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FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELF-EFFICACY OF NOVICE  
SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

By

Christine Haeffner

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College of the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major: Educational Administration

Under the Supervision of Dr. Kay A. Keiser

Omaha, Nebraska

January, 2020

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## **Abstract**

### FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELF-EFFICACY OF THE NOVICE SCHOOL LIBRARIAN

Christine N. Haeffner, Ed.D.

University of Nebraska, 2020

Advisors: Kay Keiser, Ed.D. and Rebecca Pasco, Ph.D

Effective school library programs depend on school librarians with the capacity to lead and administrate library programs that reflect the core values of contemporary school librarianship. Research has shown that the first years of practice are critical in establishing the professional identity of the school librarian. This mixed methods explanatory research study identifies factors that affect the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian, which influences the degree to which the novice school librarian feels confident of their ability to succeed in the role of school librarian.

Based on the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians* (2010a), a survey was distributed to novice school librarians, indicating their perceived level of confidence in the skills, knowledge, and dispositions defined by the standards. Results were analyzed and used to develop an interview protocol to phenomenologically explore the environmental, cultural, and program features that impact self-efficacy as revealed by novice school librarians during focus group interviews. Analysis of the responses indicated that novice school librarians have a high level of confidence in the standards that define contemporary librarianship. Despite this, novice school librarians experience challenges that impact feelings of self-efficacy in their role, including the complexities of transitioning into the role of school librarian,

time and schedule constraints, and frustrations associated with serving in multiple roles. Novice school librarians also identified factors that positively impact their feelings of self-efficacy, including personalized coaching and mentorship, access to district-provided curriculum materials, and district-led advocacy efforts. These findings indicate that district library leadership is an important factor in helping novice school librarians negotiate the complexities of transitioning into the role of contemporary school librarian.

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to Dr. Becky Pasco, who made me believe that I could do this work; and to my family, especially Kyle, who patiently persisted with me and gave me the freedom to see this dream through.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Contemporary school librarianship requires a sophisticated set of skills, knowledge, and dispositions in order to meet the multifaceted demands of teaching and leading the instruction of modern literacies. Many cultural, environmental, and program factors influence the self-efficacy of the school librarian, which impacts the degree to which the school librarian feels confident of their ability to succeed in relation to the skills, knowledge, and dispositions defined by the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)* framework (Zmuda, Curtis, & Ullman, 2015). The first years of practice are particularly critical in establishing the professional identity of the school librarian, and the transition from preservice coursework to practicing school librarianship can be more complex than anticipated. Because of this, it is exceedingly important to the foundation of an effective school library program that the new school librarian quickly builds the capacity to lead and administrate a school library program that reflects the core values of contemporary school librarianship, one in which the practices and program reflect the current *AASL National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries (2018)*.

A robust school library program positively impacts student achievement, as demonstrated by three decades of research in over 22 states (Coker, 2015; Gretes, 2013; Kachel, 2013; Lance, 2010; Todd, Gordon, & Lu, 2010). Studies repeatedly confirm that effective school library programs reflective of the current *AASL National Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries (2018)* are a proven academic support that raise standardized test scores and graduation rates for all students, regardless of school size and racial, ethnic, or economic background (Barack, 2012;

Lance, Schwarz, & Rodney, 2014; Sun, 2015). Effective school libraries are particularly beneficial in closing the achievement gap in economically disadvantaged schools with high free and reduced lunch rates (Achterman, 2008; Coker, 2015; Kachel, 2013; Pribesh, Gavigan, & Dickinson, 2011). A quality school librarian positively impacts student success by providing formal instruction of unique information and digital literacy skills that are essential to college, career, and civic readiness (Gretes, 2013; Kachel, 2013; Lance, Rodney & Hamilton-Pennell, 2000). The school librarian provides access to print and digital collections, advanced instruction in rigorous research needed for higher education and future careers, integrated instruction to learn and practice vital information literacy skills, and opportunities for students to problem solve, think critically, and communicate important ideas and information (Coker, 2015; Gretes, 2013; Kachel, 2013; Lukenbill, 2012).

Strong school library programs are led by strong credentialed school librarians, holding both a state teaching certificate and an endorsement in school librarianship through an ALA accredited/nationally recognized school library program, and capable of leading and managing the many complex roles inherent to the position (Dees, Mayer, Morin, & Willis, 2010; Everhart, 2013; Pasco, 2011). In schools lacking strong school library programs, students will be less likely to receive instruction on information literacy and inquiry processes and will have less access to high quality print and digital resources (Gretes, 2013; Kachel, 2013). Thus, when school library programs lack effective instruction and program management, student achievement is negatively impacted. Novice school librarians need the support of district and school administrators to ensure that they have the vision and skills necessary to lead effective school library programs (Church, 2008; Johnston, 2012; Steele & Foote, 2015).

In 2010, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) defined the role of the school librarian in the document *ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians* within a framework of five critical functions: Teaching for Learning, Literacy and Reading, Information and Knowledge, Advocacy and Leadership, and Program Administration. These standards set accreditation targets for school library programs, thus giving definition to the specific skills, behaviors and dispositions that form the foundation of contemporary librarianship. They also serve to inform district library leaders and school administrators about the knowledge and experiences novice school librarians should be equipped with in order to adopt building leadership roles, design and implement effective programs, collaborate to provide effective instruction, and purposefully market and advocate for the library program.

The first year of teaching has an unparalleled impact on the professional and instructional behaviors of novice educators as they form their professional identity (Frye, 2014; Gold, 1996). While engaging in coursework and preparing for a career in school librarianship, preservice school librarians are immersed in learning the many roles and expectations which define contemporary school librarianship (Dickinson, 2009; Mardis, 2007, 2013; Moreillon, 2013). However, establishing a strong school library program is complex, and novice school librarians sometimes experience difficulty transitioning into effective practitioners (Mardis, 2007; Moreillon, 2013; Vansickle, 2000). Novice school librarians who struggle to establish themselves as effective program administrators and instructional leaders risk losing the confidence of the school community, which could ultimately result in lack of support, loss of resources, and limit the effectiveness of the school library program on student achievement (Steele & Foote, 2015). Alternately, school librarians who gain the trust and support of the school community are more likely

to be supported by administrators and colleagues who influence the growth and development of the school library program, ultimately laying the foundation for a high-impact school library program (Johnston, 2012).

While new school librarians begin their tenure with a working understanding of the functions and responsibilities involved in school librarianship, there are sometimes factors that impede success.

In most school environments, a school librarian is an “only”. The only person working in the library- the only one responsible for shelving; automating; building a collection; weeding collection; establishing management policies; teaching information literacy; guiding an environment conducive to learning; engaging readers; organizing the physical space; collaborating with teachers; interacting with parents; providing reference services; managing a budget; assisting students, teachers and parents with technology; and connecting with each and every student in the school (Jacobs-Isreal, 2013, p. 41).

Effectiveness in the role of contemporary school librarian demands a different skill set than teaching in the classroom, involving a sense of balance between both instructional and administrative skills within which the librarian must be able to multitask differently than in the classroom setting (Mardis, 2007). While classroom management skills are essential in quality library instruction, the dynamics of student behavior and classroom management changes in the open setting of a library environment (Toor & Weisburg, 2007). Additionally, collaboration is essential to the overall mission and goals of the library program, yet it is difficult to teach in preservice coursework, problematic to imitate in practicum experiences, and challenging to achieve in actual practice (Latham, Gross, & Witte, 2013). Finding the magnitude of responsibility in leading a library

program overwhelming, new librarians sometimes miss the opportunity to establish a compelling vision or mission for their library programs and consequently relinquish their role to support staff rather than becoming instructional leaders in their school communities (Vansickle, 2000).

Some teachers and administrators lack understanding of contemporary school librarianship. If previous experience or academic coursework has not included the value of school libraries, it is typical for teachers and administrators to rely on memory and stereotypes to pigeonhole the school librarian into clerical roles that lack instructional impact (Steele & Foote, 2015). If a school administrator perceives the school librarian to be tentative in their new position, they may forcibly steer the program in a direction that does not fit the vision or goals of an effective contemporary library program (Toor & Weisburg, 2007).

When provided with effective and timely supports, novice school librarians are more likely to adapt quickly to the culture of school librarianship and integrate the skills, behaviors, and dispositions essential in establishing themselves as confident and capable school librarians. If district leaders are better informed in how to support novice school librarians in their first three years of practice, the novice school librarian will be better equipped to meet the standards of contemporary school librarianship and more likely to establish an effective school library program.

### **Framework**

In 2010, the *ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians* was published as a national framework for identifying the essential skills and knowledge required of preservice school librarians to effectively develop and lead high quality school library programs. “Through this review process, ALA/AASL has the opportunity



to influence not only the preservice education of the majority of school librarians who are educated in non-ALA accredited programs, but also to help teachers and administrators develop appropriate expectations for school librarians in Information Age schools” (ALA, 2017). This framework consists of five standards: teaching for learning, literacy and reading, information and knowledge, advocacy and leadership, and program management and administration.

While the purpose of the standards framework is to inform and influence the academic programs that prepare new school librarians for PreK-12 school librarianship, in this study it also serves to identify the skills, knowledge, and dispositions predictive of a school librarian’s effectiveness in the first three years of school librarianship. The framework includes a detailed description of each standard, a list of desirable program and behavioral components, and rubrics which qualify unacceptable, acceptable, and target skills and practices.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed methods study is to assess the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian within their first three years of practice in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions as defined in the 2010 *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation for School Librarians* and explore the factors that influence novice school librarians’ self-efficacy.

### **Research Question**

Self-efficacy directly affects how an individual thinks, feels, and acts towards managing difficult or challenging situations (Bandura, 1995; Zmuda, Curtis & Ullman, 2015). Therefore, this study addresses the following research question: What factors influence the self-efficacy of the novice librarian in the knowledge, skills, and

dispositions defined in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*?

Identifying factors that affect self-efficacy leads to meaningful professional support systems for novice librarians in the first three years of practice, which are critical to building robust library programs that characterize 21st century librarianship, including (1) teaching for learning; (2) literacy and reading; (3) information and knowledge; (4) advocacy and leadership; and (5) program management and administration (AASL, 2010a).

### **Significance of the Study**

The role of school librarian is challenging regardless of whether the candidate is a new or veteran educator. To ensure that school library programs are advancing toward the vision and mission defined by the 2018 *AASL National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*, it is critical that novice school librarians can successfully emerge as educators, instructional partners, information specialists, leaders, and program administrators. This study serves to identify factors that influence the self-efficacy of the novice librarian in order to inform district level leadership of supports needed to help novice school librarians quickly build capacity in their new professional role.

## Chapter 2

### Review of Literature

Taking on the role of school librarian has many challenges (Lacey & Parlette-Stewart, 2017). While similar in some ways to the experience of becoming a new classroom teacher, the challenges facing the novice school librarian differ depending on the expectations of the school community, the previous experience of the new librarian, and preservice education (Mardis, 2007). This review of literature looks at the complexities of taking on the role of novice school librarian and addresses the following question: What factors influence the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian in the first three years of practice?

Surprisingly little literature exists on the experience of the novice school librarian. Much of the available literature focuses on practical tips and recommendations for practice as they establish processes and procedures, but not on the intricacies of transitioning from novice to expert in a profession in which they are commonly isolated in their role. Using the five key competencies defined by the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians* (2010a) as an organizational framework, this chapter compiles research analyzing the preparation, professional expectations, and cultural, environmental, and program factors that impact the transition of the novice school librarian.

#### **Role of the Contemporary School Librarian**

The role of the school librarian is informed by many formalized sets of standards and professional organizations (American Library Association (ALA), 2018; Church, Dickenson, Everhart, & Howard, 2012). This is a far cry from the original *Certain*

*Standards* for school librarians published by ALA in 1920 to define the role of the high school librarian and discern the role from that of the public or academic librarian;

The librarian in the high school should combine the good qualities of both the librarian and the teacher and must be able to think clearly and sympathetically in terms of the needs and interests of high-school students. A wide knowledge of books, ability to organize library material for efficient service, and successful experience in reference work should be demanded of every librarian. Most of all should the personality of the librarian be emphasized. Enthusiasm and power to teach and inspire are as essential in the high-school librarian as in the teacher.

(Certain, 1920, p.16)

Today there is no shortage of professional discourse and published opinion over the role of the school librarian, which serves simultaneously as a gift and a curse for the school librarian who is trying to create a professional identity for themselves in their school community (Church et al., 2012). While each framework and set of standards serve different perspectives and priorities with which to define the complex role of the school librarian, they also create a dilemma for school librarians in electing which framework to invest their time, resources, and professional learning (Novotny, 2017).

In the 1925 update, *Certain Standards* added elementary schools to the standards and placed the school librarian at the center of instruction and learning by including a focus on providing high-quality and engaging instruction (AASL, 2018). In every decade since the 1960's, AASL has revised and published professional standards for school librarians and library programs. Beginning with the 1988 *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs* and again with the 1998 *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*, specific roles for the school librarian were defined,

including teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator. For the first time, *Information Power* provided school librarians with specific instructional standards, assessment indicators, and curriculum content connections. These documents “explicitly stated that school librarians were to act as leaders who made the school library an “integral part of teaching and learning in the school” (AASL, 2018, p. 6).

In the early 2000s, ALA and AASL introduced three documents that would further define and give guidance to the school librarian: *Standards for the 21st Century Learner* (2007), *Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Programs* (2009a), and *Standards for the 21st Century Learner in Action* (2009b). Organized around four basic standards, these documents identify the core skills, dispositions and responsibilities essential to effective library programs. These powerful documents served as the vehicle for AASL to ensure that the national library standards would be implemented with integrity throughout school libraries and school systems nationwide.

To further the mission, in 2010 ALA and AASL published the *ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians*. This document clearly and precisely defines five key standards for effective librarians and the elements of required proficiency within each standard. The five standards include: Teaching for Learning, Literacy and Reading, Information and Knowledge, Leadership and Advocacy, and Program Management and Administration (2010a). This document serves to inform school librarianship preparation programs, preservice librarians, and practicing librarians with specific descriptors defining effective practice.

The 2018 *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* reframe the *Standards for the 21st Century Learner* to cast a vision

for instruction in which "school librarians create a mobile teaching and learning culture centered on innovation, collaboration, exploration, deep thinking, and creativity. School librarians are key to the success of this educational paradigm shift because they provide resources and instruction to all learners through an inquiry-based research model that supports questioning and the creation of new knowledge focused on learner interest and real-world problems" (AASL, 2018, p. 44). Based on research and input from 1,300 librarians and stakeholders, these new standards take a three-pronged approach to communicating core values from the perspective of learner, school librarian, and school library. Each of the frameworks (learner, librarian, library) examines six shared foundations and key commitments (Inquire, Include, Collaborate, Curate, Explore, and Engage) through the lens of four domains: think, create, share, and grow. The three frameworks frequently overlap and reinforce each other, but also provide explicit guidance for librarians as they scaffold instructional activities to build and reinforce learners, create a vision and culture for library instruction based on engaging, innovative, and relevant pedagogy, and provide a library program that is integral to student and teacher success. Reflective of current learning environments and recognized as best practices for school libraries, these frameworks articulate the essential competencies, skills, dispositions, and alignments that are fundamental in competent school librarians and effective school library programs (AASL, 2017). School librarians and program administrators use these documents to establish, articulate, and advocate for the role of the school librarian in districts and school communities.

Parallel in timing, the Alliance for Excellent Education launched the Future Ready Schools initiative. This project serves to help school districts develop the skills and mindsets to use innovative instruction and technology to positively impact

personalized learning and bolster the readiness of students for college, career, and life. A major tenant of the Future Ready initiative is the Future Ready Librarian. Supported by AASL, the Future Ready Librarian movement promotes the message that,

School librarians lead, teach and support the Future Ready goals of their school and district in a variety of ways through their professional practice, programs and spaces. If properly prepared and supported, school librarians are well-positioned to be at the leading edge of the digital transformation of learning. (Alliance for Excellence in Education, 2018, para. 1)

The Future Ready framework describes the role of school librarian within eight tenets of leadership; defining the expectations of a Future Ready Librarian as one who: curates digital resources and tools, empowers students as creators, builds instructional partnerships, facilitates professional learning, ensures equitable access, invests strategically in digital resources, cultivates community partnerships, advocates for student privacy, designs collaborative spaces, and leads beyond the library. This framework for school librarians has gained traction through a nationwide initiative by the Alliance for Excellent Education, which builds policy and advocates for students who are prepared for college, work, and civic responsibility. Similar frameworks exist for district leaders, technology leaders, and principals, which knit together common roles and support new thinking about the work of school librarians and the capacity they have to reinforce the goals of district leaders. The Future Ready School Librarian framework serves as an important influence in reframing the role of the school librarian in many districts and school library programs. While not specifically aligned with AASL's *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*, this framework provides a succinct and descriptive overview that includes both

the roles of the school librarian and program goals towards which effective library programs should strive.

### **Educational Background of the School Librarian**

School librarians embark on their careers with a range of experience. “In the 21st century, the majority of school librarians enter the profession after spending part of their careers as public school educators” (Frye, 2014, p. 4). According to Vansickle’s 2000 research on educating preservice librarians, educators make the decision to transition to librarianship for a variety of reasons. Many are personally motivated by interests in technology, research, and information skills as well as a desire to teach across disciplines and age groups (48.2%). Some feel compelled to leave the taxing work of classroom teaching, yet still want to work with students in some capacity (30.1%). Others enter the field motivated by a love of literature, books, and reading (16.9%). A smaller number choose librarianship because they no longer want to be in the classroom (4.8%). Fewer candidates enter the field from areas outside of education, often citing the desire to work with students in a capacity beyond classroom teaching (Frye, 2014).

To hold a position as a school librarian in most states, both a state teaching certificate and an endorsement in school librarianship through an ALA accredited library program are required. Because of the instructional focus of school librarianship, a school librarian’s education requires an emphasis on both library information science and K-12 instruction (Church et al., 2012). To achieve certification as a school librarian, ALA offers two options; candidates may either seek a master’s degree in library and information science from an ALA accredited program with a specialty in school librarianship or choose an endorsement program accredited by the Council for



Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and recognized by AASL in school librarianship.

Within one of the sixty-one ALA accredited library programs in the United States and Canada, candidates earn degrees in such programs as Master of Library Science, Master of Arts, Master of Librarianship, Master of Library and Information Studies, and Master of Science (ALA, 2006). Programs achieve accreditation through an external review process that ensures that the program meets the *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies*. Candidates in such programs take general coursework in library information science studies, attend classes with preservice academic, public, special, and corporate librarians, and specialize in school librarianship by taking one or two focused courses (Frye, 2014).

Candidates seeking endorsements from one of 46 CAEP-accredited and AASL approved programs are enrolled in a course of study that meets or exceeds the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*. CAEP is authorized by the U.S. Department of Education to determine whether institutions of higher education meet the standards of excellence in the preparation of teachers. AASL exclusively reviews school library programs in CAEP accredited institutions by using the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)* to ensure student mastery in five identified standards: teaching for learning, literacy and reading, information and knowledge, advocacy and leadership, and program management and administration (Church et al, 2012). Candidates in such programs take coursework specific to school librarianship and attend classes with other preservice school librarians (Frye, 2014).

