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

*Mega Subramaniam*
Assistant Professor and Associate Director of the Information Policy and Access Center
College of Information Studies
Room 4105 Hornbake Building, South Wing
University of Maryland
College Park MD 20742-1115
Telephone: (301) 405-3406
Email mmsubram@umd.edu

*Ann Edwards*
Assistant Professor
Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership
Center for Mathematics Education
College of Education
2226k Benjamin Building
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742-1115
Telephone: (301) 405-6343
Email: aedwards@umd.edu

*Minjung Ryu*
Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership
College of Education
2226 Benjamin Building
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742-1115
Telephone: (609) 751-4716
Email: mryu@umd.edu

*Rebecca Oxley*
Graduate Research Associate, Information Policy and Access Center
College of Information Studies
Room 4121B Hornbake Building, South Wing
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742-1115
Telephone: (631) 492-0733
Email: roxley47@umd.edu

¹ Copyright is held by authors.
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.