

The Collaboration Conundrum: School Librarians and Math Teachers in the Era of the Common Core Mathematics Standards ¹

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Abstract

With the unveiling of *Standards of Mathematical Practices* embedded within the *Common Core Mathematics Standards* that value inquiry, cross-curricular connections and the use of technology in instruction, school librarians may be best positioned to collaborate with mathematics teachers to instill these practices into mathematics teaching and learning. However, mathematics curriculum is often perceived as challenging and impossible for librarians to connect with, thus, such collaboration is often not pursued by either party. This presentation will describe the results of a NSF funded study that examines how school librarians and mathematics teachers collaborate to support middle school students' mathematics learning and the factors that shape collaboration. We conducted semi-structured interviews with mathematics teachers, school librarians, and school and district leadership in a large school district. Our analysis reveals that while librarians seek deeper collaborations with mathematics teachers, their work with them is limited to cooperative and coordinative levels of involvement. We find several factors that influence the nature and opportunities for collaboration, including: institutional structures; access to technologies; testing pressure; and knowledge about mathematics teaching and learning. By examining the connections and contexts of these factors, we reveal current and potential roles of school librarians in mathematics learning in middle schools.