Candidates in Nebraska are eligible to apply for a provisional endorsement after completing fifty percent of the required thirty credit hours, allowing a candidate to accept a position as a school librarian with the condition that the program is completed within three years. Consequently, many novice librarians have not completed their coursework and may begin their professional tenure with significant gaps in the knowledge and skills defined in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)* as essential to effective school librarianship.

In the case of the transitioning school librarian, experiences matter (Mardis, 2007; Shoffner, 2011; Smith, 2014). Both professional background and the structure and content of formal preservice coursework will impact the skills, knowledge, and dispositions held by the novice school librarian, and ultimately the ability to transition effectively into the role of contemporary school librarian (Frye, 2014; Sanford, 2013).

### **Professional identity and perceptions of self-efficacy**

While the completion of a professional education program introduces the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for contemporary school librarianship, the program in itself does not equate to the development of professional identity (Boshuizen, Bromme, & Gruber, 2004). Rather, professional identity evolves through the development of applicable knowledge, skills, and dispositions contextualized in professional practice; meaningful interaction with professional role models who provide examples of how to think, reason, and act professionally; embedded, real-world experience within the profession; personal preference and compatibility to the profession; and the development of professional self-efficacy (Smit, Fritz, & Mabalane, 2010; Tan, Van der Molen, & Schmidt, 2017).

[Identity] involves a constant process of integrating past experiences into present contexts, and the anticipation of what is possible in the future . . . influenced by what we think others think of us, by a wide range of individual, social, and cultural factors, and imaginings about the future (Williams, 2013, p. 25).

Occupational competence is developed through increasingly complex stages of work and training, forming the professional identity (Rauner, 2007). The learning culture of the organization is particularly critical to the development of professional identity in that the structure of the learning culture determines what opportunities are made available for the learner to incorporate new knowledge into existing practice, how the learner approaches metacognitive analysis of practices, and the opportunities the learner is given to work with models and mentors in order to grow their knowledge, skills, and competence (Williams, 2013).

Professional identity is highly influenced by social relationships (Tan, Van der Molen, & Schmidt, 2017). The influence and perceptions of others is critical in the development of professional identity (Smit, Fritz, & Mabalane, 2010). Mentoring, modeling, and feedback from credible peers is particularly important in that it provides context and insight that helps the learner negotiate meaning within their role, understand their role from a broader professional perspective, and develop a vision for their role within their institution. “People become teachers through a complex interplay of social and professional relationship, which is essentially a collaborative and collegial process that cannot be undertaken in isolation” (Williams, 2013, p. 31). Through participation in the social context of the learning community, new professionals negotiate meaning and shape their perception of professional identity within the learning community.

As professional identity evolves, so does a growing sense of competence and self-efficacy (Williams, 2013). Defined in this research as the degree to which an individual feels confident of their ability to succeed in relation to the skills, knowledge, and dispositions defined by the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*, self-efficacy directly impacts how an individual thinks, feels, and acts towards managing difficult or challenging situations (Bandura, 1995; Zmuda, Curtis & Ullman, 2015). An individual's perception of self-efficacy will influence behavioral choices, motivation, and the level of effort dedicated towards a challenging task (Ballantine & Nunns, 1998; Tan, Van der Molen, & Schmidt, 2017).

Efficacy beliefs contribute to motivation in several ways: They determine the goals people set for themselves, how much effort they expend, how long they persevere in the face of difficulties, and their resilience to failures. When faced with obstacles and failures, people who distrust their capabilities slacken their efforts or give up quickly. Those who have a strong belief in their capabilities exert greater effort when they fail to master the challenge (Bandura, 1995, p. 8).

In context to school librarianship, the self-efficacy level of a novice school librarian is indicative of task performance; a higher level of self-efficacy predicts a higher level of task performance (Ballantine & Nunns, 1998). Often working in isolation, novice school librarians are frequently challenged in finding job-embedded role models to help contextualize professional practices;

In most school environments, a school librarian is an "only". The only person working in the library- the only one responsible for shelving; automating; building a collection; weeding a collection; establishing management policies; teaching information literacy; guiding and environment conducive to learning;

engaging readers; organizing the physical space; collaborating with teachers; interacting with parents; providing reference services; managing a budget; assisting students, teachers and parents with technology; and connecting with each and every student in the school (Jacobs-Isreal, 2013, p. 41).

In a study of novice librarians by Frye (2014), participants who do not have strong models under which to apprentice fail to formulate a mental model of an effective school librarian, and thus have difficulty understanding the role of the school librarian and do not recognize the actions, practices, and cultural beliefs of contemporary school librarians. New librarians commonly experience “imposter syndrome”; as though they do not have the expertise or experience to successfully do their job, and it is often difficult for them to understand and define success (Lacey & Parlett-Stewart, 2017). In failing to develop a strong professional identity, the novice librarians struggle to establish themselves as professionals, adversely impacting their self-efficacy and ultimately degrading the status and effectiveness of the school library program.

In a similar study, Sanford (2013) documents the construction of professional identity as novice school librarians interpret the “figured world” of the people and culture influencing their function and place in their school community. Figured worlds are socially created cultural phenomenon to which people “belong”. As people understand the structures, traditions, and expectations within the figured world, they become more adept at navigating their world. The figured world becomes the context for assigning meaning to action, for their behavior and choices, and the level of importance or influence they have in their world (Urrieta, 2007). In Sanford’s research, each of the four participants are dissatisfied with the pre-existing identity of school librarian which they inherited, but struggle with how to reform the identity of the school librarian into one that

matches their professional expectation. Sanford's research demonstrates that novice librarians are often likely to conform to cultural expectations rather than adopt a professional identity that aligns with contemporary school librarianship. The underlying impact of isolation and feeling a lack of identity can be demoralizing, resulting in anxiety, burnout, psychological distress, and poor satisfaction in work performance (Lacey & Parlette-Stewart, 2017). This highlights the urgency to bridge the understanding gap between school administrators and novice school librarians in defining the role of the contemporary school librarian in order for the novice school librarian to establish a professional identity conducive to an effective library program (Bush & Jones, 2010; Novotny, 2017; Sanford, 2013).

#### ***ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians***

The *ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians* (AASL 2010a) provide school library faculty with a series of skill, knowledge, and dispositional targets to ensure candidates are able to design and direct school library programs that provide the kind of engaged learning and information environments that will help make the *Standards for the 21st-century Learner* (AASL, 2007) a reality for P-12 students (Pasco, 2011, np).

Developed by ALA, AASL, and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, now a subsidiary of CAEP), this document provides standards and guidelines for the accreditation of colleges and universities seeking to provide preparation programs for school librarians. Approved by NCATE in 2010, the document identifies five standards with four elements that “address the most critical topics necessary to prepare entry-level school librarians for the work that they do in schools and to provide a foundation for continued excellence throughout their

careers. School library preparation programs must demonstrate candidate proficiency in each of the five standards: teaching for learning, literacy and reading, information and knowledge, advocacy and leadership, and program management and administration. Rubrics, supporting research, and references promote the application and use of each standard. Skills and dispositions are carefully threaded through preservice coursework, and accredited programs must require six to eight formal assessments which validate student mastery in elements of all five standards. A school librarian or school administrator may be more apt to rely on the *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries (2018)* for day-to-day use, but their professional coursework is steeped in the intentional instruction of the *Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*, thus providing the foundation for the school librarian's professional identity.

**Teaching for Learning.** The identity of the contemporary school librarian is rooted in teaching and learning (Ballard, 2016; Church et al., 2012; Dees et al, 2010). Instruction is the primary role of the school librarian and the focus of the school librarian's work. As stated in *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians*, qualified school librarians are:

effective teachers who demonstrate knowledge of learners and learning and who model and promote collaborative planning, instruction in multiple literacies, and inquiry-based learning, enabling members of the learning community to become effective users and creators of ideas and information. Candidates design and implement instruction that engages students' interests and develops their ability to inquire, think critically, gain and share knowledge (ALA/AASL, 2010a, p.1).

<i>ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)</i> <i>Standard 1: Teaching for Learning</i>	
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Target Indicators</b>
1.1 Knowledge of learners and learning	Knowledgeable of learning style, stages of development, and cultural influences. Assess learner needs and design instruction that reflects best practice. Support learning of all members of the learning community. Base 21 <sup>st</sup> century skills instruction on student interests and needs. Link instruction to the assessment of student achievement.
1.2 Effective and knowledgeable teacher	Implement principles of effective teaching and learning to an active, inquiry-based approach. Use a variety of instructional strategies and assessment tools to design digital-age learning experiences and assessments with classroom teachers. Document and communicate the impact of collaborative instruction on student achievement.
1.3 Instructional Partner	Model, share, and promote effective principles of teaching and learning as collaborative partners with other educators. Acknowledge the importance of participating in curriculum development, school improvement processes, and of offering professional development to other educators.
1.4 Integration of twenty-first century skills and learning standards	Advocate for 21 <sup>st</sup> century literacy skills to support the learning needs of the school community. Collaborate with teachers to plan and implement instruction of AASL standards and state curriculum standards. Integrate multiple literacies with content curriculum. Integrate emerging technologies for effective and creative teaching and to support understanding, critical thinking and creative processes.

**Figure 1. Standards for Teaching and Learning**

Adapted from *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*.

Standard 1: Teaching for Learning (Figure 1) illuminates the intensity of rigor involved in teaching within the role of the school librarian. As expected with the proficient classroom or content area teacher, the school librarian must be adept in content knowledge and pedagogy, as well as classroom management and adaptive instruction (Bishop & Cahall, 2012). However, the instructional role of the school librarian takes on



added complex layers with the expectation to serve multiple grade levels and multiple content areas (Frye, 2014). Not only does the school librarian need a highly developed understanding of their own content, they must develop, at minimum, a working understanding of the learning goals and objectives of courses taught throughout the school in order to fluidly design and implement high-quality instruction that marries classroom content with AASL learning standards (Kimmel, 2013; Pasco, 2011). This is work that is dependent on the school librarian's ability to form partnerships and effectively collaborate with classroom teachers, skills that are difficult to master outside of embedded practice (Jacobs-Isreal, 2013; Johnston, 2012; Latham, Gross, & Witte, 2013). Add in the expectation that school librarians serve as models for technology integration and leaders of professional learning, the standard of teaching for learning demands that school librarians develop the skills, knowledge, and dispositions of a master teacher (Hanson-Baldauf & Hassell, 2009; Smith, 2014). "Educating preservice school librarians with the knowledge of innovative technologies, school-wide curricular content, strategies for effective collaboration, and pedagogical strategies for integrating instructional technologies into teaching and learning will make them invaluable instructional partners and leaders in their schools" (Baker, 2016, p. 146).

**Literacy and Reading.** The importance of reading and literacy is historically rooted in the identity of the school librarian, and the focus of the school librarian has been to effectively impact literacy by designing and providing opportunities to master essential reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills (Harvey, 2010). While the role of the school librarian has expanded and evolved, reading remains a core competency (AASL, 2018; Pitcher & Mackey, 2013). Forty-eight percent of new librarians identify the enjoyment of books, technology, and information resources as a significant factor in

choosing the career path of school librarian. Another sixteen percent identify the love of literature and reading as their motivation, indicating that this role above others holds a natural appeal to most school librarians (Vansickle, 2000). However, developing and supporting a culture of reading and literacy is a multi-faceted endeavor that requires pedagogical, professional, and administrative expertise.

<i>ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)</i> <i>Standard 2: Literacy and Reading</i>	
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Target Indicators</b>
2.1 Literature	Familiar with a wide range of children's, young adult, and professional literature in multiple formats and languages to support reading for information, pleasure, and lifelong learning.
2.2 Reading promotion	Use a variety of strategies to promote reading and personal enjoyment of reading to promote habits of creative expression and lifelong reading.
2.3 Respect for diversity	Develop a collection of reading and information materials in print and digital formats that support the diverse developmental, cultural, social and linguistic needs of students and the community.
2.4 Literacy strategies	Collaborate with teachers to reinforce a variety of reading instructional strategies to ensure students are able to create meaning from text.

**Figure 2. Standards for Literacy and Reading**

Adapted from *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*.

In support of Standard 2: Literacy and Reading (Figure 2), the school librarian must first provide a robust collection of high-interest, relevant, and engaging titles, ideally in both print and digital formats (Kordeliski, 2017; Moreillon, 2018). The school library program must make all provisions to ensure that students have frequent and equitable access to quality on-level resources, including current nonfiction, a variety of popular fiction genres and formats, and a healthy collection of titles that reflect diverse

cultures and multiple perspectives (ALA/AASL, 2010a; Pasco, 2011; Pitcher & Mackey, 2013; Stephens, 2011). Collection development is an area of inexperience and apprehension for new school librarians that can only be developed through professional practice (Mardis, 2007).

The school librarian is responsible for creating an environment that is concurrently engaged in and excited about reading and also supports foundational literacy. (ALA/AASL, 2010a; Marcoux & Loertscher, 2009). In addition to a large, well-curated library, the school library program actively promotes literacy by designing instruction to support specific literacy goals, advocating for frequent personal reading time, and encouraging students to invest in reading (Loertscher, 2010; Moreillon, 2018). School librarians must be adept at building positive attitudes about reading and literacy through read-alouds, book talks and promotions, individual reader's advisory, structured reading incentives, and offering student choice and social interactions relating to literature and personal learning (Krashen 2004; Pitcher & Mackey 2013). Collaboration between the classroom teacher, reading specialist, and school librarian can maximize focus on specific literacy skills and objectives and make meaningful connections between learning and practice (Marcoux & Loertscher, 2009).

One of the school librarian's most essential skills is to be able to recognize a student's independent reading level and connect them to age and interest-level appropriate materials (Kordeliski, 2017). Librarians must be able to assess individual student needs and usher them toward resources that are tailored to meet both the curriculum content demands and the specific reading level. This requires that school librarians partner closely with classroom teachers to identify specific reading levels (Pitcher & Mackey, 2013). It also demands that school librarians have extensive

knowledge of their print and digital resources in order to quickly match student reading level to engaging content-specific materials (ALA/AASL 2010a).

In partnership with teachers and building administrators, the school librarian is an influential force in developing a culture of reading and lifelong learning (ALA/AASL, 2010a; Everhart, 2013) According to Stephen Krashen's exhaustive research on the topic, "Reading is the only way, the only way we become good readers, develop a good writing style, an adequate vocabulary, advanced grammatical competence, and the only way we become good spellers" (2004, p.37). His study points to several factors that encourage a culture of reading, including access to a large library of engaging and popular titles, a quality library program that promotes and celebrates reading, and a school that dedicates time to silent sustained reading.

For this competency to evolve, school librarians must have a commitment to reading (Kordeliski, 2017). They must continually read from their collection, modeling excitement and a life-long passion for literacy (Pitcher & Mackey, 2013). They must read professionally, expanding their pedagogical expertise and keeping current with literacy trends and topics in order to maintain relevance within their school community (Toor & Weisburg, 2007).

**Information and Knowledge.** AASL calls on librarians to "model and promote ethical, equitable access to and use of physical, digital, and virtual collections of resources" (2010a, p.11). Within this role, school librarians ensure that all resources are "readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users" (Ballard, 2016, p. 28). They model themselves as lead learners in their school; knowledge seekers, problem solvers, and risk takers (Steele & Foote, 2015; Wine, 2016). They also hold the responsibility of empowering learners to develop essential information literacy skills

through inquiry-based learning, including age-appropriate behaviors and expectations regarding the use of resources, the development of inquiry skills, critical thinking, information evaluation, knowledge creation, and synthesis (AASL, 2009; Lukenbill, 2012). There is much to learn in this role as a new school librarian, and school librarians in this role will have the complex challenge of designing authentic instruction that scaffolds and reinforces elements of inquiry, critical thinking, access, evaluation, reflection, and knowledge creation (AASL, 2018).

<i>ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)</i> <i>Standard 3: Information and Knowledge</i>	
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Target Indicators</b>
3.1 Efficient and ethical information-seeking behavior	Identify and provide support for diverse student information needs. Model multiple strategies to locate, evaluate, and ethically use information for specific purposes. Collaborate with students, teachers, and administrators to access, interpret, and communicate information.
3.2 Access to information	Support flexible, open access for library services. Develop solutions for addressing physical, social and intellectual barriers to equitable access to resources and services. Facilitate access to information in print, non-print, and digital formats. Model and communicate the legal and ethical codes of the profession.
3.3 Information technology	Design and adapt relevant learning experiences that engage students in authentic learning through the use of digital tools and resources. Model and facilitate the effective use of digital tools to locate, analyze, evaluate, and use information resources to support research, learning, creating and communicating in a digital society.
3.4 Research and knowledge creation	Use evidence-based research to collect data. Interpret and use data to create and share new knowledge to improve practice in school libraries.

**Figure 3. Standards for Information and Knowledge**

Adapted from *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*.

The role of information specialist as defined by Standard 3: Information and Knowledge (Figure 3) is perhaps the most critical work of the school librarian as instructional partner (Lukenbill, 2012). “Candidates are expected to be proficient not only in knowledge of information sources and services but also in research, information generation, and the creation of knowledge” (Church et al., 2012). The novice school librarian must be able to design effective and efficient lessons that teach students to find and use quality information while learning how to think flexibly, critically, creatively and ethically (Small et al., 2012).

Identified by the 2007 “Partnership for 21st Century Learning Framework” as essential for work, life, and citizenship, and woven redundantly through the 2018 *AASL Standards Framework for Learners*, inquiry processes make up the core focus of library instruction. Inquiry is defined as:

[A] process for learning that involves connecting to personal interests and a desire to know, gaining background knowledge, asking questions that probe beyond simple fact gathering, investigating answers to gather evidence from multiple perspectives and sources, constructing new understandings and drawing conclusions with support from evidence, expressing new ideas through a variety of formats, and reflecting metacognitively on both the product and process of learning (Small et al., 2012, p.3).

Generally, the timeframe devoted to information literacy, authentic research, and inquiry-based learning is designated through negotiation with the classroom teacher, and sometimes at the perceived expense of standard curriculum pacing. To effectively facilitate inquiry, new school librarians must know the curriculum scope and sequence across content areas and grade levels. They must be able to make connections that cross

content areas, support multiple subjects, and scaffold between grade levels (Kimmel, 2013). The novice school librarian must have the skills and dispositions to “design and direct school library programs that provide the kind of engaged learning and information environments that will help make the [standards] a reality” (Pasco, 2011, p. 28). To achieve this, the new librarian must be skillful at weaving curriculum-based content into an engaging format that motivates students to ask meaningful questions, seek viable answers, and think critically about bias, perspective, relevance, and ethical behavior. Standards serve as a way for the school librarian to connect information and knowledge skills to classroom instruction (Mardis & Dickinson, 2009). They support classroom instruction by providing deeper, extended, or more personalized learning. The *2018 National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* cast a vision for instruction in which:

School librarians create a mobile teaching and learning culture centered on innovation, collaboration, exploration, deep thinking, and creativity. School librarians are key to the success of this educational paradigm shift because they provide resources and instruction to all learners through an inquiry-based research model that supports questioning and the creation of new knowledge focused on learner interest and real-world problems (AASL, 2018, p. 43).

