged to more than one of these subgroups and thus faced multiple challenges.

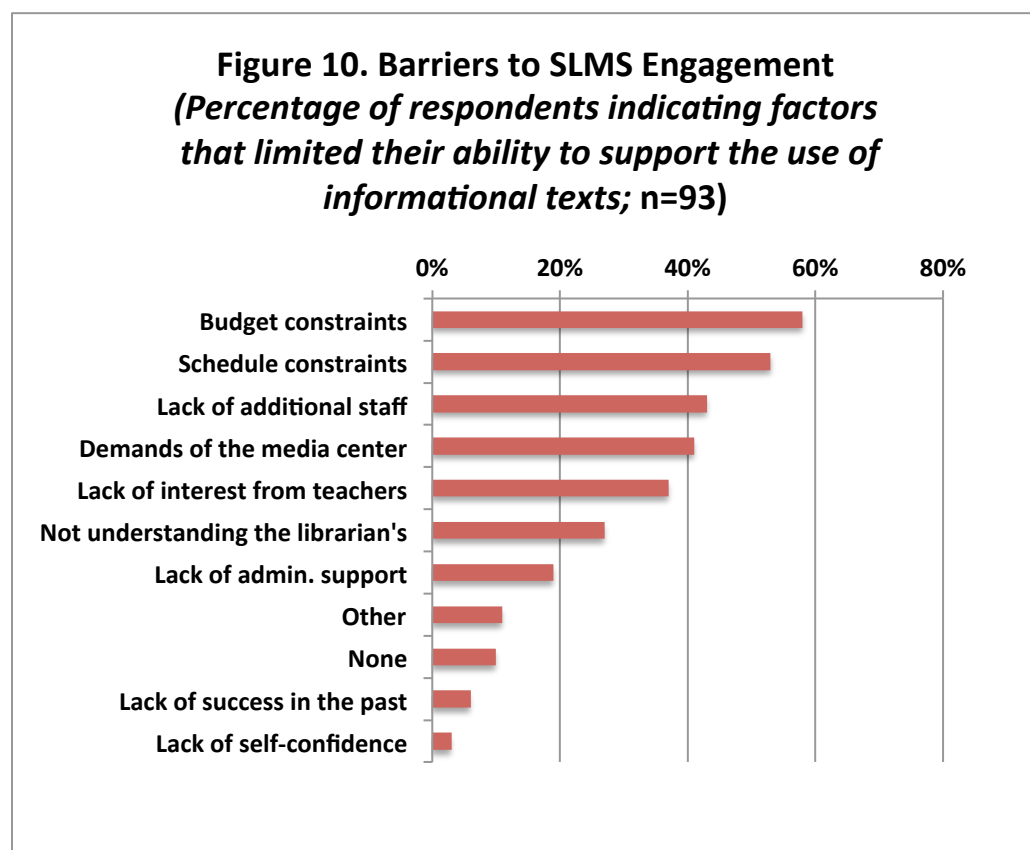


Barriers to Supporting Student Use of Informational Texts

A study of the indicated barriers to supporting CCSS-RIT in their schools may provide further insight into the above responses. Over half of respondents indicated budget constraints and schedule constraints were limiting factors (58% and 53%, respectively; Figure 10). As one SLMS observed, “Funding is the issue. You really can’t make a significant change without funds to support the Common Core initiative. You work with what is available and tweak it to try to make it meet the mandates.” The impact of limited funds was reiterated in several text comments throughout the survey. For example, there were a number of comments related to the lack of funds for a full-time librarian in the school:

If I were full-time again, I would definitely collaborate with the teachers about information text and have extra classes per week just on research projects with the students and teachers. But being part-time now, I just send e-mails out of the new books and suggestions of how to put them with CCSS.

Another respondent fulfills two different roles in the school: “I am also the ELP teacher, so my time is split between 2 jobs.”



Limited budgets have a direct impact on collection development as well as professional development for media specialists, with the potential for creating a ripple effect of scarcity throughout a school. One SLMS noted, “Just want to reflect on the fact there is no money at my school for books other than what I get from having book fairs.” Another stated,

More funding for purchasing informational texts to support Common Core standards and research would enable me to serve the students and faculty of my

school better than I can at present. Library budgets in my state have been "zeroed out" the last 5-6 years.

Such monetary constraints may also account for the relatively low level at which the study participants had increased their collections of digital texts, as well.

Media specialists reported other noteworthy barriers as well. Over one-third of respondents selected inadequate staffing (43%), the demands of the media center (41%), and lack of interest from teachers as limiting factors (37%). While the reasons behind the lack of interest from teachers cannot be fully known, it is probable that it stems, at least in part, from teachers' own demanding schedules due to testing and to adjusting to new standards and curriculum changes. One respondent commented, "teachers are overwhelmed"; another pointed to the new pressures involved with increased testing: "not having a classroom objective other than "pass the test".

A relatively small percentage of respondents (19%) reported lack of administrative support as a barrier, but text comments related to this barrier illuminate the significant difficulties that it can entail:

I am not very versed in Common Core at all. I asked my principal if I could attend workshops with the teachers, voluntarily, without any pay, so that I would understand changes and be on the same page with teachers, but I was told I could not. I would love some kind of instructions or help with this whole new curriculum.

