Debbie Phillips

MLIS 5060

Library Policies

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| **Library Media Specialist Job Descriptions** | |
| [Saint Mary’s County Public Schools](http://www.smcps.org/lms/library-media-specialist-roles-and-responsibilities) | The focus of this job description is library media specialist in a leadership role, as well as collaboration with stakeholders. There is also a strong emphasis on the use of technology as a tool for promoting information literacy. |
| [Texarkana Arkansas School District](http://www.tasd7.net/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=117969&type=d&termREC_ID=&pREC_ID=306617) | This job description is a bit intimidating with its list of 22 major responsibilities (misspelled on the doc) and duties, all of which are legitimate expectations for the position. The requirement of five years experience in a library/media center in a public school setting, which would immediately disqualify many excellent candidates from even applying for the position. \*The link to the left is to the Human Resource page of the Texarkana Arkansas School District. File numbers are listed in numerical order. Scroll down to document # 9\_7\_03 and click the link to the middle school media specialist job description. |

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| **Library Media Center Aide Job Description** | |
| [Los Angeles Unified School District](http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/personnel/class/class_comp/cds/CODE2680.htm) | This policy is from the second largest school district in the nation, governing over 640,000 K-12th grade students in over 900 schools. The policy provides a definition of the position, along with a list of typical duties that one might expect to perform on a daily basis. The list ranges from specific to open-ended, but the essence of the position is to assist the librarian, teachers, and students in their library media center needs. |

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| **Student Assistant OR Volunteer** | |
| [Prairie Point Middle School & 9th Grade Academy Library](http://www.pointlibrary.org/prairie-point-library-home/be-a-library-student-volunteer#Student%20Volunteer%20Job%20Description) | I like that this job description is short, yet clearly states expectations while leaving the door open to include unforeseen tasks. I would include a test to measure knowledge of ordering library books. \*The link to the left is to the student volunteer page of the Prairie Point Middle School Library Website. The document itself can be viewed by downloading the file located immediately below the introductory paragraph. |

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MLIS 5060

Library Policies

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| **Challenged Materials** | |
| [White Station Middle School Library](http://www.mcsk12.net/SCHOOLS/whitestation.ms/site/documents/PolicyandProcedureforChallengedMaterials.pdf) | The first words of this policy are, “Occasionally objections to material will be made”. This shows forethought, experience, a conscious effort at preparedness, and wisdom. Included in the policy is what I consider an essential element, “anyone challenging material must have read, listened to, or viewed the material before he/she can challenge the material.” The procedure involves a 3-step process that includes a list of designees to the “Materials Evaluation Committee”. The decision is to be made within 30 days of receipt of challenged materials form. Finally, there is a stipulation that challenged materials will not be removed from circulation until the final ruling of the committee has been made. |

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| **Circulation** | |
| [Awty International School Library](http://www.awty.org/page.cfm?p=5742) | This policy, from a prep school in Houston, TX, is the most detailed example that I ran across in my research. Necessarily so, as the library serves high school (upper), middle, and elementary (lower) students, PreK-12th grades. Students in upper and middle grades are allowed to check out up to 7 books at a time, while lower school students may have up to four out at one time. Serofim Library does not charge late fees except for reference materials ($5.00 per day), however, a replacement cost for lost or damaged materials is assessed. A copy machine is available for student use at no charge, but is strictly limited to school-related use. |