The common vehicle for accessing information and efficient information-seeking is digital technology, which is also a prevalent source of anxiety for novice school librarians who may come to the job with limited experience with educational technology and may feel concerned that they will not be prepared to support teachers with technology (Mardis & Dickinson, 2009). The responsibility of technology integration has been an essential role of the school librarian since *Information Power: Guidelines for*

*School Library Media Programs* was published in 1988 (Wine, 2016). However, new school librarians are not more likely or more confident in their ability to use technology instructionally; many novice librarians lack the capacity to weave technology into their daily routine, including classroom management, curriculum enhancement, and skill building (Hanson-Baldauf & Hassell, 2009). However, school librarians are uniquely situated to creatively and authentically weave technology tools and information skills into all grade levels and curricular areas, and with experience and training should be able to use technology to improve collaboration, provide professional learning, and integrate information literacy and digital literacy authentically into instruction (Hanson-Baldauf & Hassell, 2009; Johnston, 2015). “Educating preservice school librarians with the knowledge of innovative technologies, school-wide curricular content, strategies for effective collaboration, and pedagogical strategies for integrating instructional technologies into teaching and learning will make them invaluable instructional partners and leaders in their schools” (Baker, 2016, p. 146).

Finally, school librarians need the expertise and motivation to put their own information skills to work by effectively collecting, analyzing, and summarizing program-specific data to make informed decisions about pedagogy and program practices, particularly with a focus on the school library program’s impact on student achievement (Little, 2015). Evidence-based practices empower school librarians to make visible the relevance of the library program. Evidence-based practices are important for school librarians to adopt for two important reasons:

Firstly, it is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the performance of the role. It is about using research evidence, coupled with personal professional expertise and reasoning to



implement learning interventions that are effective. Without current best evidence, practice runs the risk of not only being out-of-date, but detracts from the real purpose, to the detriment of learners. Secondly, evidence-based practice is about ensuring that day-to-day efforts put some focus on effectiveness evaluation that gathers meaningful and systematic evidence on dimensions of teaching and learning that matter to the school and its support community, evidences that clearly convey that learning outcomes are continuing to improve (Todd, 2001, p. 15).

Through innovative uses of data gathering and analysis, the school librarian can demonstrate evidence that can shape program goals, inform good practice, and create accountability to ensure that the school library program makes a positive difference in student achievement (Valenza, 2015).

**Advocacy and Leadership.** Leadership is not a new concept for school librarianship. Beginning with the adoption of AASL's *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs* in 1988, school librarians have been called to serve as leaders in school-wide teaching and instruction (AASL, 2018). Librarians are uniquely situated to serve as instructional leaders based on their knowledge of the curriculum, collaborative background, and expertise in technology and instruction (Baker, 2016; Johnston, 2012; Smith, 2014).

<i>ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)</i> <i>Standard 4: Advocacy and Leadership</i>	
<b>Elements:</b>	<b>Target Indicators:</b>
4.1 Networking with the library community	Establish connections with other libraries to strengthen cooperation among colleagues for resource sharing, networking, and facilitating access to information. Participate and collaborate as members of a network of learners.
4.2 Professional development	Participate in professional growth and leadership opportunities through membership in library associations, attendance at professional conferences, reading professional publications, and exploring resources. Plan for ongoing professional growth.
4.3 Leadership	Able to articulate the role and relationship of the school library program's impact on student achievement. Utilize evidence-based practice and information from research to communicate ways in which the library program can enhance school improvement efforts.
4.4 Advocacy	Identify stakeholders who impact the school library program. Develop a plan to advocate for school library and information programs, resources, and services.

**Figure 4. Standards for Advocacy and Leadership**

Adapted from *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*.

School librarians demonstrate Standard 4: Advocacy and Leadership (Figure 4) by modeling and supporting the integration of best practices through collaboration, by collecting and organizing data to make program decisions based on specific goals, and by identifying building needs and designing professional development to support student achievement (Dees et al, 2010). Unfortunately, because librarians have specialized skill sets and often attend professional development in isolation from school staff, they often suffer from “occupational invisibility”, where school administrators fail to recognize and appreciate their leadership potential (Church, 2008; Stephens, 2011). As a result, school librarians are less likely to be called on for leadership roles. For librarians to develop as

leaders, they must have an investment in their school community, an understanding of leadership expectations, confidence in their personal leadership skills, and the opportunity to take on leadership roles (Mardis, 2013).

“School librarians must act as leaders, design and implement effective programs, and market the library program so that a strong impression is made to the stakeholders” (Everhart, 2013, n.p.). To do this the new librarian will need to first create and then maintain the model library program they want their students and staff to believe exists. Following the impression management theory, “any individual or organization must establish and maintain impressions that are congruent with the perceptions they want to convey to the public” (Everhart, 2013, n.p.). The effective school librarian constructs a positive image of their library program through their messaging and actions. Public perception is carefully constructed by the librarian’s verbal and nonverbal messaging around the purpose and priorities of their program (Norris, 2011; Vansickle, 2000). This includes the physical appearance of the library space, the events and activities that are showcased, investment in instructional collaborations, and how the librarian’s time and schedule is prioritized (Toor & Weisburg, 2007). The new librarian must carefully design the impression that they want their staff, students, and administrators to perceive about the library program.

Initially, novice librarians must carefully craft the vision and mission for their program (Everhart, 2013).

Our message represents our vision of our libraries and our work, and it reflects both the district and school mission. Before we can fashion our message, before we can align our medium with our message, we need a clear, transparent, strategic

vision—a picture in words of what is important to us (how we will contribute to student achievement) (Akers, 2016, para 5).

Too many librarians overlook the importance of articulating defined goals to their stakeholders (Harvey, 2010; Novotny, 2017; Steele & Foote, 2015). Without this level of investment, the new librarian may not have the clarity or the drive to identify program weaknesses and prescribe the changes necessary to move the program forward (Frye, 2014; Steele and Foote, 2015).

[Without] a strategic plan, we are forced to put initiatives on a “time available” basis. Since [librarians] are perceived to be a support and service function, many of these initiatives are never given the attention they need. Because we don’t consistently communicate our priorities to our supervisors, they tend to be unsure of the priorities of the school library. Without a strategic plan, we have nothing to anchor our schedule in the eyes of administrators (Crowley, 2011, p.3).

Student achievement must be central to the mission and vision (Crowley, 2011; Steele & Foote, 2015). School libraries cannot be perceived as warehouses for resources, study halls, or social hang outs; nor can librarians be seen simply as resource managers or storybook readers. Strong school library programs are those that provide visible leadership in providing important and engaging instruction, supporting meaningful technology integration, and personalizing learning to foster inquiry, authentic research, and 21st century information literacy skills (Baker, 2016; Wine, 2016).

The importance of communication cannot be understated. “Advocacy entails getting parents, students, staff, and community members to know and understand the importance of the library media program and to be willing to go to bat for it. These are the people who school boards and administrators will listen to when making decisions“

(Harvey, 2010, p.131). New school librarians cannot be hesitant to promote and market the learning activities that happen in their libraries (ALA/AASL, 2010a; Church, 2008). Librarians must establish themselves as fundamental to the student learning experience; they need “to be intentional with what they do, say, write, and so forth to help paint the picture of what the 21st-century library media program looks like and why it is a critical element for student success” (Harvey, 2010, p.10). Because many stakeholders lack an understanding of contemporary school library programs and the important purpose they serve, articulating the impact of the school library on student success to parents, community members, and fellow staff members is critical in establishing an investment in resources, time, and support of the library program’s vision (Frye, 2014; Smith, 2014; Vansickle, 2000).

Professional development is a powerful tool in school library advocacy by establishing the school librarian as an expert, inviting collaborative opportunities, and laying the foundation for additional leadership roles (Johnston, 2012; Moreillon, 2013; Smith, 2014). With their background in pedagogical knowledge, curriculum content, and technology, school librarians are uniquely situated to empower their colleagues and administrators as learners, specifically tailored to the information and digital literacy goals and needs of their unique school environment (Johnston, 2015). With special focus on school improvement goals, librarians can positively influence instructional content and delivery, impacting student achievement (Moreillon, 2013). For the new school librarian, especially those drawn to the field for the love of books and literacy, this type of leadership may not come easily, but can be coached and learned, and therefore should be embedded in preservice courses and a target of district-level librarian supports (Smith, 2014).

**Program management and administration.** While program administration includes collection management and the day-to-day operations of running a school library, the focus extends beyond conventional tasks to concentrate on the many ways the school library program can enhance and support the mission of the school through thoughtful planning and skillful leveraging of resources.

<i>ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)</i> <i>Standard 5: Program Management and Administration</i>	
<b>Elements</b>	<b>Target Indicators</b>
5.1 Collections	Evaluate and select resources using professional selection tools and evaluation criteria to develop and manage a quality collection designed to meet the diverse needs of students, teachers, and administrators. Organize collections according to current library standards.
5.2 Professional ethics	Practice the ethical principles of the profession, advocate for intellectual freedom and privacy, and promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility. Educate the school community on the ethical use of information and ideas.
5.3 Personnel, funding, and facilities	Apply best practices related to planning, budgeting, and evaluating resources. Organize library facilities to enhance the use of resources and services and to ensure equitable access to all resources for all users. Develop, implement, and evaluate policies and procedures that support teaching and learning.
5.4 Strategic planning and assessment	Communicate and collaborate to develop a library program that aligns resources, services, and standards with the school's mission. Make effective use of data and information to assess how the library program addresses the needs of their diverse communities.

**Figure 5. Standards for Program Management and Administration**

Adapted from *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*.

Within Standard Five: Program Management and Administration (Figure 5), “Candidates plan, develop, implement, and evaluate school library programs, resources, and services in support of the mission of the library program with the school according to

the ethics and principles of library science, education, management, and administration” (ALA/AASL 2010a, p. 17). For some school librarians, program management and administration may feel like the natural place to focus efforts as they begin their career, as the target behaviors appear to be more concrete and based on traditional librarianship (Mardis, 2007). However, the essence of this standard is in building a learning environment that is organized, inclusive, and firmly rooted in program evaluation and strategic planning in order to align to the mission and goals of the broader school community. It includes the careful appraisal of human, physical, and informational resources and purposeful planning and budgeting to ensure those resources are appropriate and accessible to all stakeholders (Toor & Weisburg, 2007).

Embedded within the responsibilities of program administration is the school librarian’s instructional role in teaching, modeling, and facilitating the professional principles of intellectual freedom, privacy, ethical use of information, and digital citizenship. These core values “form the basis of how we go about conducting our personal and professional lives” and serve as an organizational compass for the profession of school librarianship (Ballard, 2016, p. 28). Digital citizenship has become an especially critical topic for school librarians to demonstrate leadership (Riddell, 2017). “Today’s school librarians must be seen as leaders in their buildings. Digital citizenship provides a perfect opportunity to look for collaborative partners . . . to develop a robust and consistent curriculum” (Preddy, 2016, p. 5). This includes instruction in the skills, knowledge, and dispositions required for navigating and evaluating information, privacy, information security, digital etiquette, plagiarism, e-commerce, social networking, and cyberbullying. Rather than “covering” digital citizenship topics in a check-list fashion, it is more productive for school librarians to

“teach kids how to navigate online space in creative, critical, healthy, and ethical ways *in context* rather than in isolation as a foundation for learning and connecting in our on-line world” (Casa-Todd, 2018, p. 15). This reinforces the need for school librarians to collaborate with classroom teachers as an essential function in program management and administration.

Teachers often do not know or see the managerial tasks or organizational duties involved in the administration of the school library program, including the work connected with building and maintaining a quality collection (Pasco, 2011). Collection development and management is another aspect of school library administration that is deceptively complex.

It is our professional responsibility to provide informational, instructional, and recreational reading resources that meet the needs of our patrons . . . extending the concept of books as mirrors, our collections should not only represent but also broaden the horizons of those we serve, providing a window into the lives of those who are different from us and doors that connect and foster understanding (Church, 2017, p. 4).

Expansive research and professional reading are required to balance curricular demands with the unique needs of diverse students, teachers, and communities, as well as professional cataloging, which promotes equitable access (Adamich, 2009). Equally critical are the processes and procedures adopted by school librarians to maintain and de-select materials through weeding. “[F]ailure to effectively weed our collections is nothing less than a form of censorship” (Morgester, 2018, p. 27). Without adequate collection development, careful and appropriate cataloging, and routine weeding procedures,



patrons are less likely to successfully navigate library collections to find the most current and/or relevant materials.

Whether it be collection development, resource budgeting, or planning and facilitating digital citizenship instruction, the school librarian will better serve the school community when incorporating strategic planning and routine program assessment (Hand, 2015). In adopting a leadership position within the program management and administration of the school library program, school librarians use data and evidence-based practices to set goals and prescribe necessary changes to move the library program forward (Steele & Foote, 2015).

Strategic plans not only provide data but also inform library staff and stakeholders as to what additional resources, program, services, or instruction are required or needed. By assessing, analyzing, and evaluating a school library program, ultimately librarians can identify new strategies, trends, and technologies that will enable resources and services to be delivered more effectively (Wong, 24).

Far beyond routine clerical tasks, contemporary school librarians must be prepared to collect, analyze, and leverage data to both advocate for and forward the mission of the school library program (Todd, 2015).

### **Challenges Adapting to the Role of School Librarian**

Most school librarians are not new to education; many are classroom teachers seeking a new role in their career (Hanson-Baldauf & Hassell, 2009; Vansickle, 2000). Schoffner (2011) explores the concerns of English teachers during their first year of teaching. Through data collected from reflective writing and interviews, Schoffner finds that the adjustment from preservice experience to actual teacher is often difficult due to several re-occurring themes; the reality of teaching not matching up to

preconceived expectations, feelings of isolation, workload balance, developing identity, and connecting with students. New librarians pursue the role of school librarian for a variety of reasons, some of which may not be validated by the reality of experience in school librarianship (Sanford, 2013). For some new librarians, the experience of taking on a role in the school library does not live up to the outcome they may have imagined (Frye, 2014).

Mardis (2007) reports similar findings in her study of the experience of preservice librarians as they transfer into their role of school librarian as reflected through the lens of the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM). Within this model, teachers go through predictable stages as they progress from preservice to seasoned teachers. During the first four years, teachers are consumed with concern involving self-image and how others perceive their skills and abilities. Years five through nine involve a focus on concerns about instructional tasks and situations. It is not until around year ten that teachers have the discipline and depth of experience to focus their concern on the impact of instruction on their students. Mardis follows preservice librarians with an average of 7.3 years of classroom teaching experience for two semesters as they reflect on the experience of transitioning out of the role of teacher and into the role of school librarian. At the start of the practicum experience, the new school librarians expected their comfort and expertise in the classroom to transfer to the library. They expected the role of the school librarian to be similar to that of the classroom teacher, but on a larger scale. One emerging theme is that the teaching responsibilities in the library are only one aspect of the program; the librarian must also balance administrative, management, and leadership roles. The new school librarians cycled through the CBAM phases in much the same way as the new teacher, first focusing on self, then task, and finally impact on

the student. Mardis draws a parallel between the stages of CBAM and the roles of the librarian as defined by the American Library Association's *Information Power* document (1998); program administrator (self), information specialist (task), and finally teacher/collaborator (impact on student).

In her 2013 follow-up report, Mardis interviews the same librarians four years after completing their MLIS degrees. In reflecting on their first years as librarians, the respondents indicate that they faced challenges in working with unfamiliar age groups and content areas. Some were concerned about being placed in new schools or new districts and having to re-learn the culture of a new environment in addition to their new duties. They worry about the perception of being “new” and having to rebuild their expertise and reputation as an educator. They also report that the disconnection to an individual class of students is a difficult adjustment, as is the disconnection to a specific team of teachers with which to partner. Collaboration proves to be more complex than anticipated. On the positive side, the librarians report that their past teaching experience serves as an asset in making the transition. Other factors that impact the transition include the new school librarian's previous teaching experience, the condition of the inherited library program, and the opportunity to connect and partner with school librarians in similar circumstances (Mardis, 2013).

Many new school librarians are overwhelmed by the complexities of running a library program (Frye, 2014; Sanford, 2013; Shoffner, 2011). They may be experienced in teaching in the classroom setting, but the school librarian has a responsibility to impact the broader school community (ALA/AASL, 2010a; Moreillon, 2013). There is a responsibility to know the content of many different curriculums, to understand scope and sequence among and across grade levels, and to work with ages and grade levels with

which they are uncomfortable. This may lead to some school librarians focusing on content areas or instructional practices that they are most familiar with, at times to the detriment of proper focus or balanced instruction (Toor & Weisburg, 2007). New school librarians are in danger of fitting themselves into a single silo in which they feel especially comfortable; they may need help knowing which routines are healthy and productive and when it is time to seek new strategies and ideas (Moreillon, 2013). Goals help new librarians focus and prioritize when the chaos of new roles and new responsibilities make it hard, and also helps the new librarian distinguish priorities from busywork (Miller, 2013).

Compounding the issue of newness is the relative isolation of the school librarian (Schoffner, 2011; Vansickle, 2000). Toor and Weisburg (2007) describe common hurdles in transitioning from classroom teacher to librarian in their book *New on the Job: A School Library Media Specialist*. The majority of new school librarians find themselves in new buildings and different school communities that feel foreign to them (Pasco, 2011). They leave the comfort of their home school to join a staff of strangers. They find themselves as “singlets” in a school, lacking the natural built-in connections to grade level or content area team members (Schoffner, 2011). School librarians are unique in that they are isolated within their buildings and do not have regular interaction with other librarians who are teaching the same content or working with the challenges of similar class schedules (Mardis & Dickinson, 2009). Building collaborative relationships takes time and effort, and developing those new alliances can often be a source of stress to the new librarian (Burns, Howard & Kimmel, 2016).

*New on the Job: A School Library Media Specialist* details the many differences that exist in moving from the individual classroom to a role that serves an entire school

community (Toor & Weisburg, 2007). Developing relationships with a whole school of students is exponentially more challenging. The sheer number of names to be learned and relationships to be forged is daunting. Formulating a relationship with each teacher and team takes vigilance and intentionality, and yet is fundamental to successful instructional partnerships (Bishop & Cahall, 2012). Even the learning space is a factor. New librarians must transition from designing a learning space that reflects individual teaching preference to one that serves the community as a whole. When the library is designed effectively to serve as the “hub” of the school, the amount and variety of activity can create a sense of chaos that can be disconcerting to those who are more comfortable with routine. School librarians “are all multi-taskers who fill multiple roles and responsibilities. As a new librarian, the multitude of responsibilities can be overwhelming. Therefore, goal setting, whether institutionally formalized or personally implemented, is an essential strategy for prioritizing and juggling multiple projects” (Miller, 2013, np).

Beyond connectedness, the new school librarian must also build collaborative relationships, which are vital to the delivery of their instruction. Collaboration requires that classroom teachers recognize the added value to working with the librarian (Dess, Mayer, Morin & Willis, 2010). If no previous modeling exists, classroom teachers may expect the school librarian to take on the traditional librarian role that has either existed previously in the school or that the teacher recalls from their own school experience (Latham, Gross, & Witte, 2013; Mardis, 2007). Changing the perception of the librarian’s role and initiating collaboration requires persistence, consistency, and risk-taking that can be intimidating to new school librarians, especially to the librarian who is also new to the school (Moreillon, 2013).

Much emphasis is placed on collaboration in preservice training (Moreillon, 2012), but according to Kimmel's 2013 case study on collaborative planning, capturing the essence and key elements of effective collaboration is difficult to replicate outside of the authentic experience. The school librarian must be able to make connections that cross content areas, support multiple subjects, and scaffold between grade levels and learning initiatives. This requires detailed knowledge of curriculum scope and sequence, specific curriculum content, and available resources (ALA/AASL, 2010a; Jacobs-Israel, 2013). Novice school librarians may have the singular advantage of being able to challenge past practices by using their unfamiliarity of the curriculum to ask probing questions that drill down to the purpose behind instructional decision making and force the reconsideration of best practice (Kimmel, 2013).