Similarly, another media specialist commented:

Teachers' planning time is their class library time so I can't meet with teachers, which is something I would like to do. Also my school system has offered librarians NO training on CCSS or informational texts. If we want to learn about it we do it all on our own.

Interestingly, only a very small percentage of media specialists reported lack of success in the past (6%) or lack of self-confidence (3%). Respondents do not seem to lack

the desire or perceived ability to support teachers and students, nor does past performance heavily factor into the difficulties they experience in doing so, overall. Rather, the barriers appear to come from without in the form of scheduling issues, lack of money (and its many repercussions), and keeping up with the constant needs involved with running a library program. Also, this finding is not surprising given the generally positive attitudes exhibited by respondents when asked their thoughts about CCSS-RIT earlier in the survey. Finally, many respondents indicated more than one barrier from the list. As is evident in the text comments above, many of these barriers are interrelated, and, when experienced in concert, seem to further compound the daily difficulties that these media specialists face.

Not surprisingly, media specialists who indicated that 51% or more of their students are on FRL made up more than half of those who indicated budget constraints as a barrier. At the same time they made up less than half of those indicating all other barriers suggested. However, media specialists with fixed schedules or lack of additional support staff also made up more than half of respondents for several barriers (demands of the media center, lack of administrative support, lack of teacher interest, schedule constraints, budget constraints, and lack of success in the past). Though it is difficult to draw generalizations from this limited pool of participants, this would seem to indicate these scenarios prevent SLMSs from supporting student use of informational texts in several ways.

Respondents' Experiences Supporting Informational Texts and the Common Core

On a more positive note, more than half of respondents (n=57) related a successful experience supporting the use of informational texts in their schools. Fifteen

responses involved direct, content-area collaboration with a class on a specific topic and/or project, such as 3rd grade/Black History month, an art project on Ohio birds, 4th grade/American Revolution, and several involving biographies (American presidents, picture book biographies, live wax museum project. etc.). Several responses (n=11) involved direct instruction of information literacy outside of a specific content area, such as close reading strategies, using nonfiction text features, attending to accuracy of information, and developing research skills for projects. These skills included teaching the use of online, subscription resources like PebbleGo, their library's OPAC, and Searchasaurus; research models; and strategies for activating prior experiences and formulating research questions like KWL charts. One respondents' enthusiasm was evident in his or her commentary:

When I taught a lesson about reference materials and brought students over to the encyclopedias, they each grabbed an encyclopedia and were so absorbed in the kinds of things they were finding. It was fun to see their enthusiasm with those great informational books that many of them had never used before. Many of them are checking them out for "fun" now. I know their teacher will be using them later this year for an assignment. I feel the students will know how to use them.

Additional areas of success included promoting and circulating nonfiction texts to both students and teachers. Contrary to many respondents' difficulties engaging teachers, one respondent shared:

I have had great success collaborating with a few teachers at my school who ask for materials in advance, or meet with me to plan research and projects. I would say this is 2 or 3 teachers out of 10 homerooms.

Another commented: "I frequently recommend texts for teachers to use as supplements in their classrooms. I present books at faculty meetings and I booktalk informational books to my students on a regular basis." And yet another builds and

promotes a collection resourced in part by outside libraries, presumably from within his or her school district: “A few teachers have learned that I’m able to order books from other libraries, so we create temporary classroom collections so that kids can browse and read widely on the topic being studied.” These responses alone illuminate the many avenues that media specialists take advantage of to promote their collections, from faculty meetings, to one-on-one conversations with teachers (in the best of situations, these are initiated on both sides, not by the media specialist alone), to booktalking.

Discussion

The 102 school media specialists who responded to the survey held positive attitudes about Common Core Standards and informational texts in regards to their sense of personal preparedness, familiarity with the standards, and in the potential for increased collaborations with classroom teachers. Overall, however, most of the respondents disagreed that the CCSS-RIT had the potential to raise standardized test scores. Study respondents reported some skepticism that test scores would increase as a result of the new standards for a variety of reasons, from testing being developmentally inappropriate for younger students, to the belief that all reading, not just nonfiction reading, can contribute to improved test performance.

Likewise, study participants registered a moderate to high level of engagement with several practices supporting the new Common Core Standards. Notably, there was an especially high level of engagement in personal professional development. Media specialists indicated reading professional literature, joining online resource groups, taking training classes, and participating on listservs to learn more about CCSS-RIT and share knowledge with other school librarians.

Among practices related to resourcing teachers, the highest percentage of participants had suggested resources to teachers. While this practice is essential for all content areas, suggesting resources alone makes for relatively low levels of collaboration between librarians and teachers. It is notable that several respondents indicated later in the survey that they had collaborated at higher levels (e.g. within content area lessons), as well. Though it is difficult to know just how much of an impact factors such as fixed schedules and being understaffed has on the potential for higher-level collaborations, several respondents indicated not having enough time due to packed schedules, lack of time, teachers being overwhelmed, etc. In these cases, new curricular standards imposed by Common Core can be posed as a positive opportunity, as much as is possible, to work together to overcome teachers' sometimes-overwhelming obligations to learn, adjust, and implement something new. Now, more than ever, teachers need the expertise of the school media specialist in order to rise to these new challenges.