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MLIS 5060

Library Policies

Reflection Questions

1. The policies that I chose would work for me in my library with some slight modifications. For example, item #15 on the Texarkana Middle School Media Specialist list of major responsibilities and duties would have to be amended to read, “as flexible as possible.” My library operates on a mixed schedule that allows me a certain amount of freedom to accommodate a visit from a class during open access time. The St. Mary’s County Public School Policy, however, could be adopted by simply replacing the name with my school’s name. The Aide policy I retrieved from Los Angeles Unified District Web site could be used only if the entire section on “Entrance Qualifications” was completely rewritten or removed altogether. It would be nice if assistants were required to have a college degree, or semester units. My district does have a testing program for instructional assistants, so that part would work for my situation. I intend to use the Prairie Point student volunteer job description to design my own. I would make an addition of a test to measure knowledge of ordering library books and general library workings. In order to use the Atwy Itnl. School Library Circulation Policy I would have to do major revisions. This library allows each patron to have seven books, possibly more, to be checked out at one time. Regular operating hours are 7:30=6:00, Monday – Thursday, and it closes at 4:30 on Friday. There is a copy machine available to students at no charge for school-related use. Finally, this library allows parent/community patronage as long as it doesn’t interfere with students’ educational needs. My school district doesn’t do any of these things, but I wonder if that is because it is considered undesirable or because it has yet to be introduced as an option to be considered. I chose this policy specifically because of these new concepts; at least they are new to me. Except for a few typographical errors, I think White Station Middle School’s challenged materials policy and procedures statement is useable as-is. I appreciate the statement that, in essence, the freedom afforded by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the U.S. to access information/materials, as well as the integrity of the teachers will be defended above any materials. It also stipulates that the challenger must have read, listened to, or viewed any material that is being challenged. I will definitely use this as a model for my own library.
2. Overall, I was very satisfied with the policies I found on the Internet. As I was searching, my objective was to find policies that I could use as models for my own library policies. That required that I not necessarily choose the first one that popped up. I sorted through several policies for challenged materials before finding the one that I felt was a best fit.
3. Policies regarding the job descriptions of the library media specialist and assistants should certainly be posted on the district Webpage for the public to see. I feel the challenged materials policy and procedure should be located more prominently, possibly also on each library’s Webpage. As for the library circulation policy and student volunteer job description, the library specific nature of the subject matter of each lends itself to a per school preference or need; therefore should be left to the discretion of each individual librarian. Those docs should definitely have a place on the school Website. Additionally, the circulation policy might also be displayed in a prominent place in the library itself.
4. The policy that is most closely related to the day-to-day operation of the library is the circulation policy. Because it determines whether the library runs smoothly or not, it seems to me that it should be at the top of the list.

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MLIS 5060

Library Policies

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| **Behavior** | |
| [Walt Whitman Middle School](http://www.fcps.edu/WhitmanMS/library.html) | The link provided is to the Walt Whitman Middle School Library page. Immediately visible is the library’s operating hours, the head librarian’s name, and links to library-related services and material, one of which is “Library Policies.” This link goes to a library manual of policies. Once there, scroll down to section 4 entitled, “Patron Behavior”, on page 17. |

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| **Library Scheduling and Use of Facility** | |
| [William Monroe Middle School](http://wmmslibrary.weebly.com/policies-and-procedures.html) | Upon landing at the William Monroe Middle School Library Media Center Web page scroll to the bottom and slowly work back up the page. “Library Media Center Use” is the third topic from the bottom. |

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| **Computer Acceptable Use** | |
| [Scott County Schools](http://www.scottcounty.net/handbook)  My school district’s policy. | Upon reaching the Scott County Schools student handbook page, scroll down to page 35 where the policy on Internet use begins. It continues to the bottom of page 37 and covers Internet use in general, as well as, specific topics, e.g., e-mail, Web pages, network etiquette, use of copyrighted materials. |