### **Professional Identity**

As novice school librarians embark on designing and developing a library program, a number of elements influence their burgeoning professional identities. The implied and explicit expectations embedded in the various professional standards and corresponding frameworks are certainly influential, but only a single factor (Church et al, 2012; Mardis & Dickinson, 2009). Background teaching experience is of underlying importance (Jacobs-Isreal, 2012; Shoffner, 2011). Some new librarians enter the profession with years of teaching experience, while others have almost none. Not only does this impact lesson design and student management, but also the understanding of educational politics and underlying building culture. The culture and context in which a librarian is situated will determine much about the professional identity of a novice librarian.

[The] contexts within which novice library media specialists find themselves as they begin to work in their first school library will greatly influence their decisions, actions and identities. The expectations of district level coordinators, administrators, teachers, and students, the culture of the school, the practices of past librarians and traditions and other features of the figured world that is their new school setting will have an enormous impact on how they figure themselves as school library media specialists. (Sanford, 2013, p. 5)

The perception of the role of school librarian by administrators and teachers reflects mightily in the formulation of the librarian's professional identity (Latham, Gross, & Witte, 2013; Novotny, 2017). By nature, people value what they know (Hanson-Baldauf & Hassell, 2009). If the historic expectation is a school librarian who checks out books and reads stories, the same expectation will continue until their experience is disproven. Changing perceptions and reforming expectations is a slow process that requires time, dedication to professional standards, and persistence (Harvey, 2004; Jacobs-Isreal, 2013; Mardis & Dickenson, 2009). In Vansickle's 2000 study on preservice library students, over 60% of the preservice librarians indicate a belief that their primary role as the school librarian is one of support rather than leadership. Given the clear messaging about the importance of leadership in research literature, this indicates that novice school librarians may be unprepared or hesitant to transition into the responsibilities of creating program vision and providing instructional leadership, professional development, and program advocacy (Dees et al, 2010; Everhart; 2013, Mardis, 2013; Moreillon, 2013; Wine, 2016). When a school librarian has weak or missing skills, lack of confidence, fear, or administrative directives that impact the roles realized by the school librarian, they may adopt a professional identity that minimizes

their program goals and the potential impact of the school library program (Moreillon, 2013; Steele & Foote, 2015; Toor & Weisburg, 2007).

Faced with the real and immediate demands of managing a library program and balancing the expectations of teachers and administrators, the novice school librarian has to decide what roles and aspects of school librarianship will be valued, asserted, rejected, and/or negotiated, often during the infancy of the school year (Sanford, 2013).

Ultimately, it is among interactions with administrators, teachers, and students that the librarian will begin to define their niche, commit to professional priorities, and build their identity as a school librarian (Everhart, 2013; Stephens, 2011). However, with the support of district leaders, targeted assistance can be put into place that bolsters specific skills, provides guidance on establishing procedures and precedence, defines mission and vision, and lays the groundwork for a strong professional school librarian identity to emerge (Mardis & Dickenson, 2009; Massey, DiScala, Weeks, Barlow, & Kodama, 2016; Shoffner 2011, Smith, 2014).

### **The Role of the School District Library Supervisor**

An important source of support for the novice school librarian is the district library supervisor:

The school district library supervisor is in a unique position at the district level to ensure that [school librarians] are integrated into the district's curriculum, to advocate on behalf of the work that [school librarians] can contribute, and to provide much-needed professional development for building-level librarians (Massey, DiScala, Weeks, Barlow, & Kodama, 2016, p. 389).

According to the 2012 AASL *Position Statement on the School Library Supervisor*, the role of the district library supervisor is to ensure that highly qualified school librarians are



providing the services and instruction necessary for students to be successful learners. The district library leader advocates for school library programs, evaluates and recommends best practices, invests in resources, and provides professional development to building-level librarians, with the goal of developing contemporary school librarians and library programs that align with the mission and vision of national school library standards (AASL, 2012).

In 1994, AASL outlined ways in which the novice school librarian would benefit from the leadership of a district library supervisor, which included; helping the school librarian develop a library program based on the district's mission and goals; communicating the role of the school librarian to teachers, principals, and other stakeholders; directly teaching school librarians how to develop and coordinate a school library program; facilitating and provisioning resources across the district; and providing professional development to school librarians in support of contemporary librarianship (Massey et al, 2016).

While the district library leader can be instrumental in making sure school librarians, including the novice, have the resources and training necessary to lead effective library program, the district library supervisor has become less visible over the last fifty years (DiScala, Moses, & Weeks, 2015). In 1960, national library standards identified the district library supervisor as an important element in ensuring the success of school library programs, but by 1998, statements related to the importance of the district library supervisor were left out of the national school library standards. (Massey et al, 2016). Since then, almost no literature has been published regarding the role of the district library leader or the ways in which they influence the building-level school librarians and library programs (Weeks et al, 2017).

In 2012, the Lilead Project began the first national survey in fifty years to examine the role of the district library supervisor (Traska, 2014). This survey indicates that the influence of the district library supervisor has eroded since the first studies in 1968 (DiScala, Moses, & Weeks, 2015). Despite this, district library supervisors identified their most important responsibilities as; developing the knowledge and skills of school librarians; guiding the direction of the district library program; advocating for school library programs; and managing databases and library management systems for school and district libraries (Weeks et al, 2017). These functions serve to impact the quality of all library programs within a school district, including those of the novice school librarian. (AASL, 2012).

### **Conclusion**

Novice school librarians enter the field with diverse amounts of experience and expertise. Some begin their school library career with years of teaching experience, others with none. Some have completed the full requirements for school librarian endorsement, others begin with a handful of credits. Some will inherit well established programs with supportive administrators, others will walk into situations where the school library program has been neglected and unsupported.

The first three years of school librarianship are critical in establishing the effective practices that build strong contemporary school library programs. The field of school librarianship has plenty of professional standards and frameworks to define good practice. It is not enough for novice librarians to know and understand the standards. In order for novice school librarians to integrate quickly into the school culture and to successfully establish both the school library program priorities and a positive professional identity, district leaders must understand the challenges inherent to leading a

library program in the first three years of practice. This research serves to identify the factors that influence the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

The literature in chapter two demonstrates the complexity of skills, knowledge, and dispositions required of novice school librarians as they begin their new role. Under the best circumstances, the novice school librarian has completed an education steeped in the skills, knowledge, and dispositions defined by ALA/AASL as necessary to be qualified as a school librarian. However, the actual practice of school librarianship depends heavily on the cultural, environmental, and program elements that influence the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian. Strong school library programs are led by strong school librarians, capable of leading and managing the many complex roles inherent to the position (Dees et al, 2010; Everhart, 2013; Pasco, 2011). In schools lacking strong school library programs, students will be less likely to receive instruction on information literacy and inquiry processes and will have less access to high quality print and digital resources (Gretes, 2013; Kachel, 2013). Thus, when school library programs lack effective instruction and program management, student achievement is negatively impacted. Novice school librarians need the support of district and school administrators to ensure that they have the vision, knowledge, and skills necessary to lead effective school library programs (Church, 2008; Johnston, 2012; Steele & Foote, 2015).

The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed methods study is to assess the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions as defined in the 2010 *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation for School Librarians* and explore the factors that influence novice school librarians' self-efficacy. Using the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians*

(2010a) as a contextual framework to describe the targeted skills and behaviors of novice school librarians, this study identifies the specific factors that influence the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian and thus impact the overall effectiveness of the school library program.

### **Central Research Question**

What factors influence the self-efficacy of the novice librarian in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions defined in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*?

### **Design**

The design of this research is explanatory sequential mixed methods study. This methodology was selected because the use of quantitative data alone does not sufficiently capture the details and trends within the lived professional experiences of the novice school librarian, nor does qualitative data adequately measure the level of self-efficacy experienced by the novice school librarian in practice (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Researchers have identified three advantages of mixed-methods research: 1) it enables researchers to simultaneously address confirmatory and explanatory research questions and, therefore, evaluate and generate theory at the same time; 2) it enables researchers to provide stronger inferences than a single method or worldview; and 3) it provides an opportunity for researchers to produce a greater assortment of divergent and/or complementary views (Vankatesh, Brown & Sullivan, 2016, p. 437).

In this study, quantitative data indicates the self-efficacy of novice school librarians as they apply the essential skills, knowledge, and dispositions defined in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*. The

qualitative data phenomenologically explores the environmental, cultural, and program features that influence self-efficacy as revealed by data in the quantitative segment. “The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research problem. The qualitative data and their analysis refine and explain those statistical results by exploring participant’s view in more depth” (Invankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006, p. 4). The integration of this research data serves to identify the specific cultural, environmental and program elements that influence the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian and thus impact the overall effectiveness of the school library program.

### **Participants**

The site for this study is a growing urban district of nearly 42,000 students, including 39 elementary schools, 12 middle schools and six high schools. There are 58 librarians in the school system, as well as a district Library Services Department which is staffed by a district library supervisor, coordinator, two full time library instructional coaches, a cataloguer, a library management systems technician, and several staff who manage processing and other support roles. The researcher in this study serves as the supervisor of the library services department, which is a position of influence over school library programs in this district. As a result, the researcher’s role as a district leader was considered as a variable when determining data collection methods and during data analysis.

Participants of this study were those hired as school librarians by the school district between 2016 and 2018. Fourteen subjects were hired during this time period. Fourteen subjects participated in the survey and 12 participated in the focus group interviews. All subjects had completed their first, second, or third year in the role of

school librarian. Of the anticipated participants, all are women. Most participants have previous classroom teaching experience, two are new to teaching. Eleven of the 14 participants had more than six years of classroom teaching experience prior to transitioning to school librarian. Of the participants with prior teaching experience, ten have held teaching positions within the district. Two have previous experience as school librarians in neighboring school districts. Six of the participants accepted librarian positions in levels different than their previous teaching experience; five moved from teaching in secondary grades to elementary library positions, one moved from teaching preschool to an elementary school library position. Twelve of the 14 started their jobs as school librarian with a provisional certification; 13 of 14 were fully endorsed at the time of the study. Nine participants serve under a fully fixed daily schedule model, three are in a fully flexible schedule, and three operate in a schedule that is part flexible, part fixed. All eligible participants with consent were included in the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study.

### **Quantitative Phase**

**Instrumentation.** The initial quantitative phase consisted of an online survey presented via Qualtrics to fourteen novice librarians to gather data on their perceived level of efficacy in 53 competencies comprising the five standards defined by the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*; teaching for learning, literacy and reading, information and knowledge, advocacy and leadership, and program management and administration. Open-ended questions prompted participants to provide details about cultural, environmental, and library program elements that influence perceptions of self-efficacy. The objective for this phase was to identify commonalities in perceptions of self-efficacy and elements that influence those

perceptions. In their study, *Traditional, Likert, and Simplified Measures of Self-Efficacy*, Maurer and Andrews suggest:

Self-efficacy is best measured by assessing both magnitude and confidence . . . that the Likert scale can be considered a measure of both magnitude and confidence, and . . . based on reliability, predictive validity, and factor analysis data, that a Likert scale measure of self-efficacy is an acceptable alternative to the traditional measure (2000, p. 966).

The data was collected via a web-based survey using an instrument developed with the specific descriptive language contained in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*. The survey was comprised of five sections based on the five standards identified by ALA/AASL as essential to develop and manage library and information services in a P-12 setting. The survey items assessed confidence levels in the described elements of each standard using a four-point Likert scale. For reliability and validity, the wording of each item was directly reflective of the language used to describe the elements of each standard in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)* document.

**Validation Process.** A series of measures were taken in order to establish the construct validity of the instrument. The *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)* encompass the skills and behaviors preservice librarians learn when completing an endorsement through an accredited school library education program. The items that comprise the instrument were written in language that closely mirrors the verbiage included in the 2010 *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians*, as written by the professional organizations to systematically define effective school librarians and school library programs. The



original document language was included at the top of each section of the survey in order to describe each standard and frame the purpose of the questions.

The questionnaire items and format were initially reviewed by Dr. Dawn Mazzie, an assessment specialist in the district's Department of Evaluation and Assessment. Having no objections to the content or wording of the questions, Dr. Mazzie provided guidance on the flow of the questions and strategies to create better user experience within the Qualtrics software system. Updates to the format of the instrument were made by the researcher in order to maximize participation and data analysis tools.

The online survey was then piloted by a focus group of nine practicing certified librarians representing five different school districts. The focus group was provided an overview of the research study, including the purpose statement and research questions. A preview of the online survey was sent via Qualtrics so that members could analyze question content and structure and engage with experiential qualities of the instrument. Focus group members provided feedback specific to the clarity, relevancy, and format of survey items using a standard protocol collected via a Google Forms questionnaire. Survey items and format were adjusted according to feedback. Approval of the instrument, including survey items and format, was granted by the district Department of Assessment and Evaluation in May 2019.

**Procedures.** The quantitative questionnaire created by the researcher was distributed using Qualtrics, the primary tool for questionnaires in the district. The questionnaire link was sent directly to the district email account for each qualifying participant in conjunction with a description of the study and letter of informed consent. Participants received two weeks to complete the questionnaire, and a reminder

email was sent halfway through the allotted time period and again two days before the questionnaire closed.

**Data Analysis.** In phase one, participants responded to a Qualtrics online survey in which they ranked their self-efficacy on a four-point scale in 53 competencies of effective practice. Data analysis was carried out for each of the 53 competencies. The mean for each competency was determined and ranked. The researcher used graphic representations of each competency to identify trends and provide visual comparison between individual participants, demographics, and confidence intervals. Further analysis was applied to demographics in relation to confidence intervals so that the researcher could look for any impact of teaching experience and model of daily schedule on participant responses. Further phenomenological analysis was applied to trends and patterns based on open-ended responses.

### **Qualitative Phase**

**Instrumentation.** In the second qualitative phase, focus groups phenomenologically explored the environmental factors, cultural factors, and library program features that influence the efficacy of the school librarian. The interview protocol was developed based on emerging themes from the initial quantitative phase. Focus groups were facilitated by a neutral third party who is a qualified and experienced school librarian and trained in the interview protocol. The focus groups were semi-structured in nature, which allowed the narrative of each participant to give voice to their lived professional experience.

In this phase, multiple sources were used to collect and organize the data meaningfully: (1) transcription of the semi-structured focus group interviews; (2) thorough notes on participant responses as reflected upon by the interviewer; (3) follow-

up electronic interview to confirm data and to pursue more information on developing themes; and (4) participants' responses to the questionnaire in the initial quantitative phase (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006).

**Validation Process.** Reflective of the validation process used in the quantitative phase of the study, the same focus group of nine practicing certified librarians was updated on common themes and findings uncovered in the initial questionnaire. Focus group members provided feedback specific to the clarity, relevancy, and validity of the interview questions using a standard protocol collected via a Google Forms questionnaire, specifically considering the themes identified during the qualitative survey and the phrasing of questions that would effectively expand on the cultural, environmental, and program factors that influence levels of self-efficacy indicated in the survey. Input was sought on the order of questions and the appropriate prompts for elaboration. Interview questions and protocol was adjusted according to feedback. Approval of the instrument, including interview questions and protocol, was granted by the district Department of Assessment and Evaluation. See Appendix B for interview protocol.

**Procedures.** Following analysis of the quantitative data, semi-structured focus groups were arranged with the same group of novice librarians who participated previously in the quantitative study. To avoid potential bias due to the relationship between the participant and the researcher, the focus groups were facilitated by a neutral third party who is a qualified and experienced librarian and trained in the interview protocol. The focus groups took place at a neutral location during non-contract hours, and lasted no longer than one hour. Results of the quantitative analysis were shared with participants prior to the convening of focus groups so that they could reflect on whether

the results accurately represent their own experience. Focus group questions addressed reactions to the quantitative evidence and prompted broader discussion about elements influencing feelings of efficacy in specific domains.

The focus groups were digitally recorded and later transcribed using automatic transcription software. The facilitator hand-recorded responses on the interview protocol throughout the focus groups and provided a verbal and written report to the researcher with their reflections about each focus group session. Following the focus groups, a follow-up email was sent to participants requesting additional input on themes which emerged during the interview process.

**Data Analysis.** The focus groups were recorded in duplicate and transcriptions were coded and analyzed with the assistance of Dedoose qualitative analytic software in order to identify emerging themes. Specifically, the researcher used conventional data analysis; first locating text segments directly from the data to identify language that describes factors influencing the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian, coding the passages into categories that align with five standards defined by the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*, and then further combined the codes into themes reflective of cultural, environmental, and program factors that affect the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Analytics within the Dedoose software aided in synthesizing the qualitative and quantitative data to reveal patterns, explore relationships, and visualize data.

### **Mixed Methods Data Integration**

Inherent to the explanatory sequential mixed methods research design is the use of qualifying quantitative data to connect and compare the results of the quantitative portion of the study (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). Analysis of the quantitative data

informed the researcher's decision making in designing the interview protocol and follow-up questions used with the focus group in order to explain and clarify themes that emerged from the self-efficacy survey (Ivankova et al, 2006). The researcher then interpreted the qualitative data from the focus groups and connected findings back to the original themes established in the survey. The quantitative data informed the focus group interviews and the resulting qualitative data was compared with themes that emerged from the initial survey results. Each piece served to illuminate the other (Creswell, 2015).

Following analysis, the external researcher conducting the focus groups reviewed the analysis to ensure that the interpretation and drawn inferences accurately reflect the data collected in the interviews. Focus group participants were provided a summary of the findings and encouraged to contribute reflections and recommendations for action (Creswell, 2016).

### **Limitations**

This study had selected a group of novice school librarians from a single school district to participate, which may not naturally represent the population of novice school librarians and may limit the inferential potential of this research. Additionally, the framework of the study is based on the *ALA/ AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*, which is nearly a decade old. While this document is purposely worded to be comprehensive and yet general enough to serve advances in the field, there are topics that exist in 2019 that are not clearly addressed or defined. In using this framework as the foundation for defining contemporary school librarianship and basing the quantitative survey on the tenets included, this document bound this research to the standards as they were defined in 2010.

## **Researcher as Instrument**

As the district library supervisor in a district employing over sixty school librarians, I find myself thinking a great deal about novice school librarians. Each year my district hires on average five or six new school librarians, which results in a fairly significant change to the schools and library programs in which they serve. As an administrator, I find this to be an exciting time, teeming with opportunity to reframe and refresh a school library program. What I have observed, however, is that the first years of practice are laden with new learning and challenges for novice school librarians, which sometimes creates a lag in the resources and services that school librarians are expected to provide. This lag does not go unnoticed by building and district administrators, and part of my job is to build supports and opportunities for professional learning that will ease the transition for novice school librarians and help them quickly develop library programs that are reflective of our national school library standards.

That said, my motivation for conducting this research is to identify specific factors that influence the effectiveness of the novice school librarian so that supports can be better tailored to meet the needs of the novice school librarian. This lent itself to mixed methods research design; I was first be able to identify themes among skills, knowledge, and dispositions that novice school librarians self-report as perceiving high or low self-efficacy, and then I was able to explore in detail through focus groups the factors that impact those perceptions. My position as the district library supervisor required extra care in the design of the research and collection of data; procedures were put into place to assure participants that responses were anonymous and that I would not have access to identifying information. It was especially important that participants felt secure in order to glean a straightforward and honest representation of the novice experience so

that I can better serve novice school librarians as they face the challenges of building effective school library programs. I believe every novice school librarian wants to serve their students and school communities well. My aim was to learn how to help them establish themselves faster and with as few growing pains as possible.