A relatively small number of participants had collaborated with a public librarian. Since over half of librarians indicated that budget constraints were an issue, which may account for lower levels of engagement in the area of promoting the reading of nonfiction, such collaborations may be one way to fill in gaps in school library collections, particularly digital texts, when available at the public library. Again, barriers in scheduling and in having additional library staff may pose formidable barriers in having the time and energy to pursue such collaborations. As increased attention is given to the role of the public librarian in supporting students and the Common Core through practices such as handling reference questions for student research, selecting materials that support school assignments, and nonfiction readers' advisory, SLMSs may begin to

see their relationships with local public librarians as an increasingly critical resource for better serving their schools (Grabarek, Lindsay & Nesi, 2013).

In spite of such barriers, media specialists reported many successful experiences supporting informational texts in their schools. Many communicated enthusiasm about their work and a desire to work more closely with teachers and students, whether or not it was currently happening or possible given their particular situation.

Conclusion

This study conducted a national survey in order to ascertain the attitudes, practices, and barriers that characterize elementary level school media specialists and their situations. The media specialists who participated in this national survey registered overall confidence and optimism regarding the value of information texts, the potential for further collaborations with teachers due to new Common Core Standards for informational texts, and their own preparedness to support students. A very small percentage cited a lack of confidence or lack of past success as barriers. Rather, barriers such as budgeting, fixed scheduling, and keeping up with daily media center demands posed difficulties in doing so for many respondents.

The joint action brief of the AASL and Achieve, Inc. regarding the role of the SLMS in implementing Common Core standards suggests a three-stage plan for supporting students and teachers through school library programs: 1. Understand It, 2. Create a Plan, and 3., Act on It. The survey results suggest that a high percentage of school media specialists who participated understand the Common Core Standards for Reading Informational Texts and how it has impacted curriculum and instruction in their schools; thus, they are well established within the first stage of this process. The

participants' overall high level of engagement in professional development and training also seems to indicate that proactive steps are being made to understand CCSS-RIT, and to prepare for needed changes implied by the new standards. While the SLMSs in this study showed a moderate to high level of engagement in many practices, a number of barriers explicitly stated by these participants limit their abilities to do so in others. This may suggest that in order for SLMSs to engage in an effective level of action, there are several obstacles to be overcome. These obstacles are further complicated by socioeconomically challenging environments, fixed scheduling (or other time constraints), and inadequate staffing in the library. Also, some respondents indicated they had already been promoting and using nonfiction to a significant extent in their library programs, so that the new standards had little impact on their practices. While the results of the study cannot be generalized to all media specialists, those who participated suggest a group of confident and able professionals proactively seeking opportunities to learn more about CCSS-RIT and opportunities to support both students and teachers in their schools. Indeed, they model at varying levels the action brief's suggestion that librarians take a proactive role in student learning.

As this three-stage process is by necessity iterative rather than linear, and as some participants may be in the early stages of adjusting their practices, future studies of SLMSs' support of informational texts may be helpful in illuminating whether levels of engagement increase, and how their attitudes or barriers in supporting student use of nonfiction change over time. Also, this study was limited to elementary school populations. Thus, research on SLMSs at middle and high schools may also be beneficial in order to get a sense of the full spectrum of informational text use from Kindergarten

through 12th grade. Finally, future research may also examine informational texts themselves. Advertisements for nonfiction materials that claim to be “aligned to the Common Core” or “supporting the Common Core have increased in professional and popular literature. As budget constraints pose a barrier for many of the SLMSs surveyed in this study, an examination of these “aligned” materials may provide guidance on the most effective use of their limited funds for collection development.

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Appendix A: Survey

About you:

1. Has your school adopted the Common Core State Standards?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

2. What grade levels do you serve at your school?
 - Kindergarten – 2nd grade
 - Kindergarten – 5th grade
 - Kindergarten – 6th grade
 - I do not serve any students between Kindergarten and 6th grade
 - Other (please specify: _____)

3. How long have you worked as a librarian in your current school? Fill in the blank with the number of years **completed**. (First year=0, Second year=1)

4. How long have you worked as a school librarian? Fill in the blank with the number of years **completed**. (First year=0, Second year=1)

5. What type of schedule do you have?
 - a. A flexible schedule
 - b. A fixed schedule
 - c. A hybrid schedule—partially fixed and flexible.

6. Please indicate the level of additional staffing in your media center:
 - a. No additional staff
 - b. Additional part-time staff
_____ Number of part time staff
 - c. Additional full-time staff
_____ Number of full time staff

7. Do you have any work experience as a classroom teacher?
 - a. Yes (Please specify: _____)
 - b. No

8. What is the approximate percentage of students receiving Free and Reduced Lunch at your school?
 - a. Fewer than 20%
 - b. 21-50%
 - c. Greater than 50%

Your thoughts on the Common Core Standards for Reading Informational Text:

Note:

The Common Core English/Language Arts Standards categorizes all text as either Informational Texts or Literature.

Informational texts are listed as "Literary Nonfiction, Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts". They include "biographies and autobiographies; books about history, social studies, science, and the arts; technical texts, including directions, forms, and information displayed in graphs, charts, or maps; and digital sources on a range of topics."

