

Shutesbury Elementary School Library Annual Report – June 2010

Highlights of 2009-2010

- Received Massachusetts DESE certification as a library teacher (grades K-12)
- Received membership in the Massachusetts Regional Library System including database subscriptions and buying cooperative
- Successfully collaborated with teachers in each grade level
- Used a wide array of web 2.0 and technology tools to enhance student learning
- Updated the library catalog to Follett's Destiny Quest, offering web-based access and increased features for students
- Hosted "Books in Action", attended by 140 students
- Continued to offer "Tech Time" in conjunction with the computer teacher, providing weekly technology professional development to staff
- Was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities "We the People Bookshelf" grant
- Experienced continued high circulation
- Mentored an active Library Apprentice program

This school year brought exciting change to the library program. The librarian position was upgraded from an aide to a library teacher. This move is a testimony to the administration, staff and community and their commitment to literacy. With a certified library teacher, the school was able to join the regional library system and experience the benefits that members enjoy including inter-library loan, databases, deep discounts on purchases, and continuing education. The year also saw continued use of technology throughout the program, including the new Smartboard and web 2.0 tools such as Voicethread and blogs.

The library is a busy hub, bustling with positive energy. Classes, learning partners, small work groups, tutors and teachers visit the library weekly. But most importantly, the joy of reading is alive and present and students visit the library continually throughout the day to check out books and read.

Curriculum Highlights

With technology teacher Debbie Lee, we continued to move the library/computer curriculums closer together into a true information literacy model. I am grateful to have such a talented and cooperative colleague!

I attained my goal for the year of collaborating with each classroom teacher. Through this close work, I was able to integrate information literacy skills into classroom content.

Highlights included:

- 6th grade economics unit that incorporated social studies frameworks and media literacy culminating in a fine showing of multi-media productions
- Research and creation of a [wiki](#) centered around the 4/5 study of Mexico
- A [Voicethread](#) showcasing 3rd and 4th graders' knowledge of the Pilgrims and Wampanoags in 1621
- 2nd grade independent research on Tanzania presented as a narrated [powerpoint](#) presentation
- [Digital storytelling](#) with grade 1
- Animal research and an introduction to databases with kindergarten

Using wikis linked to the school website, I developed [pathfinders](#) for classroom use to aid students in finding quality resources.

Throughout the course of the year we referenced the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, the AASL information literacy standards for the 21st Century Learner and ISTE NETS technology standards to make sure students were hitting the benchmarks of each area.

Reading

SES is a school that loves reading! This is evidenced every day, from the joy in a kindergarten student checking out his weekly book, to a 6th grader pumping through the MCBA list on her way to becoming a “25 Reader.”

This love for reading starts at the top, where principal Bob Mahler once again read all 25 MCBA nominees. The principal also offers his own book club in the library once a week to the 3rd grade which has been very popular. He reads in the lunch room to the youngest students and keeps a list of the books he has read on the library catalog. This year he also offered a week-long symposium on World War II focused on the book *The Green Glass Sea*. He serves as a tremendous role model for students and staff alike.

The Massachusetts Children’s Book Award Program (MCBA) continues to be a focal point of our language arts program in grades 4-6. The program earned high levels of participation (over 80%) and enthusiasm for reading- - this year students and staff combined to read 850 books during the MCBA program.

New this year was the Cyber Book Club, in which students read and discussed *Out of Patience* with children from the Norman E. Day School in Weston, MA via Skype. We also used Skype to conduct the Union 28 Battle of the Books Championships between Shutesbury, Swift River and Leverett. We hosted author Brian Meehl in January for an engaging talk on writing and a luncheon with a group of readers. I maintained a [MCBA blog](#) to showcase our students’ reading efforts.



In addition to the Cyber Book Club, lunch time book clubs were held for *Three Cups of Tea* as part of the all-town read, Leslea Newman's *Hachiko Waits* and Carl Hiasson's *Flush*. Attendance per book club averaged 22 students per session this year (Many children attended all the book clubs offered.)

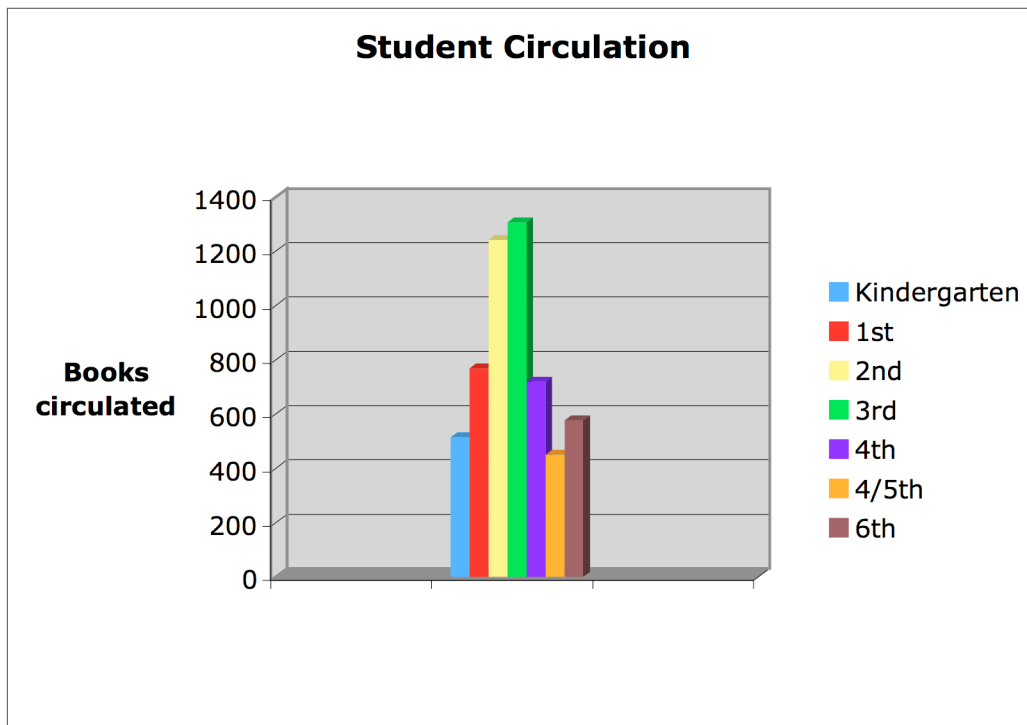
The library hosted two book fairs this year. Through this effort we added several hundred new books to the collection. They continue to be fun events that draw in the community and put inexpensive books in the hands of our students.