## Chapter 4

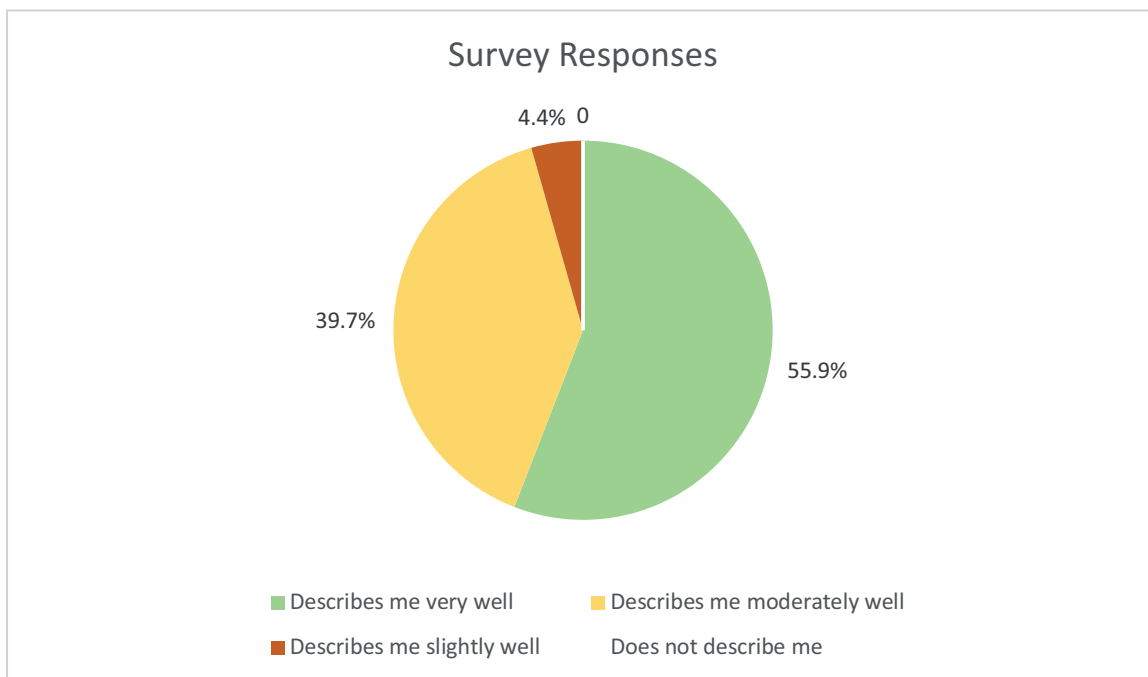
### Results

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that influence the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian. The study initially measured the perceived self-efficacy of fourteen novice school librarians in the 53 elements defined in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*. The results from the survey were used to formulate open ended focus group interview questions with the purpose of exploring phenomenological reflections of participants regarding perceptions about their experiences as a novice school librarian and the factors that either supported or undermined their feelings of self-efficacy.

#### Survey results

Fourteen participants responded to 53 Likert-style items defined by the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*. Of 798 total responses, the novice school librarians awarded themselves the highest rating of “Describes me very well” (4) in 55.9% of responses. They indicated their ability to meet the standard “Describes me moderately well” (3) in 39.7% of responses. Only 4.4% of responses indicated the ability of the novice school librarian to meet the standard “Describes me slightly well” (2). None of the participants marked the response “Does not describe me” (1) for any of the standards. Of participants who indicated responses indicating their ability to meet the standard “Describes me slightly well”, four participants accounted for 82.9% of responses.





**Figure 6. Reported Confidence in Standards Indicators**

	1.1 Knowledge of learning styles	1.2 Recognize impact of cultural influences	1.3 Assess learner needs to design instruction	1.4 Support learning of all students	1.5 Modify & adapt instruction to meet needs of all learners	1.6 Facilitate active, inquiry-based learning
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
Mean	3.64	3.79	3.5	3.36	3.43	3.46

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
■ Describes me slightly well      ■ Does not describe me

**Figure 7. Confidence Indications: Standard 1: Teaching and Learning**

	1.7 Use instructional strategies to develop digital-age learning experiences	1.8 Use assessment strategies to develop digital-age learning experiences	1.9 Partner with classroom teacher to design and develop instruction	1.10 Communicate the impact of collaborative instruction on student achievement	1.11 Collaborate with other educators	1.12 Provide professional development as it relates to library and information use
<b>1</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>2</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>3</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>4</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>5</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>6</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>7</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>8</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>9</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>10</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>11</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>12</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>13</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>14</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.43</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>3.57</b>	<b>3.36</b>

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
 ■ Describes me slightly well      Does not describe me

**Figure 7. Confidence Indications: Standard 1: Teaching and Learning, Continued**

	1.13 Participate in curriculum development and school improvement process	1.14 Able to collaborate to plan and implement instruction of AASL standards	1.15 Advocate for 21 <sup>st</sup> century literacy skills	1.16 Integrate multiple literacies with content curriculum	1.17 Integrate technology into creative teaching and learning	1.18 Employ strategies to support critical thinking and creative processes
1	■	■	■	■	■	■
2	■	■	■	■	■	■
3	■	■	■	■	■	■
4	■	■	■	■	■	■
5	■	■	■	■	■	■
6	■	■	■	■	■	■
7	■	■	■	■	■	■
8	■	■	■	■	■	■
9	■	■	■	■	■	■
10	■	■	■	■	■	■
11	■	■	■	■	■	■
12	■	■	■	■	■	■
13	■	■	■	■	■	■
14	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mean	3.14	3.36	3.64	3.64	3.71	3.5

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
 ■ Describes me slightly well      Does not describe me

**Figure 7. Confidence Indications: Standard 1: Teaching and Learning, Continued**

In Standard 1: Teaching and Learning, participants indicate a high level of confidence. The average mean is 3.49. 53.6% of responses were indicated by participants in the highest confidence interval, “Describes me very well”; 39.3% were in

the second-highest interval, “Describes me moderately well; 7.1% indicated “Describes me slightly well”; 0 responses indicated “Does not describe me”.

	2.1 Familiar with a wide range of literature to support reading for information	2.2 Familiar with a wide range of literature to support reading for pleasure	2.3 Familiar with a wide range of literature to support reading for lifelong learning	2.4 Use a variety of strategies to promote leisure reading and model personal enjoyment	2.5 Promote habits of creative expression	2.6 Develop a print collection that supports the diverse needs of the students and community
1	■	■	■	■	■	■
2	■	■	■	■	■	■
3	■	■	■	■	■	■
4	■	■	■	■	■	■
5	■	■	■	■	■	■
6	■	■	■	■	■	■
7	■	■	■	■	■	■
8	■	■	■	■	■	■
9	■	■	■	■	■	■
10	■	■	■	■	■	■
11	■	■	■	■	■	■
12	■	■	■	■	■	■
13	■	■	■	■	■	■
14	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mean	<b>3.64</b>	<b>3.57</b>	<b>3.57</b>	<b>3.64</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>3.79</b>

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
 ■ Describes me slightly well      ■ Does not describe me

**Figure 8. Confidence Indications: Standard 2: Literacy and Reading**

	2.7 Develop a digital collection that supports the diverse needs of the students and community	2.8 Collaborate with teachers to reinforce reading instructional strategies
<b>1</b>		
<b>2</b>		
<b>3</b>		
<b>4</b>		
<b>5</b>		
<b>6</b>		
<b>7</b>		
<b>8</b>		
<b>9</b>		
<b>10</b>		
<b>11</b>		
<b>12</b>		
<b>13</b>		
<b>14</b>		
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.43</b>	<b>3.29</b>

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
■ Describes me slightly well      ■ Does not describe me

**Figure 8. Confidence Indications: Standard 2: Literacy and Reading, Continued**

In Standard 2: Literacy and Reading, participants indicate a high level of confidence. The average mean is 3.52. 56.3% of responses were indicated by participants in the highest confidence interval, “Describes me very well”; 37.5% were in the second-highest interval, “Describes me moderately well; 6.2% indicated “Describes me slightly well”; 0 responses indicated “Does not describe me”.



	3.1 Identify and support diverse student information needs	3.2 Model strategies to locate, evaluate, and ethically use information	3.3 Collaborate to efficiently access, interpret, and communicate information	3.4 Support flexible, open access for library services	3.5 Develop solutions for addressing barriers to equitable access to resources and services	3.6 Facilitate access to information in print, non-print, and digital formats
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
Mean	3.57	3.57	3.5	3.07	3.21	3.57

■ Describes me very well     
■ Describes me moderately well  
■ Describes me slightly well     
■ Does not describe me

**Figure 9. Confidence Indications: Standard 3: Information and Knowledge**

	3.7 Model and communicate legal and ethical codes of the profession	3.8 Design and adapt experiences that engage students in authentic learning through digital tools and resources	3.9 Model and facilitate effective use of digital tools to locate, analyze, evaluate, & use information	3.10 Use evidence-based, action research to collect data	3.11 Interpret and use data to improve practice in the school library
1	■	■	■	■	■
2	■	■	■	■	■
3	■	■	■	■	■
4	■	■	■	■	■
5	■	■	■	■	■
6	■	■	■	■	■
7	■	■	■	■	■
8	■	■	■	■	■
9	■	■	■	■	■
10	■	■	■	■	■
11	■	■	■	■	■
12	■	■	■	■	■
13	■	■	■	■	■
14	■	■	■	■	■
Mean	3.71	3.57	3.43	3.07	3.29

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
 ■ Describes me slightly well      Does not describe me

**Figure 9. Confidence Indications: Standard 3: Information and Knowledge, Continued**

In Standard 3: Information and Knowledge, participants indicate a high level of confidence. The average mean is 3.41. 46.8% of responses were indicated by participants in the highest confidence interval, “Describes me very well”; 48% were in the second-highest interval, “Describes me moderately well; 5.2% indicated “Describes me slightly well”; 0 responses indicated “Does not describe me”. Two of the 11 indicators have the lowest confidence interval mean across all standards; “I am able to support flexible, open access for library services” (3.07); and, “I am able to use evidence-based, action research to collect data” (3.07).

	4.1 Establish connections with other libraries for resource sharing, networking, & facilitating access	4.2 Cooperate with library colleagues for resource sharing, networking, & facilitating access	4.3 Participate as a member of a social & intellectual network of learners	4.4 Participate in professional growth & leadership opportunities	4.5 Plan for ongoing professional growth	4.6 Articulate the role of the library program's impact on student achievement
<b>1</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>2</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>3</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>4</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>5</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>6</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>7</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>8</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>9</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>10</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>11</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>12</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>13</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>14</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.64</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>3.43</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>3.36</b>

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
 ■ Describes me slightly well      ■ Does not describe me

**Figure 10. Confidence Indications: Standard 4: Advocacy and Leadership**

	4.7 Utilizes evidence-based practices and information from research to communicate ways the library enhances school improvement efforts	4.8 Identifies stakeholders within the community who impact the school library program	4.9 Develops a plan to advocate for school library programs, resources, and services
<b>1</b>			
<b>2</b>			
<b>3</b>			
<b>4</b>			
<b>5</b>			
<b>6</b>			
<b>7</b>			
<b>8</b>			
<b>9</b>			
<b>10</b>			
<b>11</b>			
<b>12</b>			
<b>13</b>			
<b>14</b>			
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.36</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>3.36</b>

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
■ Describes me slightly well      ■ Does not describe me

**Figure 10. Confidence Indications: Standard 4: Advocacy and Leadership, Continued**

In Standard 4: Advocacy and Leadership, participants indicate a high level of confidence. The average mean is 3.47. 51.6% of responses were indicated by participants in the highest confidence interval, “Describes me very well”; 43.6% were in the second-highest interval, “Describes me moderately well; 4.8% indicated “Describes me slightly well”; 0 responses indicated “Does not describe me”.

	5.1 Evaluates & selects resources using professional selection tools and evaluation criteria to develop and manage a quality collection	5.2 Organizes library collections according to current library principles and standards	5.3 Practices the ethical principles of the profession	5.4 Advocates for intellectual freedom and privacy	5.5 Promotes and models digital citizenship and responsibility	5.6 Educates the school community on ethical use of information and ideas
1	■	■	■	■	■	■
2	■	■	■	■	■	■
3	■	■	■	■	■	■
4	■	■	■	■	■	■
5	■	■	■	■	■	■
6	■	■	■	■	■	■
7	■	■	■	■	■	■
8	■	■	■	■	■	■
9	■	■	■	■	■	■
10	■	■	■	■	■	■
11	■	■	■	■	■	■
12	■	■	■	■	■	■
13	■	■	■	■	■	■
14	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mean	3.71	3.86	4.0	3.79	3.93	3.43

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
 ■ Describes me slightly well      ■ Does not describe me

**Figure 11. Confidence Indications: Standard 5: Program Management and Administration**

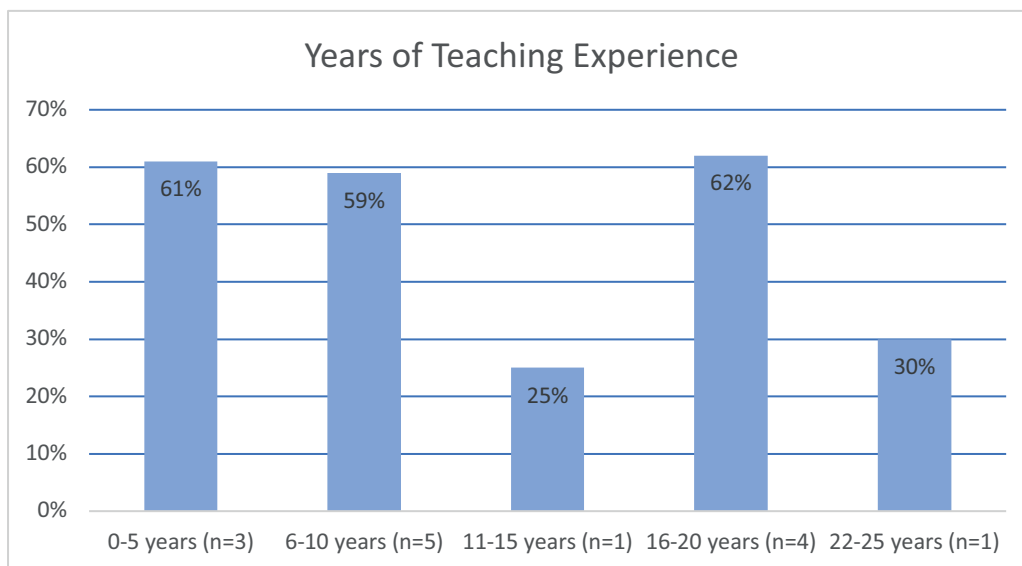
	5.7 Communicates & collaborates with stakeholders to develop a program that aligns resources with the school's mission	5.8 Communicates & collaborates with stakeholders to develop a program that aligns services with the school's mission	5.9 Communicates & collaborates with stakeholders to develop a program that aligns standards with the school's mission	5.10 Makes effective use of data to assess how the library program addresses the needs of the diverse community
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
Mean	<b>3.64</b>	<b>3.57</b>	<b>3.64</b>	<b>3.29</b>

■ Describes me very well      ■ Describes me moderately well  
■ Describes me slightly well      ■ Does not describe me

**Figure 11. Confidence Indications: Standard 5: Program Management and Administration, Continued**

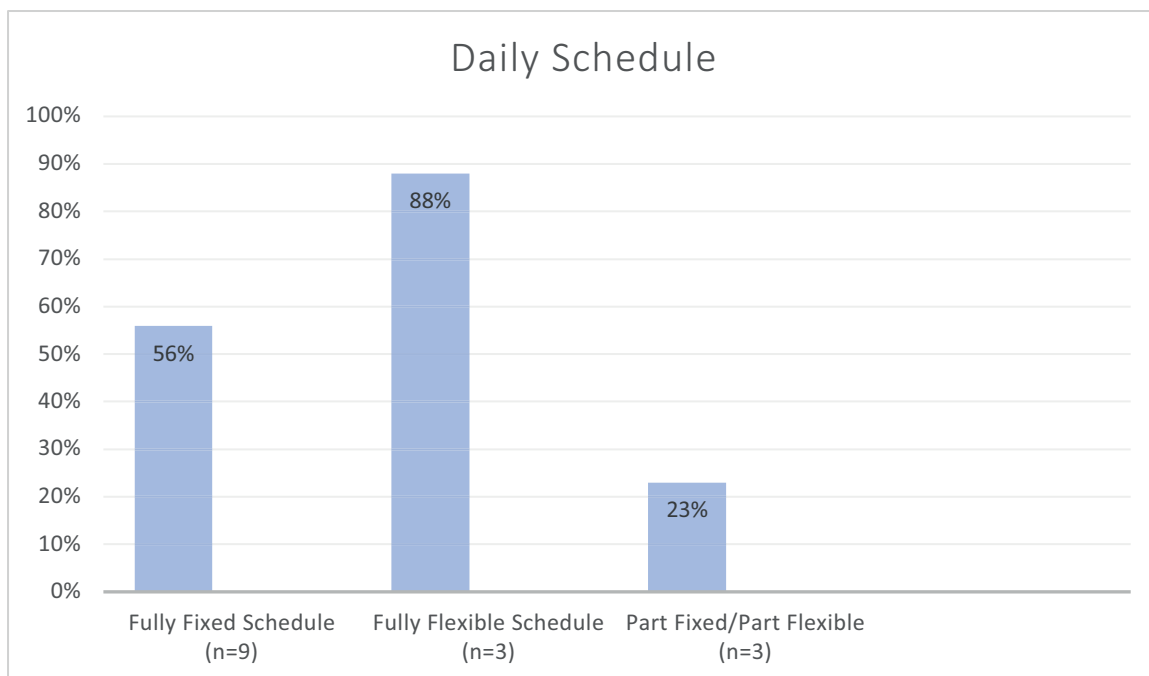


In Standard 5: Program Management and Administration, participants indicate a high level of confidence. Three of the 10 indicators have the highest confidence interval mean across all standards; “I practice the ethical principles of my profession” (4.0); “I promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility” (3.93); and, “I organize school library collections according to current library cataloging and classification principles and standards” (3.86). The average mean is 3.68. 72.1% of responses were indicated by participants in the highest confidence interval, “Describes me very well”; 26.4% were in the second-highest interval, “Describes me moderately well; 1.4% indicated “Describes me slightly well”; 0 responses indicated “Does not describe me”.



**Figure 12. Highest Confidence Interval by Years of Teaching Experience**

Years of previous teaching experience did not appear to impact the reported confidence level of participants. Participants with 0-5 years of teaching experience marked 61% of their responses at the highest level; participants with 6-10 years of experience marked 59% of responses at the highest level; and participants with 16-20 years of teaching experience marked 62% of their responses at the highest confidence level.



**Figure 13. Highest Confidence Interval by Daily Schedule Model**

Flexible schedules are those in which the school librarian controls the variation and timing of library use and instruction, whereas a fixed schedule has classes scheduled for a regular and fixed time period. Librarians whose daily routine involves a fully fixed schedule marked the highest level of confidence on 56% of responses. Those with a fully flexible schedule marked the highest level of confidence on 88% of responses. Novice school librarians who are scheduled flexibly for part of the day and fixed in their schedule for the other part of the day indicated the highest level of confidence on only 23% of responses.