	<i>Disagree strongly</i>	<i>Disagree somewhat</i>	<i>Agree somewhat</i>	<i>Agree strongly</i>
a. I am familiar with the Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts.				
b. I understand how the Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts have affected classroom instruction at my school.				
c. I feel prepared to support student reading of informational texts.				
d. The Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts present an opportunity for increased collaboration with teachers at my school.				
e. I believe the Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts will help raise standardized test scores.				
f. Elementary school students need more exposure to reading and using informational texts for learning.				

9. Please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with each statement by checking the appropriate box:

10. Additional comments: (Fill in response)

11. Your practices related to Common Core Standards for Reading Informational Text:
Please indicate at what level you have engaged in the activities listed below **as a result of**
the Common Core Standards (CCSS) for Reading Informational Texts:

	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>To a minimal extent</i>	<i>To some extent</i>	<i>To a large extent</i>
a. Ordered informational texts because they were marketed as aligned to or supporting the Common Core?				
b. Increased the number or percentage of <i>print</i> informational texts in your collection?				
c. Increased the number or percentage of <i>digital</i> informational texts in your collection?				
d. Adjusted your library budget to reflect a greater emphasis on informational texts?				
e. Weeded your collection?				
f. Created a book display of informational texts?				
g. Reorganized your library space or shelving?				
h. Changed your library signage?				
i. Provided storytelling of informational texts?				
j. Booktalked informational texts in your collection?				
k. Highlighted informational text resources <i>on your library website</i> ?				
l. Suggested informational texts to teachers for classroom use?				
m. Made plans to adapt your library services to include more informational texts?				
n. Suggested collaborations with teachers to support them in meeting CCSS for Reading Informational Texts?				

o. Collaborated (at any level) with classroom teachers on lessons addressing CCSS for Reading Informational Texts?				
p. Adapted your curriculum or instructional strategies to align with CCSS for Reading Informational Texts?				
q. Attended a curriculum planning meeting at your school?				
r. Attended a professional conference, workshop or other educational presentation regarding informational texts?				
s. Consulted professional literature on informational texts or CCSS for Reading Informational Texts? Please specify: _____				
t. Connected with other school librarians to share best practices and/or resources?				
u. Collaborated with a public librarian regarding informational texts?				
v. Engaged in other activities related to the CCSS for Reading Informational Texts? Please specify: _____				

12. Additional comments: (Fill-in response)

13. Are there any factors that limit your ability to support the use of informational texts in your school?

Check all that apply:

- Demands of the media center
- Lack of administrative support
- Lack of interest from teachers
- Schedule constraints
- Budget constraints
- Lack of additional staff in the media center
- Lack of understanding of the librarians' role
- Lack of self-confidence
- Lack of success in the past
- None; there are no obstacles
- Other (please specify): _____

14. Please provide a description of one of your most successful experiences supporting the use of informational texts at your school. If this does not apply to you, please write "N/A". (Fill-in response)

15. Additional comments: (Fill-in response)

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

Appendix B: Survey Results

1. About You Has your school adopted the Common Core State Standards?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	104	100%
2	No	0	0%
	Total	104	100%

2. What grade levels do you serve at your school?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Kindergarten - 2nd Grade	5	5%
2	Kindergarten - 5th Grade	43	42%
3	Kindergarten - 6th Grade	8	8%
4	No grades between Kindergarten and 6th Grade	0	0%
5	Other (Please specify)	46	45%
	Total	102	100%

Other (Please specify)
K-8
1-5
PreK - 12
K-8th Grade
K-8
Kindergarten - 8th Grade
Kindergarten - 8th grade
k-3
1st-5th
PreK- 6 and 9th grade
4-5
PreK - 4th grade
k-4
Pre K through 5
PreK-5
4-5
prek -8
prk-12
Pre-K -5
K-8
Kindergarten - 4th grade
PreK-5
5,6
3-5
Early Childhood-5th Grade
Preschool-3rd grade
K-12
k-12
K-8
prek - 6th
K-4
K-4
1-12
pre k -5th
pre-K-8th
Kindergarten - 4th
PreK - 6
Daycare-5th Grade
K3,k4-5th
3rd-5th
grades 4-8
K-5 and early childhood
6

K-8
Kindergarten-4th Grade
2. How long have you worked as a librarian in your current school? Fill in the blank with the number of years <i>completed</i> (First year=0, Second year=1, etc.)
Text Response
0
7
10
3
7
18
4
0
16
8
3
Fourth year
10
23
3
0
3
3
0
15
1
3
7
33 years
6
2
3
0
7
3
10
9
5
1
1
7
eighteen=17
7

11
25
23
6
13
0
6
5
0
3
16.5
7
5
9
2
5
14
2
10
7
7
5
15
12
2
15
7
12
11
1.5
1
17
3
over 10 yrs
0
0
6
5
3
17
4
3
7
3

25
3
7
1
0
0
15
9
6
4
11
5
14
6
21
0

4. How long have you worked as a school librarian? Fill in the blank with the number of years completed. (First year=0, Second year=1, etc.)