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MLIS 5060

Library Policies

Reflection Questions

1. I approach this assignment as an opportunity to explore other library policies that I might incorporate into my own library. Often, a policy has a feature or two that I really like, as with the William Monroe Middle School. The LMS keeps the regulations regarding library use short and professional, yet it seems to cover the points that she feels will make the center run smoothly for all involved. The feature I really like is the reservation link that allows teachers to schedule library times without having to find time to visit the library physically or pick up the phone and call. The Walt Whitman Middle School library policy on patron behavior in the library briefly addresses inappropriate conduct and possible consequences. It also mentions “BYOD” (bring your own device) guidelines, which is an area that I would like to explore in my own library. She specifically states that they are only to be used for academic purposes, which, I’m afraid, might be difficult to regulate in my situation, as I have no library assistant. I particularly like the library computer use passes on the very last page of the manual. That is something that I could institute with my teachers. I think the Scott County Schools Computer Acceptable Use policy is necessarily very thorough and specific. Students are required to read, with a parent/guardian, sign, and return to school where it is kept on file for that school year. Failure to do so, or checking the “No, I do not agree.” box, results in that student’s exemption from all personal use of school technology. This policy has been in place for many years, and is updated as needed.
2. Overall, I was very satisfied with the policies I found for this assignment. I find that I spend more time than I can afford looking for policies that I can incorporate into my own policies.
3. The county’s policy on Technology Acceptable Use should definitely be posted on the district Web page making it available for all to see because it is a district-wide policy that is required reading for any student (and guardian of that student) who wishes to use any technology at any county school. If an issue arises, no one can say that they weren’t aware or that any part of the policy, or the policy itself, was hidden from them. I would also include a link on my library Web site to this document. Library patron behavior guidelines and scheduling/use policies are probably different from library to library; therefore, each library would need to post their school-specific guidelines/policies to their own library Web page, not district-wide. I would give the district policy of Acceptable Use priority over the library policies simply because of the greater seriousness of potential problems as a result of noncompliance.
4. This is a toughie! Without behavior guidelines and scheduling policies chaos would undoubtedly ensue. However, an acceptable use policy coming from the central office, not just the school, implies a gravity of consequences that few students are willing to risk. This keeps most students from using technology inappropriately. There is a lot of ugliness, and danger, on the Internet, and it is only a click away. Our first responsibility to our students is to keep them safe, even from themselves.

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MLIS 5060

Library Policies

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| **Confidentiality of Patron Records** | |
| [Oxford Middle School](http://osd.middle.schoolfusion.us/modules/cms/pages.phtml?pageid=46115&SID)  District Policy | The link provided connects directly to the school district’s policy on confidentiality and privacy based completely on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which applies to the library as well. The library Web page itself is a portal to the library’s OPAC, Destiny Quest. |

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| **Selection** | |
| [Haleyville City Schools](http://hms.haley-k12.us/sites/default/files/HCS%20Library%20Policies%20and%20Procedures%2013-14.pdf)  District Policy | The link provided connects to the school’s comprehensive library user manual. One must scroll down to page 21 where the section on collection development begins, and continues to the top of page 23. This policy addresses the major areas of concern when building a library collection, e.g., objectives, who is responsible for making selections, criteria for selection, selection tools used. |

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MLIS 5060

Library Policies

Reflection Questions

1. These were the toughest policies to find! I ended up choosing two middle schools that use district policies simply because after pouring through dozens of Web sites I still hadn’t found a policy for either area that was exclusively middle school. That said, I think Oxford’s Confidentiality Policy could definitely be copied and pasted into my own library manual because it is straight from the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which is a Federal Law that protects the privacy of student education records, including library circulation records. I feel that the Haleyville City Schools collection policy would also be easily set in place and used with minimal changes. I really appreciate the statement of responsibility that shows a strong commitment by the central office to support the decisions made by the LMS on selection choices. The contents of the policy are aligned with AASL standards and guidelines, including references to AASL throughout.
2. I was disappointed that I didn’t find school library created policies for this assignment, but I am pleased with the policies that I did find. I feel they will be very helpful in my own endeavor to create a manual for my library.
3. These policies regarding patron confidentiality and selection of LMC learning materials should both be posted on a district Web site as well as on the library Web page. These are issues that extend beyond the walls of the library and require a high level of transparency.
4. While there is no doubt that student confidentiality is extremely important and is to be protected at every turn, we must remember that every class, student, and teacher in the building, the educational program itself, depends on the ability of the LMS to fill the LMC with materials that enrich and support the curriculum, and provide students with reading materials for pleasure and information.