As shown in Table 1, there is little variance in the level of perceived confidence across the fifty-seven items. The mean ranged from 4.0 to 3.07. Items in the top 3% indicated the ability to practice ethical principles of the profession (4.0), promote and model digital citizenship (3.93), and organize the library collection according to cataloging and classification standards (3.86). Items in the bottom 3% indicated slightly

less confidence in the ability to develop solutions for addressing physical, social, and intellectual barriers to equitable access to resources and services (3.21), promote habits of creative expression (3.21), communicate the impact of collaborative instruction on student achievement (3.21), identify stakeholders who impact the school library program (3.14), participate in curriculum development and the school improvement process (3.14), use evidence-based, action research to collect data (3.07), and support flexible, open access to library services (3.07).

Table 1  
*Survey Results by Mean*

Standard	Indicator	Mean
Program Management	I practice the ethical principles of my profession.	4.0
Program Management	I promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility.	3.93
Program Management	I organize school library collections according to current library cataloging and classification principles and standards.	3.86
Teaching for Learning	I recognize the impact of cultural influences on learning.	3.79
Literacy and Reading	I am able to develop a collection of reading and information materials in print formats that support the diverse developmental, cultural, social and linguistic needs of the students and community.	3.79
Program Management	I advocate for intellectual freedom and privacy.	3.79
Teaching for Learning	I am able to integrate technology into creative teaching and learning.	3.71
Information and Knowledge	I am able to model and communicate the legal and ethical codes of the profession.	3.71
Advocacy and Leadership	I cooperate with library colleagues for resource sharing, networking, and facilitating access to information.	3.71
Advocacy and Leadership	I plan for ongoing professional growth.	3.71
Program Management	I evaluate and select print, non-print, and digital resources using professional selection tools and evaluation criteria to develop and manage a quality collection designed to meet the diverse curricular, personal, and professional needs of students, teachers, and administrators.	3.71
Teaching for Learning	I am knowledgeable of learning styles and stages of child development.	3.64
Teaching for Learning	I am able to advocate for teaching 21st century literacy skills.	3.64
Teaching for Learning	I am able to integrate multiple literacies with content curriculum.	3.64
Literacy and Reading	I am familiar with a wide range of children's, young adult, and professional literature in multiple formats and languages to support reading for information	3.64
Literacy and Reading	I am able to use a variety of strategies to promote leisure reading and model personal enjoyment of reading.	3.64
Literacy and Reading	I am able to promote habits of lifelong reading.	3.64

Table 1, Continued  
*Survey Results by Mean*

Advocacy and Leadership	I establish connections with other libraries for resource sharing, networking, and facilitating access to information.	3.64
Program Management	I am able to communicate and collaborate with students, teachers, administrators, and community members to develop a library program that aligns resources with the school's mission.	3.64
Program Management	I am able to communicate and collaborate with students, teachers, administrators, and community members to develop a library program that aligns standards with the school's mission.	3.64
Teaching for Learning	I am able to collaborate with other educators.	3.57
Literacy and Reading	I am familiar with a wide range of children's, young adult, and professional literature in multiple formats and languages to support reading for pleasure	3.57
Literacy and Reading	I am familiar with a wide range of children's, young adult, and professional literature in multiple formats and languages to support reading for lifelong learning.	3.57
Information and Knowledge	I am able to identify and provide support for diverse student information needs.	3.57
Information and Knowledge	I am able to model multiple strategies for students, other teachers, and administrators to locate, evaluate, and ethically use information for specific purposes.	3.57
Information and Knowledge	I am able to facilitate access to information in print, non-print, and digital formats.	3.57
Information and Knowledge	I am able to design and adapt relevant learning experiences that engage students in authentic learning through the use of digital tools and resources.	3.57
Program Management	I am able to communicate and collaborate with students, teachers, administrators, and community members to develop a library program that aligns services with the school's mission.	3.57
Teaching for Learning	I am able to assess learner needs and design instruction based on assessment results.	3.5
Teaching for Learning	I am able to use a variety of instructional strategies to develop digital-age learning experiences.	3.5
Teaching for Learning	I am able to partner with classroom teachers to design and develop instruction.	3.5
Teaching for Learning	I am able to employ strategies to support critical thinking and creative processes.	3.5
Information and Knowledge	I am able to collaborate with students, other teachers, and administrators to efficiently access, interpret, and communicate information.	3.5

Table 1, Continued  
*Survey Results by Mean*

Advocacy and Leadership	I participate in professional growth and leadership opportunities through membership in library associations, attendance at professional conferences, reading professional publications, and exploring internet resources.	3.5
Teaching for Learning	I am able to use principles of effective teaching to facilitate an active, inquiry-based approach to learning.	3.46
Teaching for Learning	I am able to modify and adapt instruction to meet the needs of learners with diverse learning styles, physical and intellectual abilities and needs	3.43
Teaching for Learning	I am able to use a variety of assessment tools to develop digital-age learning experiences.	3.43
Literacy and Reading	I am able to develop a collection of reading and information materials in digital formats that support the diverse developmental, cultural, social, and linguistic needs of the students and community.	3.43
Information and Knowledge	I am able to model and facilitate the effective use of current and emerging digital tools to locate, analyze, evaluate, and use information resources to support research, learning, creating, and communicating in a digital society.	3.43
Advocacy and Leadership	I participate and collaborate as a member of a social and intellectual network of learners.	3.43
Program Management	I am able to educate the school community on the ethical use of information and ideas.	3.43
Teaching for Learning	I am able to support the learning of all students	3.36
Teaching for Learning	I am able to provide professional development to other educators in the school as it relates to library and information use.	3.36
Teaching for Learning	I am able to collaborate with other educators to plan and implement instruction of the AASL Standards for Learners.	3.36
Advocacy and Leadership	I am able to articulate the role and relationship of the school library program's impact on student academic achievement within the context of current educational initiatives.	3.36
Advocacy and Leadership	I am able to utilize evidence-based practice and information from education and library research to communicate ways in which the library program can enhance school improvement efforts.	3.36
Advocacy and Leadership	I am able to develop a plan to advocate for school library and information programs, resources, and services.	3.36

Table 1, Continued  
*Survey Results by Mean*

Literacy and Reading	I am able to collaborate with classroom teachers to reinforce a wide variety of reading instructional strategies to ensure students are able to create meaning from text.	3.29
Information and Knowledge	I am able to interpret and use data to create and share new knowledge to improve practice in the school library.	3.29
Program Management	I am able to make effective use of data and information to assess how the library program addresses the needs of the diverse community.	3.29
Teaching for Learning	I am able to communicate the impact of collaborative instruction on student achievement.	3.21
Literacy and Reading	I am able to promote habits of creative expression.	3.21
Information and Knowledge	I am able to develop solutions for addressing physical, social, and intellectual barriers to equitable access to resources and services.	3.21
Teaching for Learning	I participate in curriculum development and the school improvement process.	3.14
Advocacy and Leadership	I am able to identify stakeholders within and outside the school community who impact the school library program.	3.14
Information and Knowledge	I am able to support flexible, open access for library services.	3.07
Information and Knowledge	I am able to use evidence-based, action research to collect data.	3.07

Items in the top 10% suggest a high confidence level in practices related to professional ethics. Subjects indicated they are highly capable in advocating, communicating, and modeling the foundational principles of school librarianship defined in the five standards. Themes appearing in the top 25% of items suggest strong confidence in developing literacy and aligning resources to student needs. Items related to data-based practices and impacting programmatic change fell predominantly into the lowest 25% of results, indicating slightly lower confidence levels in participating novice school librarians. Overall, respondents reported high levels of confidence across all standard indicators.

## **Qualitative Findings**

The researcher coded and analyzed for common themes across the four focus groups and within the open-ended responses provided by the initial survey. In following with the framework of the survey and questions that emerged from the survey results as the protocol for the focus group interviews, the researcher looked at responses through the lens of each of the five standards defined in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*. Two overarching themes emerged to address the question, “What factors influence the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian?”: challenges influencing the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian and supports influencing the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian.

### **Challenges influencing the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian.**

Participants identified three unique factors that influence their self-efficacy across the five standards: role transition; time constraints; and dual roles.

*Role transition.* The novice school librarians indicated that transitioning into the role of school librarian gave them the feeling of “starting over” professionally. One participant stated, “It was just making such a huge switch from my previous role, and feeling like I was a brand new teacher again, and trying to learn a new curriculum, and a new school.” Even those with many years of teaching experience reported a sense of lost confidence, “I think the hardest thing was being a first-year teacher again after teaching for 23 years. That was awful. It wasn’t the fact that I was a librarian, it was just starting over. That was hard.” This was especially pronounced by those participants placed in a school setting serving different grade levels than in their previous teaching role. One participant who transitioned from a high school teacher to an elementary school librarian said:



It was hard that first year to really feel like I was an authority on anything when I didn't even know how an elementary school functioned . . . It's a completely different world. Secondary is a completely different world, and that was all I ever knew.

Participants across focus groups reported feeling ineffective and insecure about their new role in the school. One stated, "I'm fearful of failure and what others will think or say. I just don't feel like I have the confidence in my abilities and knowledge to lead [as a librarian]."

The novice librarians spoke to feeling overwhelmed by the responsibility of providing instruction across grade levels, content areas, and student populations, "We stepped into this role where we have to know what all the grades are working on." Transitioning from one grade level to another requires new vocabulary and knowledge of processes and procedures with which participants reported feeling uncomfortable and overwhelmed. One participant stated, "I just didn't know how elementary schools worked, and so I was like, "Someone please explain these terms to me." There's just a learning curve." Another reported a sense of disequilibrium that results from transitioning into such a different instructional role, "It was beyond exhausting . . . I never had a single moment of muscle memory. I was just forever training."

Participants in this study acknowledged the need to support literacy and reading by providing instruction and/or reinforcing basic reading skills, but felt challenged when it comes to recognizing the specific concepts that need to be taught and the direct reading instructional strategies that align with classroom curriculum:

I went from being an elementary classroom teacher to a librarian. I feel like how they teach reading and what they teach in reading has changed in just three or four years. Having some training and updates on what they're doing in reading, or

how it's being tested, or what the classroom teachers really value in reading would be helpful.

This was articulated with greater emphasis by librarians who began their teaching careers at the secondary level, and now find themselves providing instruction at the elementary level. One participant who transitioned from teaching secondary English to elementary school librarian noted that school librarians with secondary backgrounds have rarely taken coursework to support early readers, "There are definitely high school students who need reading strategies, and we probably should have been taught how to help them."

Participants reported that the transition into the role of librarian is hindered by lack of experience, insufficient understanding of student reading levels, and inadequate familiarity of titles and resources appropriate for the diverse student population. One participant stated:

The big thing for me was just figuring out books. Books for pure enjoyment, and [independent] reading books for the kids. Figuring out the reading levels since I'd never really taught reading before and those kinds of things was hard. That's still hard for me, so I keep working at that.

Statements made by participants indicated that leadership and advocacy takes time to develop when transitioning into the role of school librarian:

I didn't feel like I could be a leader in the building when I didn't really know how the building worked. [Now I'm] feeling confidence in, "Yes, I know what I'm doing. Yes, library is really important," and feeling confident to really, vocally advocate for the library.

One participant reported feeling too overwhelmed by the responsibilities of library program management to take on a leadership role in the first years:

I think it's a matter of having enough time to manage having a leadership role on top of trying to figure out a lot of new things. So I don't feel like it was "I don't know how to do [leadership and advocacy]." It was more like, "I don't want to add one more thing quite yet."

*Time constraints.* The concept of time and the impact of time constraints on the novice school librarian's feelings of self-efficacy was coded 31 times, 30% more than any other factor challenging the novice librarian. Responses indicated that novice librarians are frequently taxed with a host of duties unrelated to library program management or administration. One novice librarian described:

In the position I have at my school I feel pulled in many different directions and have several roles in addition to my teacher librarian role. I find it difficult to balance everything. I also have little flexible time when teachers are available to meet for collaboration.

Participants reported feeling frustrated as they struggle to live up to the library program management and administrative elements that are considered important, but are not afforded time in their daily schedule. One participant described her frustration:

I was in a rotation and I loved that it allowed me to see all of the students every four days. But what it didn't allow for was time to meet or do other [collaboration with] teachers . . . or any shelving, because I didn't have a secretary. And so all of my lesson planning was on my own time in the evenings and on the weekends. Anytime I ordered books it was always over some kind of holiday or long weekend.

Participants across focus groups drew a connection between the structure of their teaching schedule and their ability to collaborate. One subject stated, "Being a singular librarian, time is at a premium, and it can sometimes be difficult to collaborate and reach every group." The schedule which is imposed upon the novice school librarian dictates the amount of instructional time during which they will have access to students as well as the amount of collaborative time they can afford to classroom teachers. A fixed schedule guarantees instructional access to students, but limits collaboration:

I've been flexibly scheduled and I've done specials. And I'd say the benefit now of being in the specials rotation is that the time I have with my students is guaranteed. And where before I had to advocate for time, and I had to work really hard with teachers to get time scheduled to see students. And so now that time with them is guaranteed. But then also I'm so scheduled so rigidly now I don't

have time to do all the other things that I want to do, like plan, or shelf books, or meet with teachers. It's harder to meet with teachers when you're planning times at a different time every day.

Participants who are scheduled in a fixed rotation recognized that their access to students is limited by the length and duration of the class rotation schedule. One novice librarian described:

The most difficult thing about my library program is that the large number of students that attend our school only allows for me to see students every seven school days. Beyond the [district library] lessons, I don't have time to implement other instructional ideas.

Conversely, participants who have a flexible daily schedule expressed frustration in capturing time to secure instructional access to students. One stated, "I had to advocate for time, and I had to work really hard with teachers to get time scheduled to see students." Novice school librarians identified feeling that classroom teachers are pressured to avoid deviating from the prescribed curriculum, "Teachers do not have flexibility in their schedules to deviate from the pacing. It makes it challenging to be creative with collaborative teaching." Participants gave voice to the difficulties novice school librarians face in forming collaborative partnerships:

It's hard to share the load as a classroom teacher. There's so much they need to take care of. And so I found myself begging basically to let me be a part of [instruction] . . . I had to try to convince them, "I'm actually one of you, I've just been [in the classroom]. I can take this on." It was very frustrating. It just felt like I was constantly pleading with people to let me be a part of things.

A fixed, rigid schedule is described by one participant as having a detrimental impact to collaborative partnerships:

Obviously, we want to be collaborating with teachers and meeting with teachers. Well, if we're part of the [fixed] rotation, that's the teacher's plan time, so when am I going to get to meet with them during their plan time? You can say we can meet before and after school, but that's when [the teachers] have a bunch

of other meetings, too, and I have before-school duty. During my times that are open, I'm doing recess duty, and lunch duty, and I'm helping with guided reading, and I'm teaching computer, too.

Another participant described her frustration with a flexible schedule as one that limited her time and instructional access to students:

The first two years I was flexibly scheduled and I really, really tried to be available or in classrooms. And honestly it was beyond exhausting . . . The teachers and the administration had not had a flexibly scheduled librarian previously, and so no one could really understand what that should look like . . . but there is a ton of pressure to have your students doing [the prescribed curriculum] . . . And then as time went on, I had to be in the schedule, and ironically it alleviated the stress for me, and probably for the teachers, too, because they were probably glad I was not begging and clinging all the time to be in [their classrooms].

Novice librarians reported that access to students is often short and intermittent, making it difficult to learn student names, develop authentic connections with students, and establish routines and procedures to support positive behavior. “The first year was really rough because I did not know the kids well . . . our school only allows for me to see students every seven school days.” The amount of time allocated to the librarian’s interaction with students impacts the librarian’s ability to establish relationships with students, which participants linked to the quality of teaching and learning they are able to provide:

The most surprising piece of this new position was how difficult it is to make connections with kids to really build those relationships. Only seeing them 50 minutes once every six or more days makes that really difficult. Coming from teaching lower elementary, I am still trying to figure out my niche with 4th and 5th graders. They have been the hardest classes for me in connecting, teaching, and disciplining.

The item “I am able to promote habits of creative self-expression” fell in the bottom 3% of responses, indicating slightly less self-efficacy in this descriptor. Several

librarians across different focus groups felt ill-equipped to promote habits of creative self-expression because they do not have time to incorporate creative self-expression in the course of their limited instructional time:

Like with anything with teaching, your first year, you're like, "Okay, let's make sure the stuff that has to get taught is getting taught. Let's get our bases covered." Then [you might] have that freedom to develop more, and more, and more. It's just the time and understanding that your first year ... It's not to say it's not going to happen, but your first year, understanding that maybe that doesn't have to be your focus.

Participants explained that a fixed schedule ensures that students will have time devoted to library instruction, but narrowly defines the amount of time each student will have access to the library. While participants acknowledged that the school library offers the potential for creative and innovative learning, the limited number of student contacts caps instructional opportunities.

Novice librarians identified the time constraints of a fixed schedule as an obstacle to serving in a leadership role. This was illustrated by one librarian's example of how her fixed schedule limited her access and availability to teachers, which she perceived to negatively impact her ability to adopt a voice of leadership in her school:

We have a technology/instructional coach and our leadership roles sometimes merge. She doesn't have a fixed schedule and I do, so she has more opportunities to be in front of the teacher teams and lead programs, that otherwise I would be asked to do.

Across focus groups, participants voiced frustration over time constraints created by their schedules to adequately manage a school library program. Participants who have a fixed schedule reported that they feel less capable of meeting the demands of library program management and administration when they are scheduled from bell-to-bell with instruction:

We need time to actually maintain and sustain a library program. [Without] volunteers, I don't know that anything would ever get shelved. That's really the hard piece. I feel that we're not given adequate time to really maintain what our library programs should be.

The novice librarians reported feeling that building administrators and classroom teachers lack an understanding of the duties and responsibilities involved in school library program management, and so the librarians are often scheduled with additional support-role duties, further limiting time for essential library program duties such as shelving, collection development, and collaboration. One participant described:

There's a lot of good stuff in place for helping to communicate with the classroom teachers, but the collaboration piece, I think, is still really difficult, and I don't know that it's going to become any easier until there's some sort of change in schedules or an understanding that the librarians also have a program to run, too, which is like an entire job in of itself.

The survey item "I am able to support flexible, open access for library services" was indicated by librarians as the area in which they feel the least confident. Participant statements on access to library services centered on the school librarian's schedule and the amount of time the novice school librarian has instructional access to students. Overall, participants expressed frustration with their inability to impact open access, particularly to the physical space of the school library and to the resources provided by the school librarian themselves:

I think so many of us, just with the way our schedules are the extra expectations put on us in terms of teaching computer or doing all these other things, that I think a lot of us, including myself, feel that that open library concept is just not super possible, like we're not really given that type of time or schedule to do that.

Participants explained that scheduling factors decided on by school administrators impede access to the school library's resources and instruction, "Is it really equitable access if some students are getting to come to the library for an hour once a week, and

some students are only coming every other week? Is that equitable?” Participants do not feel as if they control any influence over such factors, “We are a small school and I have to split my time teaching different subjects. This means that the library program is not as [accessible] as other schools.”