Text Response

4

7

10

13

14

18

11.5

0

16

26

3

Seventh year

10

23

3

0

3

9

6

15

1

3

7

34 years

6

7

5

0

8

3

15

9

5

1

3

7

eighteen=17

7

11

25




23
8
27
10
11
5
0
3
7
6
9
16
4
10
14
2
10
7
11
10
16
26
2
16
7
16
11
4
1
17
24
over 10 yrs
21
0
6
7
3
16
37
3
15
13
35
3

9
6
17
18
15
9
18
30
12
5
26
6
15
21
0

5. What type of schedule do you have?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	A flexible schedule	10	10%
2	A fixed schedule	42	43%
3	A hybrid schedule - partially fixed and partially flexible	46	47%
	Total	98	100%

6. Please indicate the level of additional staffing in your media center:

#	Answer		Response	%
1	No additional staff		46	46%
2	Additional part-time staff (Please indicate the number of additional part-time staff below):		28	28%
3	Additional full-time staff (Please indicate the number of additional full-time staff below):		25	25%
	Total		99	100%

Additional part-time staff (Please indicate the number of additional part-time staff below):	Additional full-time staff (Please indicate the number of additional full-time staff below):
1	1
1	1
1	1
1	1 (I am just a reference person for her)
1	1 clerk
2	1
2	1 librarian
1, 5 hour assistant	1
1	8
.1	1
1	1
2 with very limited hours	1
2	1 plus FT Tech
4	2
1	1
1	1 at 6-8 library; 0 at K-5 libraries
1	1 at each school
1	1
1	1
1	1
1	1
1 per elementary	1
.75	2
1	1
1	1
1	
1	

7. Do you have any work experience as a classroom teacher?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes (Please indicate subject and grade level below):		51	52%
2	No		48	48%
	Total		99	100%

Yes (Please indicate subject and grade level below):
special education
grades 3-5 all content
Drama: 4 years
7-12 Spanish
6th grade ELA
7 years long and short term sub grades K-12
4th Grade - 3 years
6-8 math and fourth grade all subjects
grades 1-6
Elementary (2-5)
Grades 1 and 2
ESL Co-teaching model
Kindergarten
1 & 2 grades
3-5
K-3
7-12 Family and Consumer Science
4 years K-1
2nd
6 and 7 grade math and science
K-5, all subjects
SIA
K,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,Community College and University
1st grade all subjects
Grade 2
7-12 English
k
Grade 5 all subjects
Computer Technology 10-12
4th & 5th grade all; 6 & 7th grade Social studies and Math
k-adult science and math
English 8, 9, 10
music/humanities
english secondary
all subjects
K,1,2,4
4th
2nd gr
1st and 4th - all subjects
3rd, 1st, 5th science, 2&3 academic assistance
HS English
substitute all grades
General-1st

4th grade all subjects 7th grade science reading math
Grades 4,5,6
2nd, 3rd, 5th grades
5th grade and preschool

8. What is the approximate percentage of students receiving Free and Reduced Lunch at your school?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Fewer than 20%		28	29%
2	21% - 50%		30	31%
3	51% or more		40	41%
	Total		98	100%

9. Your Thoughts on the Common Core Standards for Reading Informational Text Note: The Common Core English/Language Arts Standards categorizes all text as either Informational Texts or Literature. Informational texts are listed as "Literary Nonfiction, Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts". They include: "biographies and autobiographies; books about history, social studies, science, and the arts; technical texts, including directions, forms, and information displayed in graphs, charts, or maps; and digital sources on a range of topics." Please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with each statement by checking the appropriate circle below:

#	Question	Disagree strongly	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Agree strongly	Total Responses
1	I am familiar with the Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts.	2	5	47	42	96
2	I understand how the Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts have affected classroom instruction at my school.	1	8	51	36	96
3	I feel prepared to support student reading of informational texts.	2	2	45	47	96
4	The Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts present an opportunity for increased collaboration with teachers at my school.	2	13	41	40	96

5	I believe the Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Texts will help raise standardized test scores.	10	44	35	7	96
6	Elementary school students need more exposure to reading and using informational texts for learning.	1	7	47	41	96

Text Response

In my experience, circulation of informational texts is higher at the elementary level. Teachers have very little planning time and they don't ask or are not willing to participate when offered with help.

There was too much emphasis on narrative fiction. However, I don't believe CCSS is the best way to improve things.

I work in a parochial school so we're not officially required to adopt CC. Our principal was gun ho and told the advisory board and parents as much but later regretted it because of the emergence of some CC critics whose incomplete information and conservative tendencies made them vocal and persistent. It has definitely had a chilling effect and our fine principal has become very cautious. I attended the AASL conference returning with excellent ideas that have influenced collection development and lesson planning. It is discouraging the conservative outcry (small in number). As my principal has said, parents have never questioned curriculum until this year.

More funding for purchasing informational texts to support Common Core standards and research would enable me to serve the students and faculty of my school better than I can at present. Library budgets in my state have been "zeroed out" the last 5-6 years.

Grades K-3 at my school seem to mostly check out non-fiction materials while the older grades (4-8) check out more fictional materials, although some students will only check out non-fiction no matter the age. It seems that non-fiction and fiction have about the same check out rate per week at my school. Teaching students to find and use information from the non-fiction sources is what is needed, they are already interested in the information and don't need extra prodding.