With Reading Specialist Christine Larson I helped to organize Dr. Seuss Day in March in conjunction with Read Across America. We kicked off the day with an all-school reading of the Cat in the Hat and had numerous games and activities running in the library and computer lab throughout the day.



Collection and Circulation

- 13,396 materials (2,000 more than the town library!)
- 1995 average age
- Circulated 8,748 materials
- 211 student holds placed
- 222 patrons (which includes students, staff, parents and community members such as learning partners.)



The student circulation statistics reflect an interesting trend. Since changing to an “unlimited” checkout in 2008, the number of books circulated to students in grades 2 and 3 remains high. These emergent readers generally max out their account, carrying 10 books at a time. In contrast, our most proficient readers in grades 4/5 and 6 check out far fewer books. They choose longer books and read far more heavily from their classroom libraries, which are well stocked. They also tap into the young adult collection at the public library.



Databases

For the first time this year we were able to offer our students the use of databases. Accessed for free through our regional library membership, these included Gale Infotrac, Newsbank and Proquest. The retail value of these resources is \$10,000. These resources are available from home via the school website and were used in many research projects, including the unit on biomes, biographies, Mexico, and animals

Interlibrary Cooperation

I continued to enjoy a cooperative relationship with the three other Union 28 librarians. We meet monthly throughout the year planning our MCBA program and sharing ideas and best practices. We organized a visit from author Brian Meehl in January and shared the expense of his program at three of our schools.

I have also developed a good working relationship with Mary Ann Antonellis, director of the M.N. Spear Memorial library. I used the public library extensively to borrow class sets of books and supplement the school library collection for research projects. I placed interlibrary loan requests for teachers and students. This has been an effective cost saving measure. We have also been able to borrow books audiobooks and DVDs to help differentiate instruction. We confer on book purchases and promotion of the summer reading program and as the public library moves into a building project for their new library I will continue to build that relationship.

Volunteers

I rely on volunteers to shelf and process books. I was fortunate this year to have a talented and reliable crew who volunteered 5 hours each week. I am grateful to Myrtle Blanchard, Molly Moss, Mary Carlson and Jen Davies for their dedication to the library.

The student volunteers, our Library Apprentices had an outstanding year. 12 students in grades 5 & 6 volunteered one recess period each week to work in the library. They tackled display work, shelving and processing,

organized a “Get Caught Reading” promotion and worked at the book fair including facilitating the appearance of Geronimo Stilton. But their most popular accomplishment was the creation of a series of public service announcements for reading promotion. These “commercials” were shown at all-school assembly to an appreciative audience and are shared on the library webpage. This year’s group featured a high number of boy members; the value of young children seeing “big” kids working in the library and modeling that reading is cool is immeasurable.



Professional Development

Courses and Workshops:

- Survey of Children’s Literature K-12
- Apple’s Technology in Education
- Media Literacy in 21st Century School Libraries: Enabling New Teaching Practices & Learning Outcomes for the Information Age
- Transform your school library into a learning commons
- Fun with Research: Helping Students Master 21st Century Skills

Through the listserves, blogs, social bookmarking, webinars and Twitter that I follow and read daily, I have developed a powerful professional learning network. These sources contribute widely to my knowledge as well as connecting me to top librarians around the world.

Committees and memberships

I joined the school’s Literacy Team this year, to learn more about how we teach reading and explore ways that I could serve teachers in this area. I am one of the school’s representatives to the Town of Shutesbury 250th Celebration committee.

I am a member of the Massachusetts Scholl Library Association and attended the annual conference in Sturbridge in October.

Goals

The library long-range plan is nearly complete and I plan to submit it for review over the summer.

I plan to search out grants to further our mission and continue work on establishing a learning commons model.

As we look at our reading program next year, I will be searching for ways that the library can further promote a passion for reading in all of our students.

With technology the theme for next year's union-wide curriculum days, I will be part of the team of technologists and librarians to design and facilitate the workshops. In particular, I am designing an online component to train teachers in the use of web 2.0 tools. This is a very exciting opportunity and we hope to use the success of Tech Time to springboard into this next phase of technology integration.

Submitted by Marcia Bernard
June 11, 2010