*Dual roles.* Four of the twelve participants interviewed are assigned the dual role of elementary school librarian and computer science teacher. Novice librarians who serve in dual roles express a sense of being devalued; that being responsible for delivering library instruction and administration a library program is not enough. One dual-role librarian stated,

We had budget cuts this year, so now I have to teach library and computer, which just gives me even less time to plan and to prepare because I have to figure out two subject areas. That's been a big frustration this year, having to teach two things and learn something that I wasn't trained in.

Participants serving in dual roles reported feeling stress over balancing the demands of teaching library and computer science lessons, “I was trying to squeeze in way more than I needed to, but I was originally told I was supposed to teach [everything]. I was just trying to cram it in. It made it stressful for the students, for me.” Serving in dual roles was reported to negatively impact the amount of time novice school librarians can dedicate to program management and administration:

I don't have time to effectively lesson plan and conduct library management, such as ordering or shelving [because] I'm asked to also teach computer science in addition to the library curriculum.

The librarians serving in dual roles voiced concerns about equity and their perceived inability to provide quality instruction in their specific area of expertise. As one stated, “I have to split my time teaching library and computer, so my library program is not as detailed or as in-depth as other schools with a [dedicated librarian].”



The item “I am able to support flexible, open access for library services” was indicated by novice librarians as the area in which they have the least confidence.

Participants expressed frustration with their inability to impact open access, particularly to the physical space of the school library and to the resources provided by the school librarian, based on limitations created by dual roles:

I think so many of us, just with the way our schedules are, with the extra expectations put on us in terms of teaching computer or doing all these other things, that I think a lot of us, including myself, feel that an open library concept is just not super possible. We’re just not really given that type of time or schedule to do that.

**Supports influencing the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian.** Supports and resources generated by district level leadership were indicated 98 times as factors positively influencing the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian. Supports and resources fell into three general categories: curricular materials and resources; district-led advocacy; and training and professional learning.

*Curricular materials and resources.* Participants in this study indicated district-provided library lesson plans 29 times as a factor that positively influence the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian. One novice librarian voiced a common attitude toward the district-provided lesson plans, “The [district library] lessons are awesome our first year. If we didn't have all the lessons, then I would be trying to make it up as I go and it would be really hard.” Another novice librarian stated that instructional planning for multiple grade levels and content areas is time intensive, and that district-provided lesson plans makes her feel prepared and supported, “I like the [district library] lessons because it’s all right there, you don’t have to go and hunt down all the different things that they’re suggesting. It just makes it very neat and tidy to get your lessons ready.”

Elementary level participants indicated that district-provided library lessons positively influence their teaching and instructional partnerships. One participant stated, “The [district library] lessons at the elementary level are really helpful initially, particularly when you're not exactly sure what everyone needs to know. [They are] amazing.” The novice librarians reported that access to pre-prepared lessons saved them time during their first years and helped them to develop a sense of instructional priorities.

Another librarian described the lessons as lending purpose to her instruction, “Having something there, already ready, that you can show to teachers and administration, [to explain] here's why I do this. It's not just that [I'm] doing whatever random thing for 15 minutes.” Participants indicated that district-provided lessons served to grant legitimacy to their instruction and help to quickly build their authority and confidence as an expert in the area of school library instruction:

The [district library lessons] are really helpful, because they are very clear and organized in terms of . . . these are the things that are taught in this grade level. These are the really, really important skills that need to be taught . . . If nothing else, teach these two things to this grade, this quarter. If you can't get to anything else, you get to these two. It made it a lot easier for me to know what to communicate to teachers and to my admin, rather than just being like, "Here's a lot of big, fancy ideas." Some people like hearing the big, grand ideas, but when it comes down to it, they want to know the nuts and bolts of, "Here's what we're doing. Here's how this impacts student learning.”

Curriculum pacing charts provided by district library leaders were recognized across focus groups as valuable resources that support novice librarians by identifying the scope and sequence of grade-level instruction. The detailed pacing chart for grades kindergarten through fifth grade provides a comprehensive map of the themes, skills, and objectives taught at each grade level and in each content area. The pacing chart was indicated 10 times as a factor that positively affects the novice school librarian’s self-efficacy, “I still use the integrated pacing charts constantly to look back and see what the

classroom teachers are teaching at a certain time of year so I can find ways to offer collaboration or ways to connect what I'm teaching." The pacing chart helps novice school librarians to quickly develop understanding of the instructional focus in each grade level and content area:

The pacing chart really helps because then I can look at that and say, "this group is going to do their research this quarter". So it helped me prepare more. Or "I need to work a lot closer with this group of teachers for research purposes." Especially that first year when I didn't know when everyone was going to be doing their stuff.

These resources helped novice librarians boost their understanding of curriculum, which was reported by participants to build professional confidence and positively impact self-efficacy in teaching for learning. One participant commented:

I'd say the integrated pacing guides [were most helpful supporting instruction]. I still use those constantly to look back and see what the classroom teachers are teaching at a certain time of year so I can find ways to offer collaboration, or ways to connect what I'm teaching.

On seven occasions, participants made a connection between collaborative partnerships and access to an integrated curriculum pacing chart. Novice school librarians indicated that they are more likely to experience success as collaborators if they feel confident in their ability to connect to specific and timely curricular goals:

We have access to their curriculum through the pacing chart. It gives us the opportunity to be ahead of them by saying, "Oh, we know that you're doing rocks and minerals. Can we help?" . . . Just by having that in front of us and being an extra step ahead of them and giving the idea to the classroom teachers first, opens up the conversation instead of just waiting and hoping that they ask you.

Participant librarians indicated that they feel more confident and supported in designing their own instruction to match classroom-based instruction when they have the ability to anticipate curricular themes, goals, and objectives. The curriculum pacing chart sets the

foundation for the school librarian to reach out to the classroom teacher to instigate collaborative partnerships:

The integrated pacing chart is very helpful. It provides a quick and easy way to access exactly what students are working on in their classrooms. It also is a conversation starter with classroom teachers, ie, “I notice that you are learning about \_\_\_\_ in the classroom, can I suggest some resources that will tie in nicely?”

*District-led advocacy.* Participants described the positive impact of district level advocacy efforts on their school library programs:

The [district library leaders] talk to the administration about what we have to offer. They have a voice and an opportunity to speak to administration district-wide and so they set the stage for us. Then they even tell us, “Hey, we’ve already shared this with your administration, be aware.” And that gives me the confidence to feel like, okay, I can go ahead and do this . . . I appreciate that the library media services folks do some advocating before we get there.

Novice librarians reflected that advocating for their library program was easier when supported by district level library leaders. One participant provided the example:

This year [district library leaders] are giving us newsletter content that we could put out in our own newsletters. I appreciate having those kinds of things provided for us and reminders like, “This is a way you could advocate.” Just the reminder and the resources make a huge difference.

The novice librarians reported that support from district library leaders also positively affected their confidence in using data to advocate for their library programs to stakeholders and the broader community. One novice librarian said:

[District library leaders] are always giving us data to share or important things to advocate for what we do. If anybody questions our program, we have answers, we have our standards, we can show them [data] and defend what we’re doing.

Participants reported that district-level advocacy in support of promoting creative expression encourages novice school librarians to incorporate creative expression into their school library instructional program:

I think [creative expression] is something that happens already and I'm thankful for it. The library [district leaders] set the stage for us and make our administration aware. That gives me the confidence to feel like, okay, I can go ahead and do this . . . And that's not always a shared vision. So I appreciate that the library media services folks do some advocating in front of us, I guess. I love that.

*Training and professional learning.* Continuing coursework to complete their school library certification during their first years of librarianship was reported by participants as a factor that positively impacted their practice. One participant described:

While I was working in the library and being a librarian for the first time, I was also still engaged in this really deep, professional development, and master's work on it. At first I was worried that it'd be too much, or I haven't learned enough yet to actually do this job, but I think it actually was really helpful to be learning about it while I was doing it, because I was able to see, immediately, all the applications to it, which from going through my teaching program in undergrad, which was not the case . . . We learned all this theory and this other stuff, and then you finally get put in a classroom, and you're like, "Wait a minute, what?" So I think it actually helped me, doing [my school library] classes while I was in my first few years.

Participants reported feeling confident that they could apply what they were learning in coursework and naturally more connected to other librarians in the district who were also in their classes.

District-led professional learning was indicated 43 times as a factor impacting the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian. Participants reported that a district-organized support system minimizes the isolation a novice school librarian may experience in their new role:

I'd say especially my first year having the support of the [district library] coaches and the leadership at district office made a huge difference . . . [the support] made me feel a lot more capable, and if I had questions come up, it was easy to find someone that could help with it.

Participants across focus groups reported that they benefit from coaching support especially in their first year of librarianship when the coach provides timely and individualized knee-to-knee training throughout the school year. Multiple participants voiced an appreciation for individualized training according to specific program needs, questions, and challenges. One participant stated:

When I started as a librarian I had incredible support from the team at the district office. Training was held in the summer to help me and other new librarians get acclimated. It was just enough to get me started but not too much that it overwhelmed. Follow-up training was given as individual coaching sessions throughout the year. Topics seemed to be timed perfectly to what was needed each month. Whenever I had a question, it was quickly answered.

Participants described coaching as especially beneficial when organized to train and support specific skills at the time of year when the skill is first needed, as opposed to front-loading training at the beginning of the school year with all the skills a novice librarian might need throughout the year:

There was a lot of new information, but I didn't think it was too overwhelming because throughout the year [the library coaches] would come in once a month and give you what you needed at that moment, so you didn't have to learn it all at once.

Participants reported a sense of greater self-efficacy when they have access to a library coach to quickly answer questions, request feedback, and provide job-embedded training. One novice librarian described:

In our training we're just . . . overwhelmed with support and faith. [The library coaches] went over everything with us and they were always willing to come in if we had any questions. They'd come in and help you. You never ever felt afraid to ask a question on how to do something because someone would always be there to help you and show you how it's done because they just . . . want us to be our best.

Participants reported that the coaching they received in their first years helped to build confidence and self-efficacy in leadership and advocacy. One librarian stated, “I’m pretty passive by nature, [the coaches] knew that. They encouraged me to join committees, lead things, and they helped to facilitate that [leadership] role.” Another told how the district coaches helped her to build her image as a building leader early in her career. “The coaches the first year showed me how to be a leader within the building and would show me things that I needed to pass onto other people. So I looked like a leader the very first year.”

Access to a mentor was also reported by the novice school librarians as a positive factor impacting their first year of school librarianship. Participants indicated that their mentor provided a system of support in which they could comfortably ask questions and seek advice from a colleague who shares similar professional circumstances. One participant shared:

The thing that [helped most with instruction] is that mentor piece because when I did it, I got to watch [my mentor] for half a day, which was great. And then she got to watch me for half a day and then I got her feedback, which was amazing. And then together we got to go watch [another librarian] for half a day. And that was huge.

When given the opportunity to visit each other’s school library and observe their teaching, the mentor and mentee both benefited from sharing ideas and reciprocating feedback regarding instructional and programmatic decision making. Participants stated that having a mentor reduced anxiety and provided an initial support network for the novice school librarian:

I had a mentor, and before I even started, she helped me in my library. It was huge. It was so helpful because it was terrifying for me initially, to go from the classroom to a library. It was really different. So, I felt like that was really good.

The positive effect of strong district-level library leadership was communicated repeatedly among participants across focus groups. One stated, “I felt completely supported and encouraged by all the district library staff which gave me confidence as I was just starting.” Another said, “There was incredible support, especially when I was getting started. Now I still feel connected in that way so that I can still call with anything I need, or email.” The support received from district library leaders was described by participants as personalized and genuine:

There was a definite understanding [by district library leaders] that everyone's situation is different, and how everyone's going to work within their school, and within their staff, and with their students was going to be different. [They] really supported the strengths and individual journey of each person, which I really appreciate.

Participants credited district library leadership with providing whatever supports and resources the individual librarian needed to feel successful:

I just think that the [district level] communication is very good. I feel that we know what our responsibilities are. We know what the expectations are. Whatever [district library leaders] need to give us to be able to do our jobs, they get to us.

The novice librarians reported feeling that strong district leadership helped them to feel more confident and professional in their new role of school librarian. One stated:

What helped me the most was honestly just having what I felt was really good and genuine support from the people around me, specifically everyone really in [district] library services. I never felt that I was being judged for not knowing something. I've also felt that I had a lot of positive support, and if I wanted to try something new, I was given the freedom to do what I felt was best. I was treated and respected as a professional [by district library leaders] right off the bat. I really appreciate that, and that helped build my confidence. They were just really good at giving good support and feedback when I would try something new.

Participants also connected district-provided professional development to their capacity to lead and advocate their library programs. “I think the support from leadership



has been tremendous in my ability to provide instruction for my library students. They provide all librarians with continuing education to help us become effective within our library programs.” The impact was reported to be especially positive when the professional learning provided regular access to the novice librarian’s network of peers. One participant stated, “At our PLC meetings we are given so many tools and ideas from our leaders and our peers. I always leave those meetings excited to try something new and proud to feel all of the support we get.”

### **Conclusions**

Under the best circumstances, novice school librarians begin their careers confident in the skills, knowledge, and dispositions defined by AASL as necessary to be qualified as a school librarian. However, the actual practice of school librarianship depends heavily on the culture and context in which the novice librarian is immersed. It was clear from the results of the survey that participants in this research have a high level of confidence in the standards defined in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians* (2010a) as they begin their career as school librarian. By examining the lived experiences of the novice school librarian through open-ended focus group interviews, the researcher discovered that despite indications of high levels of confidence, novice school librarians experience challenges that influence feelings of self- efficacy in their role, including the complexities of transitioning into the role of school librarian, time and schedule constraints, and frustrations associated with serving in dual roles. Despite these challenges, participants in every focus group spoke earnestly about specific supports that have made a significant positive impact on their feelings of success and capability during their first years of school librarianship, including access to district-provided curriculum materials, district-led advocacy efforts, and timely training

and professional learning, tailored to the needs of the individual and readily accessible by the novice school librarian.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions

Data from more than 22 statewide school library impact studies suggest that “the most substantial and consistent finding is a positive relationship between full-time, qualified school librarians and scores on standards-based language arts, reading, and writing tests, regardless of student demographics and school characteristics” (Lance & Kachel, 2018, para. 4). Strong school library programs can make a positive impact on student achievement at all grade levels, but effective school library programs depend on school librarians with the capacity to lead and administrate library programs that reflect the core values of contemporary school librarianship. The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed-methods research study was to assess the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions as defined in the 2010 *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians* in order to help answer the research question: What factors influence the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian? This chapter includes a discussion of findings related to the themes that emerged from analysis of the online survey and focus group interviews, including factors that negatively affect self-efficacy, factors that positively affect self-efficacy, and the implications that may be valuable to district library leaders.

### Discussion of Results

The results of this research suggest that new school librarians begin their tenure with a high level of confidence regarding the role and responsibilities involved in school librarianship. No single element in the standards defined by the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians* (2010a) was significantly low, and all participants rated their level of confidence in the upper two confidence intervals in over

85% of responses. These findings indicate that the novice school librarians in this study felt well-prepared by preparation programs as they began their work of school librarians. At the same time, interview responses indicate that the transition into school librarianship is hard, even for those librarians with years of classroom teaching experience. These findings support the literature regarding the development of professional identity independent of formal education or training. While skills, knowledge, and dispositions can be taught by preparation programs to establish the foundations of practice, professional identity, and thus the development of professional self-efficacy, evolves through contextualization of those skills in professional practice (Smit, Fritz, & Mabalane, 2010; Tan, Van der Molen, & Schmidt, 2017).

**Factors negatively influencing the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian.**

As participants considered cultural, environmental, and program factors that made them feel less confident or capable of performing their role as defined in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School of School Librarians* (2010a), common responses emerged around three themes: increased responsibilities created by serving in multiple roles in addition to school librarian; time constraints constructed by teaching schedules; and the discomfort associated with transitioning into an unfamiliar role.

*Serving in multiple roles.* Interestingly, the challenges voiced by participants are not factors over which the novice librarians exercise control. Teaching schedules and job duties are most frequently determined by administrators, who often lack an understanding of the role of the contemporary librarian and may fail to recognize or appreciate the skill set of the school librarian (Levitov, 2013, Church 2008). This was indicated by several participants as they referenced the many non-library related duties they are assigned, such as cafeteria and recess duty, substituting for absent classroom teachers, and being assigned

additional roles such as computer science teacher or gifted facilitator. As one participant stated, “That first year in the elementary library [was] really difficult because my vision for the library didn't match my administrators' vision for the library.” Often, participants named lack of adequate time as a key factor that limited both instructional time with students and the novice’s ability to develop, manage, and lead a school library program consistent with the expectations and standards they developed in their professional coursework.

*Time constraints constructed by teaching schedules.* Participants recognized that the ability of the school librarian to build trust and develop strong relationships with teachers and school administrators is central to developing the role of instructional partner (Johnston, 2012; Shumaker, 2012; Steele & Foote, 2015). This emerged as a common frustration of the new librarian, who frequently reported that rigid scheduling and time constraints denied them the opportunity to develop collaborative partnerships with teachers:

We want to be collaborating with teachers and meeting with teachers, but if we're part of the [fixed] rotation, that's the teacher's plan time. When am I going to get to meet with them? During my times that are open, I'm doing recess duty, and lunch duty, and I'm helping with guided reading, or I'm teaching computer, too.

Authentic instructional partnerships and meaningful collaborations are very difficult to establish when the novice school librarian and classroom teachers are so rigidly scheduled as to prohibit synergistic planning, instruction, and assessment. This is detrimental to the novice librarian, as “[the] presence of strong collegial relationships between teachers is a crucial enabler for [librarian] teacher leaders because these relationships allow for sharing of ideas, working toward common goals, supporting one another, and guidance through a common sense of purpose” (Johnston, 2012, p. 27).

*Discomfort associated with transitioning into an unfamiliar role.* Reflective of the literature, participants in all focus groups referenced the difficulties associated with transitioning into a new role as complex as school librarian (Frye, 2014; Mardis, 2013; Schoffner, 2011). While survey results indicated that preservice coursework provided a high level of confidence in the foundational skills, knowledge, and dispositions required in contemporary librarianship, participants voiced frustration in their endeavors to establish themselves as a contemporary school librarian. “I think the hardest thing was just [feeling like] a first year teacher after teaching for 23 years. That was awful. It wasn't really the fact that I was a librarian, it was just starting over. That was hard.” This was reported by participants to be especially challenging for those librarians new to teaching and those who have moved between primary and secondary levels. Despite previous teaching experience, despite high-quality preservice training, many novice school librarians feel overwhelmed as they confront the complexities of designing a library program in which they serve a wide range of developmental stages, diverse learning needs, and cultural influences across grade levels and content areas, schoolwide. As one participant aptly stated, “It’s a completely different world.”

**Factors positively influencing the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian.**

Throughout the course of the focus group interviews, participant responses focused more on factors that aided their transition than on those that impeded their feelings of success. While results align with the literature contending that time-on-the-job experience is key to gaining self-efficacy as a school librarian, this research indicates that certain specific supports provide advantages to novice librarians that increase their confidence and positively impact their feelings of self-efficacy, including access to district-provided curriculum materials, district-led advocacy, and specific, personalized,

and well-timed professional learning (Mardis, 2007). The common denominator between these factors is their source of origin; all three factors are born from the organization and efforts of district-level library supervisors. As one participant stated, “Overall, [district library] leadership is so helpful. I feel that things are communicated and we know what our responsibilities are. We know what the expectations are. Whatever we need to be able to do our jobs, they get it to us.” Participants in this research voiced repeatedly the benefits provided to them by district library leaders who have a vision and mission based on contemporary school librarianship and the resources to support school librarians through curriculum resources, advocacy, and professional learning, which supports previous literature describing the important work of district library supervisors as, “[a]dvocating for library programs and developing a vision and mission for the district’s [library] program” (Traska, 2014, p. 36).