I am glad to see a shift to more non-fiction at the elementary level as when students are adults, they will read more non-fiction. However, I don't believe the new SBAC testing is not developmentally appropriate for the youngest students being tested (3rd, 4th, and 5th) so I don't think CCSS will raise test scores.

Our district cut our librarians to part-time leaving us with 2 schools. The CCSS emphasize research and technology schools which is what a full-time librarian could do. We are barely able to get through each day. No help and expect to have each class each week.

More informational text but still balanced with fiction

I think that more reading of any kind will raise reading scores! I oversee the elementary buildings and the aides have scheduled classes each period. By contract, the aides aren't permitted to teach so I see the libraries as supplementing the topics teachers are covering in the classroom and purchasing more informational texts. However, the classroom teachers will be the ones to instruct students on how to read informational texts.

Student's are tested too much as it is. Changing the type of test is not going to improve things.

Teachers can't do it all-parental involvement is a must

11. Your Practices Related to Common Core Standards for Reading Informational Texts (1/2)

Please indicate at what level you have engaged in the activities listed below as a result of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Reading Informational Texts:

#	Question	Not at all	To a minimum extent	To some extent	To a large extent	Total Responses	Mean
1	Ordered informational texts because they were marketed as; the Common Core?	17	28	42	8	95	2.43
2	Increased the number or percentage of print informational texts in your collection?	16	21	42	16	95	2.61
3	Increased the number or percentage of digital informational texts in your collection?	42	22	25	6	95	1.95
4	Adjusted your library budget to reflect a greater emphasis on informational texts?	33	25	31	5	94	2.09
5	Weeded your collection?	15	29	37	14	95	2.53
6	Created a book display of informational texts?	29	21	34	11	95	2.28
7	Reorganized your library space or shelving?	42	25	18	10	95	1.96
8	Provided storytelling of informational texts?	28	32	27	8	95	2.16
9	Booktalked informational texts in your collection?	18	32	35	10	95	2.39

10	Highlighted informational text resources on your library website?	61	20	9	5	95	1.56
11	Suggested informational texts to teachers for classroom use?	4	20	40	31	95	3.03
12	Made plans to adapt your library services to include more informational texts?	10	26	48	11	95	2.63

11. Your Practices Related to Common Core Standards for Reading Informational Text (2/2)

Please indicate at what level you have engaged in the activities listed below as a result of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Reading Informational Texts:

#	Question	Not at all	To a minimum extent	To some extent	To a large extent	Total Responses	Mean
1	Suggested collaborations with teachers to support them in meeting CCSS for Reading Informational Texts?	9	28	37	19	93	2.71
2	Collaborated (at any level) with classroom teachers on lessons addressing CCSS for Reading Informational Texts?	19	27	31	17	94	2.49
3	Adapted your curriculum or instructional strategies to align with CCSS for Reading Informational Texts?	7	22	48	17	94	2.80
4	Attended a curriculum planning meeting at your school?	20	20	26	28	94	2.66
5	Attended a professional conference, workshop or other educational presentation regarding informational texts?	21	17	21	35	94	2.74
6	Consulted professional literature on informational texts or CCSS for Reading Informational Texts? (Please specify):	10	18	39	27	94	2.88
7	Connected with other school librarians to share best practices and/or resources?	12	16	39	27	94	2.86

8	Collaborated with a public librarian regarding informational texts?	60	19	9	5	93	1.56
9	Engaged in other activities related to the CCSS for Reading Informational Texts? (Please specify)	34	28	18	14	94	2.13

Consulted professional literature on informational texts or CCSS for Reading Informational Texts? (Please specify):	Engaged in other activities related to the CCSS for Reading Informational Texts? (Please specify)
articles in professional journals	
ALA, AASL	
SLJ, Horn Book	
Both: Too many to name	
Webinars, Blogs, Internet searches	
Library Media Monthly, Knowledge Quest	
SLJ	
School Library Journal	
Articles that I have seen on this topic	Booktalked informational texts, and taught close reading strategies using informational texts
School Library Journal	
various blogs and websites	
School Library Journal	
ALA	
Im_net listserv, IL Board of Ed website not at work today to identify	
Lucy Cawkins	
Big6 online classes	conduct information seeking lessons
LM-Net, AASL professional magazine	Webinars, pd courses
many prof. books have suggested book lists	
SLJ, Booklist, School Library Monthly, Empire State Information Fluency Continuum	
Common Core Curriculum Maps ELA K-5	Took Paige Jaeger's AASL course last year
Internet Resources, Professional Magazine	
	Reading Academy
	Read lots of articles about it and done research about the upcoming tests.
	joined newsela.com and readworks.org for online informational texts
	PD from State Department
	Library Lessons
	AASL conference workshops
	attended Library Department Meetings where this was part of the agenda.
	Webinar
	Professional Development
	District pd on CCSS

13. Additional Comments (Optional):**Text Response**

Since the prompt asked "as a result of CCSS" many answers were marked as minimal as non-fiction units of study were already in place and only needed small modification to align with CCSS.

For library purposes, I still believe in a strong mix of fiction and non-fiction. I am trying to get kids to love reading.

Teachers planning time is their class library time so I can't meet with teachers which is something I would like to do. Also my school system has offered librarians NO training on CCSS or informational texts. If we want to learn about it we do it all on our own.

Have always used a lot of informational texts in my lessons. Have a large collection of age appropriate informational texts already, so I do not plan to alter my buying strategies.

My collection/curriculum already supported the use of informational texts so I did not need to change much with the adoption of the CCSS.

I am fortunate to already have a strong collection in depth and breadth supporting our curriculum, I am well-funded for many years

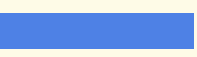

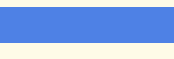








If I were full-time again, I would definitely be collaborated with the teachers about information text and have extra classes per week just on research projects with the students and teachers. But being part-time now, I just send e-mails out of the new books and suggestions of how to put them with CCSS.

I am not very versed in common core at all, I asked my principal if I could attend workshops with the teachers, voluntarily, without any pay, so that I would understand changes and be on the same page with teachers, but I was told I could not. I would love some kind of instructions or help with this whole new curriculum.

I am just in the early stages so I predict my responses will be changing next year.

Just want to reflect on the fact there is no money at my school for books other than what I get from having book fairs.

14. Are there any factors that limit your ability to support the use of informational texts in your school? Check all that apply:

Answer		%
Demands of the media center		41%
Lack of administrative support		19%
Lack of interest from teachers		37%
Schedule constraints		53%
Budget constraints		58%
Lack of additional staff in the media center		43%
Lack of understanding of the librarian's role		27%
Lack of self-confidence		3%
Lack of success in the past		6%
None. There are no obstacles		10%
Other (Please specify)		11%

Other (Please specify)
Lack of time with such a packed curriculum to plan and implement experiences. I'm a District Librarian
Lack of highly engaging Informational texts that are at a low level for my students
Frequent changes of curriculum
classroom objective other than "pass the test"
teachers are overwhelmed
Need to reinstate full-time librarians
No training, lack of communication
I am also the ELP teacher, so my time is split between 2 jobs
Funding is the issue. You really cant make a significant change without funds to support the common core initiative. You work with what is available and tweak it to try to make it meet the mandates.

15. Please provide a description of one of your most successful experiences supporting the use of informational texts at your school. If this does not apply to you, please write "N/A".

Text Response
N/A
Students using KYVL and Informational texts to complete research project.
I usually compare like topics in literature and informational text beginning in 1st grade
Using various types of sources (print, database, video) to compare and contrast features of source, information found and if it supported or refuted schema or other info found.
4th grade students using biographies then presenting a live wax museum
I have spoken with one of the teachers about the upcoming test and I showed her a print out of what the 7th grade test will look like. It was the first time she had seen it.
I book talked some informational texts and they became popular among the students.
Our students prefer informational texts, I'd say at least 2 to 1, in the elementary library. It has not been difficult to meet CC standards in this area, except for budget.
Covering US Presidents this year - chose 4 to start with - Wehn introducing each president - introducing the informational text to go along with...as well as other correlated informational text.
Collaborating with third and fourth grade teachers on book reports.
I like to do units that involve collecting information from various sources (including several NF texts). One of the students' favorites (and mine) is a unit I do on the Iditarod race in Alaska.
I just try my best to incorporate it into my library lessons or actively go out and seek out a teacher and their class to work with on a project I have in mind.
I purchased some informational text ebooks that the teachers could use on the interactive whiteboards to more easily point out text features such as captions, subtitles, etc.
Use of PebbleGo with primary aged students.
created a computer packet for writing reports using informational texts
I did a wonderful persuasive writing lesson using Pale Male by Janet Schulman that the 5th grade teacher worked with me executing.
Linking nonfiction ebooks through 4th grade and Media center curriculum
I have worked with a teacher at each grade level to review curriculum and purchase/suggest resources to support common core.
collaborating with 3rd grade teachers to teach library lessons about informational texts that they are using in their classrooms
2nd Grade Snow unit. Objective - To show the different resources in the library where we can get information about a subject. To practice simple research skills by finding information about snow from the books provided.
creating accounts for my students using newsela.com providing nonfiction articles from newspapers around the country with quizzes to help determine their lexile levels
Teacher Inservice on Picture Books including Informational Text literature

Pairing fiction and non-fiction sources on a topic to spark interest
collaborating on each grade level's units
Projects based on viewing/listening to "Martin's Big Words" video (shown with captioning)
Increasing the circulation of nonfiction collection
I have had great success collaborating with a few teachers at my school who ask for materials in advance, or meet with me to plan research and projects. I would say this is 2 or 3 teachers out of 10 homerooms.
Demonstrating and observing teachers and students using the OPAC to search for subject content of informational texts.
N/A
N/A
Collaborated with a fourth grade teacher on American Revolution topics using websites, databases and print
guiding students to successfully complete their projects with correct information.
N/A
N/A
na
I did a second grade lesson on informational text with text features. Students then did research using these features.
I frequently recommend texts for teachers to use as supplements in their classrooms. I present books at faculty meetings and I booktalk informational books to my students on a regular basis.
scavenger hunt by students for facts from texts on shelf, single non-fiction text reviews by several students, each a different chapter
n/a
NA
When I taught a lesson about reference materials and brought students over to the encyclopedias, they each grabbed an encyclopedia and were so absorbed in the kinds of things they were finding. It was fun to see their enthusiasm with those great informational books that many of them had never used before. Many of them are checking them out for "fun" now. I know their teacher will be using them later this year for an assignment. I feel the students will know how to use them.
science and a few social studies teachers assign unlimited access ebooks as part of instruction
I teach kindergarten students how to use and navigate Pebble Go and non-fiction texts which they then use to look up answers to research questions in their classrooms as well as at home.
A week or two before a major holiday/event, I send out an email to teachers listing print and digital resources available. They appreciate not having to have a "meeting" about it, they can preuse at their own leisure; but it highlights items they may not know we have.
worked with the third graders on biographies (nonfiction) and the second graders on their animal reports