*Access to district-provided curriculum materials.* The novice school librarians in this study cited district-provided library lessons and curriculum pacing guides as specific resources that significantly affected their self-efficacy in planning and delivering essential library instruction. The *AASL Position Statement on the School Library Supervisor* (2012) states that a necessary support from district leadership is to provide context and resources in order to implement “the objectives of a visionary school library program for the district” (para. 2). These resources provided the novice librarians a substantial advantage in establishing meaningful collaborations with classroom teachers and set a solid foundation for building instructional partnerships. Said one participant, “District library media leadership provides phenomenal support and resources to carry out collaboration and implementation of instruction of the AASL standards and in all curricular areas.” The novice school librarians recognized the complexity of mastering

the content knowledge and pedagogy of teaching multiple grade levels and content areas, but reported feeling more capable of designing and implementing instruction that combined classroom content with AASL learning standards because of the district-provided lessons and pacing guides.

***District-led advocacy.*** In this study, participants in all focus groups reported feeling more confident in advocating and making decisions for their school library program because of advocacy efforts and messaging that originated from the district level. Because messaging about contemporary school librarianship was already reaching school administrators, the novice librarians felt more justified in adopting and communicating a vision and mission for their school library program that aligns with their recent professional training and the standards of contemporary librarianship. “The [district library leaders] have a voice and an opportunity to speak to administration district-wide, and so they set the stage for us . . . And that gives me the confidence to feel like I can go ahead and do this.” This aligns with the 2012 Lilead survey on the role of district-level library supervisors which found advocacy to be an extremely important function in support of building-level school librarians (Weeks et al., 2017). Novice librarians who reported feeling overwhelmed with the daily demands of teaching and managing a library program did not feel as if they had the time or expertise to devote towards advocating for change or building support for the school library program. This study confirms that district-led advocacy efforts can provide messaging, facilitate data gathering, and lend confidence to the novice librarian until they have gained the expertise to begin generating their own advocacy efforts.

***Timely and personalized professional learning.*** The novice school librarians in this study spoke most passionately about the positive impact that library coaches and



mentors had in shaping their first years of practice and preparing them to be successful at each step along the way. Reflective of Sanford's work on the construction of the novice school librarian's professional identity (2013), the relationship between novice librarians and the district coaches and mentors was critical in helping the new librarian decide what aspects of school librarianship should be valued, asserted, rejected, and/or negotiated during their first years as school librarian. The coaches and mentors often anticipated and pre-taught to the novice librarian's needs, empowering them to side-step common problems and to feel and be seen as competent professionals; "They kind of gave us what we needed at that moment we needed it." In a role where the school librarians are isolated from other like-positioned colleagues, the novice librarians reported feeling as though they always had access to someone who would quickly and expertly answer their library-specific questions. While some participants admitted to feeling frustrated and overwhelmed at times, participants in all focus groups felt that district-level coaching and professional development helped them to overcome knowledge gaps, to identify processes and procedures that helped them develop efficiencies in their program management, and cast emphasis on ways in which they could develop their school library program to best reflect the standards of contemporary school librarianship. As one librarian stated, they were "overwhelmed with faith and support".

***District library leadership.*** Historically, scant scholarly literature exists that examines the influence of the district library leader on the success of the school librarian. The emerging focus of the district library leader in this research study demonstrates that district leadership and support are factors that can significantly affect the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian. District library leaders can shape the quality and nature of school library instruction. They hold the potential to facilitate better

collaboration and instructional partnerships. District library leaders have the opportunity to advocate for school library programs and influence the school administrator's vision and mission of contemporary librarianship in support of the new school librarian.

Finally, district library leadership can set up scaffolds and support systems so that novice school librarians who “[don't] have an ounce of muscle memory” can be successful enough and confident enough in leading their school library programs until the point where their foundation of skills, knowledge, and dispositions is strong enough for the novice librarian to lead and administrate a school library program that manifests the central values of contemporary school librarianship.

### **Emerging Professional Identity**

Like new teachers, new school librarians often struggle with issues of identity, responsibility, and conflicting expectations (Schoffner, 2011). The emphasis on the impact of coaching and mentoring in this study is consistent with the literature on the development of professional identity. Participants voiced a significant connection between professional identity and social relationships (Tan, Van der Molen, & Schmidt, 2017). The influence and perceptions of others is critical in the development of professional identity (Smit, Fritz, & Mabalane, 2010). This was voiced repeatedly by participants in statements about the positive impact of coaches, mentors, and personalized support from district library leaders. Relationships between the novice school librarians and their library coaches and mentors made a significant difference in the development of their professional identity. These relationships helped the novice librarians feel like professionals; they bolstered their confidence even when their skill set was developing:

Just having people available at the district office to talk through things helped me to be a better leader in my school. I would have this idea in my head and I just need somebody to confirm that it's a great idea or to help me tweak it. That gave me more confidence.

The coaches and mentors provided resources and tools that helped the novice librarians present themselves as experts in front of their school colleagues, even while they were still shaping their perception of their new professional identities within the role of contemporary librarianship. School librarianship is an isolated role. “People become teachers through a complex interplay of social and professional relationship, which is essentially a collaborative and collegial process that cannot be undertaken in isolation” (Williams, 2013, p. 31). Meaningful relationships between novice school librarians, coaches, mentors, and district level leaders serve an important part in helping the new school librarian negotiate meaning within their role, understand their role from a broader professional perspective, and develop a vision for their role within the institution.

### **Implications and Recommendations for Further Research**

Novice school librarians in this study feel confident that their preservice training prepared them well in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions defined in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians* (2010). Despite this confidence, they also demonstrate the gap that exists between skills developed formally through coursework and the development of the school librarian’s professional identity, which critically influences the model school librarianship they will adopt in practice. As one participant stated, the standards represent what the novice librarian “can” do, not necessarily what they will choose or be granted the opportunity to do in the actual practice of librarianship.

There are a number of practical implications of the present research. The major implication involves the potential impact of district level library leaders. In order to quickly assimilate and establish themselves as contemporary school librarians, novice school librarians substantially benefit from frontline training and professional supports,

which can be effectively prescribed and delivered through district library supervisors. District library supervisors must focus on enhancing the self-efficacy beliefs of novice librarians through allocation of resources and by providing timely professional development that is personalized to the individual needs of the novice school librarian. In order to effectively move the librarian forward on the continuum from novice to experts, these supports must be directly connected to the actual work of school librarianship; not theoretical, but practical application that involves critical analysis and decision making within the standards defined for contemporary librarianship.

With the exception of the 2012 Lilead survey of district level library supervisors, the most recent studies examining the impact of district level library leadership were last reported in the 1990's, and no recent studies exist that examine the influence of district level library leadership on the development of novice librarians (Weeks et al, 2017). Participants in this study overwhelmingly named district-provided supports and resources as factors that had a considerable positive effect on their feelings of self-efficacy. More research is recommended to align the significance of district-level leadership to the overall success and institutional security of the school-based library program.

This research study adds to the body of research addressing the training and professional support needs of novice school librarians and identifies factors that impact novice school librarians in a large, well-resourced district. However, statistics indicate that many librarians serve in roles where they are isolated in their schools and districts (Pasco, 2011). Additional research would benefit the field by exploring how novice school librarians gain access to high-quality curriculum resources, advocacy support, or

frontline training and professional development when district-level library leadership is not supported or resourced.

This study also casts light on the significance of the way in which instructional time is scheduled and allocated to the self-efficacy of the novice school librarian. Both fixed and flexible schedules present challenges to the librarian's ability to carve out face-to-face instruction and to establish collaborative partnerships, and the layering of additional roles on top of school library instruction and program management forces the librarian to provide fewer services and more limited access. Building leaders and district administrators who are aware of the effects of scheduling decisions on the librarian's ability to meet contemporary school library standards can better leverage the school librarian to serve students, teachers, and school communities. The field of school librarianship would benefit from further research investigating the effect of the school librarian's schedule on student access to resources, proficiency in reading, and overall mastery of information literacy skills.

### **Conclusion**

Effective school library programs led by strong school librarians make a very real difference in the academic success of students. Ensuring that novice school librarians are supported in developing professional identities that nurture self-efficacy and cultivate contemporary librarianship is essential to the overall impact of the school library program. Effective school librarians are too valuable of a resource to be left to their own devices for learning the intricacies of their work. Novice school librarians are more likely to emerge as strong contemporary librarians when provided supports to build a strong professional identity and sense of self-efficacy. This is more likely to be accomplished through intentional structuring of supports and resources by district level

library supervisors who have a mission and vision for strong school library programs. As one novice school librarian poignantly reflected:

I think it's just the way our [district library] program is set up. The support I received helps keep the fun and joy in this job, and that's why I just loved it from day one, and haven't ever stopped. . . It's something that I'm constantly excited to get better at, and I think that because we have things in place that support you in constantly getting better, that I always feel that it's a possibility for me.

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## Appendix A: Survey

### Survey of perceived confidence in the *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians (2010a)*

Q1 You are being asked to take part in a research study about factors that impact novice librarians. You are being asked to take part in this study because you were hired by the district as a school librarian between the years of 2016-2018. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

Principal Researcher: Chris Haeffner

The purpose of this study is to identify factors that impact the self-efficacy of novice school librarians. The questionnaire will ask you to consider how well you identify with each of the standards included in the 2010 *ALA/AASL Standards for the Initial Preparation of School Librarians* and should take around fifteen minutes to complete.

The records of this study will be kept private, and the researcher will not have access to the identity of the respondents. Research records will be kept on a secure server; only the researcher will have access to the anonymous records. No identifying information will be made public in any sort of report resulting from this study.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you are ever uncomfortable, you are free not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide not to participate or to skip some questions, it will not affect your current or future relationship with the researcher. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the researcher, Chris Haeffner or the UNO Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (402) 559-6463 or access their website at <https://www.unmc.edu/irb/>.

Electronic Consent: Please select your choice below. Clicking on the "Agree" button indicates that

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate in the online survey

Agree

Disagree

*Skip To: End of Survey If You are being asked to take part in a research study about environmental and cultural factors tha... = Disagree*

**Q2 Standard 1: Teaching for Learning Candidates are effective teachers who demonstrate knowledge of learners and learning and who model and promote collaborative planning, instruction in multiple literacies, and inquiry-based learning, enabling members of the learning community to become effective users and creators of ideas and information. Candidates design and implement instruction that engages students' interests.**

	Describes me very well (4)	Describes me moderately well (3)	Describes me slightly well (2)	Does not describe me (1)
I am knowledgeable of learning styles and stages of child development. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I recognize the impact of cultural influences on learning. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to assess learner needs and design instruction based on assessment results. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to support the learning of all students. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to modify and adapt instruction to meet the needs of learners with diverse learning styles, physical and intellectual abilities and needs. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to use principles of effective teaching to facilitate an active, inquiry-based approach to learning. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to use a variety of instructional strategies to develop digital-age learning experiences. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to use a variety of assessment tools to develop digital-age learning experiences. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to partner with classroom teachers to design and develop instruction. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to communicate the impact of collaborative instruction on student achievement. (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to collaborate with other educators. (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to provide professional development to other educators in the school as it relates to library and information use. (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I participate in curriculum development and the school improvement process. (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I am able to collaborate with other educators to plan and implement instruction of the AASL Standards for Learners. (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to advocate for teaching 21st century literacy skills. (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to integrate multiple literacies with content curriculum. (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to integrate technology into creative teaching and learning. (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to employ strategies to support critical thinking and creative processes. (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Q3 What cultural, environmental, or program factors positively impact your ability to effectively provide instruction for PK-12 students in a school library setting?

Q4 What cultural, environmental, or program factors negatively impact your ability to effectively provide instruction for PK-12 students in a school library setting?

**Q5 Standard 2: Literacy and Reading Candidates promote reading for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment. Candidates are aware of major trends in children's and young adult literature and select reading materials in multiple formats to support reading for information, reading for pleasure, and reading for lifelong learning. Candidates use a variety of strategies to reinforce classroom reading instruction to address the diverse needs and interests of all readers.**

	Describes me very well (4)	Describes me moderately well (3)	Describes me slightly well (2)	Does not describe me (1)
I am familiar with a wide range of children's, young adult, and professional literature in multiple formats and languages to support <i>reading for information</i> . (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am familiar with a wide range of children's, young adult, and professional literature in multiple formats and languages to support <i>reading for pleasure</i> . (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am familiar with a wide range of children's, young adult, and professional literature in multiple formats and languages to support <i>reading for lifelong learning</i> . (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to use a variety of strategies to promote leisure reading and model personal enjoyment of reading. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to promote habits of creative expression. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to promote habits of lifelong reading. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to develop a collection of reading and information materials in <b>print formats</b> that support the diverse developmental, cultural, social, and linguistic needs of the students and community. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to develop a collection of reading and information materials in <b>digital formats</b> that support the diverse developmental, cultural, social, and linguistic needs of the students and community. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to collaborate with classroom teachers to reinforce a wide variety of reading instructional strategies to ensure students are able to create meaning from text. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q6 What cultural, environmental, or program factors positively impact your ability to effectively promote reading for learning, personal growth and enjoyment to PK-12 students in a school library setting?

Q7 What cultural, environmental, or program factors negatively impact your ability to effectively promote reading for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment to PK-12 students in a school library setting?

**Q8 Standard 3: Information and Knowledge Candidates model and promote ethical, equitable access to and use of physical, digital, and virtual collections of resources. Candidates demonstrate knowledge of a variety of information sources and services that support the needs of the diverse learning community. Candidates demonstrate the use of a variety of research strategies to generate knowledge to improve practice.**

	Describes me very well (4)	Describes me moderately well (3)	Describes me slightly well (2)	Does not describe me (1)
I am able to identify and provide support for diverse student information needs. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to model multiple strategies for students, other teachers, and administrators to locate, evaluate, and ethically use information for specific purposes. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to collaborate with students, other teachers, and administrators to efficiently access, interpret, and communicate information. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to support flexible, open access for library services. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to develop solutions for addressing physical, social, and intellectual barriers to equitable access to resources and services. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to facilitate access to information in print, non-print, and digital formats. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to model and communicate the legal and ethical codes of the profession. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to design and adapt relevant learning experiences that engage students in authentic learning through the use of digital tools and resources. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to model and facilitate the effective use of current and emerging digital tools to locate, analyze, evaluate, and use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

information resources to support research, learning, creating, and communicating in a digital society. (9)

I am able to use evidence-based, action research to collect data. (10)

I am able to interpret and use data to create and share new knowledge to improve practice in the school library. (11)

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 What cultural, environmental, or program factors positively impact your ability to effectively provide information and knowledge skills for PK-12 students in a school library setting?

Q10 What cultural, environmental, or program factors negatively impact your ability to effectively provide information and knowledge skills for PK-12 students in a school library setting?

**Q11 Standard 4: Advocacy and Leadership Candidates advocate for dynamic school library programs and positive learning environments that focus on student learning and achievement by collaborating and connecting with teachers, administrators, librarians, and the community. Candidates are committed to continuous learning and professional growth and lead professional development activities for other educators. Candidates provide leadership by articulating ways in which school libraries contribute to student achievement.**

	Describes me very well (11)	Describes me moderately well (12)	Describes me slightly well (14)	Does not describe me (15)
I establish connections with other libraries for resource sharing, networking, and facilitating access to information. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I cooperate with library colleagues for resource sharing, networking, and facilitating access to information. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I participate and collaborate as a member of a social and intellectual network of learners. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I participate in professional growth and leadership opportunities through	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



<p>membership in library associations, attendance at professional conferences, reading professional publications, and exploring Internet resources. (4)</p>				
<p>I plan for ongoing professional growth. (5)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I am able to articulate the role and relationship of the school library program's impact on student academic achievement within the context of current educational initiatives. (6)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I am able to utilize evidence-based practice and information from education and library research to communicate ways in which the library program can enhance school improvement efforts. (7)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I am able to identify stakeholders within and outside the school community who impact the school library program. (8)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I am able to develop a plan to advocate for school library and information programs, resources, and services. (9)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Q12 What cultural, environmental, or program factors positively impact your ability to advocate and lead in a PK-12 school library setting?

Q13 What cultural, environmental, or program factors negatively impact your ability to advocate and lead in a school library setting?

**Q14 Standard 5: Program Management and Administration Candidates plan, develop, implement, and evaluate school library programs, resources, and services in support of the mission of the library program within the school according to the ethics and principles of library science, education, management, and administration.**

	Describes me very well (4)	Describes me moderately well (3)	Describes me slightly well (2)	Does not describe me (1)
I evaluate and select print, non-print, and digital resources using professional selection tools and evaluation criteria to develop and manage a quality collection designed to meet the diverse curricular, personal, and professional needs of students, teachers, and administrators. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I organize school library collections according to current library cataloging and classification principles and standards. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I practice the ethical principles of my profession. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I advocate for intellectual freedom and privacy. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to educate the school community on the ethical use of information and ideas. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to communicate and collaborate with students, teachers, administrators, and community members to develop a library program that aligns <b>resources</b> with the school's mission. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to communicate and collaborate with students, teachers, administrators, and community members to develop a library program that aligns <b>services</b> with the school's mission. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I am able to communicate and collaborate with students, teachers, administrators, and community members to develop a library program that aligns **standards** with the school's mission. (9)

I am able to make effective use of data and information to assess how the library program addresses the needs of the diverse community. (10)

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Q15 What cultural, environmental, or program factors positively impact your ability to effectively manage and administrate in a PK-12 school library setting?

Q16 What cultural, environmental, or program factors negatively impact your ability to effectively manage and administrate in a PK-12 school library setting?

Q17 How many years did you teach before becoming a librarian? (Please give response in numerals)

Q18 At this time, do you have a provisional or full endorsement?

Provisional

Full Endorsement

Q19 At the time you started as a librarian, did you have a provisional or full endorsement?

Provisional

Full Endorsement

Q20 Approximately how many students attend your school?

- 0-249
- 250-499
- 500-749 (6)
- 750-999 (7)
- 1000 or more (8)

Q21 Are you on a fixed or flexible library teaching schedule?

- Fixed, full day
- Fixed, part day; Flexible, part day
- Flexible, full day

Q22 Does your school receive Title I funding?

- Yes
  - No
-

## Appendix B: Focus Group Protocol

What do you notice about the survey results? Does anything stick out or surprise you? Why?

As a new librarian, what factors helped to build your confidence to lead a library program?

What specific supports or resources were most helpful in:

- Helping you become a better advocate and leader for your library program?
- Supporting your ability to collaborate with teachers?
- Planning and delivering instruction as a new librarian?
- Teaching research and information skills to your students?

What benefits and challenges does your daily schedule present?

What specific kinds of training and professional learning helped you most as a new librarian?

What did you feel were the biggest frustrations in being a new librarian? What helped you work through those frustrations?

In starting your first library program, what would better equip you:

- To take on a leadership role in your school?
- To reinforce reading instruction and reading strategies?
- To use data to make decisions about your program?
- To be an effective advocate for equitable access for all your students?
- To promote creative expression in your library?