Students took part in the Aullwood Arts contest. They researched information about a chosen Ohio bird, wrote a paragraph of results and created a picture of the bird incorporating habitat and physical features they discovered. Their work was displayed at school and some were selected to enter the Aulwood contest and displayed at Aullwood.

N/A

I love when classroom teachers do come to me looking for texts to support what is going on in their classrooms and I do my best to support them in every way possible! Introducing Searchasaurus database to 5th graders in order for them to gather information to support writing argument essays. Also using Pebble Go database with k-4 students

I am currently reading several informational texts to help a resource choose one for a group of students.

I read aloud and discussed picture book biographies with students.

We use informational texts constantly when researching and we research at all grade levels. I complete a text features lesson with them before using Non-Fiction/Informational texts. This helps them become more fluent at using these resources. I use the "Big 6" and "Super 3" research models which help incorporate the use/function of Informational texts before and during research.

N/A

Na

research projects

N/A

A few teachers have learned that I'm able to order books from other libraries, so we create temporary classroom collections so that kids can browse and read widely on the topic being studied.

n/a

We have just begun implementing the procedure of checking out ebooks, and the teachers seem very excited.

na

N?A

I was able to show ALL third graders how to read info texts, NF text features, and write reports throughout the course of the year, instead of in one setting due to collaboration with the teachers.

n/a

n/a

N/A

N/A

lessons on text features in media center

The 2nd grade class made booklets of informational text features for which we used pictures taken with ipads from the informational text in the media center. The students will now look through their own text books to see how many features they can find and how each feature can help them understand the material easier.

N/A

3rd graders completing Black History month projects were directed to the biography section (print) and Biography in Context (online).

working on a research unit with my wnd grade with books and web sites to help them with their work

Promotion of nonfiction areas of media center, plus increasing number of books each child may check out, has greatly increased circulation of all nonfiction items, including info texts

lesson using primary documents in a biography lesson

I use math "stories" like Spaghetti and Meatballs for all and the Penny Pot. Sp.&MB deals with Area and Perimeter. I read the book and then either use post-its or the actual library tables to reflect what happens in the book and to check for understanding.

Collaborating with the teacher on small group research projects. Then the small group meets with me in the library for research time.

read a story to first grade then attempted close reading with an article related to the story

NA

16. Additional Comments (Optional):

Text Response

Some teachers are completely on board, many so busy they don't take time to use us. I don't think teachers really are using informational text as they should be. I think they are putting off making changes due to the LARGE number of other changes going on in the world of education and they just haven't gotten to that yet.

I don't see the need to buy lots of new texts to meet CC. I think CC can teach kids how to get information out of any NF text they may have available to them.

My students are all beginning readers and my biggest gripe with informational texts is that a lot of the writing is targeted for older students. I've only found a few publishers that cater to this population. I'd also like to see more online databases focusing on informational writing for young learners

we have not formally begun using CC, tho we will be adopting them in the next year
Again, I have frequently used informational texts throughout my career, I did not need to change a lot in order to meet the demands of the CCSS.

I feel that our school was already using informational texts BEFORE the common core standards were adopted. I believe common core standards have somewhat increased the use of informational texts at my school library, but not very much. Non-fiction materials have always been popular here. The quality of activities using informational texts in the classroom, however, have improved greatly, as have my opportunities as a librarian to help students to better use informational texts. For that I am very grateful. The common core standards have helped teachers to teach students more of what they need to know and have helped me to use my librarian skills to be more supportive. There is more that I can do, however... I am working on collaborating more and purchasing specific materials to help teachers even more.

the shifting of content in the curriculum wreaks havoc on collection development over time and costs huge sums of money to accomodate those changes

I believe that the CCSS are developmentally inappropriate for our youngest learners. I also believe that the standards should not be fully implemented until they have been field tested.

i am retiring this year, because I spend most of my days dealing with classroom managment issues that are not being addressed by administrators. I love working with k-6 reading and discussing a variety of common core topics. I do not like standing in the chaotic halls at every class change with little or no help. Our library has over 13,000 volumes and most of them have never been checked out, because 6-12 teachers only bring their students to the library to use the computers. In the eight years that I have been here I have tried to encourage more library use. My requests and actions to encourage library use have been ignored for the most part. I am discouraged and burnt out.

There has always been use of informational texts the media centers that I work in. I have always done 50-50; when I read fiction, I find nonfiction titles that correlate. We always have non fiction on display and I book talk those as well as fiction titles.