

Module One - Part Three Planning

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LIBS 658: Knowledge, Resources: Planning, Selecting, and Managing Collections

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## **Introduction to the Community**

Shenandoah County is a rural area in the Shenandoah Valley located along Interstate 81 south of where Route 66 ends going west. The county is made up of several small towns that have a large farming community. These towns contain other branches of the library system located in small houses in addition to the main branch County Library located in the town of Edinburg. The town of Edinburg has only one red light. There is a focus of historical events for this county due to the many Civil War battles and events that occurred. The area does have an increasing hispanic population that is evident with comparing the census data to the school demographic data indicating that in 10 years this growth will be significant. Socially economically the area is made up of the haves and have nots with a decreasing middle class population. Almost half (46%) of the households have an income lower than the median of \$54,921 and 52.3% of students are economically disadvantaged. Some of this may be the evidence that after students who do obtain a postsecondary education usually do not return to the area due to the lack of professional opportunities. The top three industries for the county are retail, medical/social assistance, and manufacturing. This area is ripe with potential growth and has resources that are under utilized or need to be identified and developed.

## **Collection Analysis Summary**

The Shenandoah County Library is very underutilized with only 40% of the population being registered users. When looking at the collection analysis I was

surprised that for such a small rural community there was a diverse collection when addressing the LGBTQ community. A Random Sampling was completed to explore the diversity of the young adult fiction in regards to LGBTQ+ characters in books; the sampling averaged the number of books per shelf and multiplied this by the number of shelves to get an estimate of the total count of books, then that number was divided by 40 to get a number a range of when to pull a random book. Data was collected and presented in the analysis. When the mapping was completed there two subject areas were explored using the card catalog (online) to obtain data on the materials available and in what format they were available. The Random Sampling of the Young Adult section resulted in 29.5% of the sampling to have LGBTQ characters in the materials; when completing the mapping of the online card catalog there continued to be evidence of this population being represented in the library. I was surprised that due to the Civil War history of the area there were so little materials available. The analysis identified that the library is not being utilized at this time due to policies or lack of having a usable collection development policy. There are many barriers in place that limit access for much of the population of the community.

### **Areas in need of Improvement**

The first area to address in the collection selection and management would be developing a usable collection development policy. Currently the policy is being revised and the librarians do not utilize it when selecting materials and addressing requests to remove items from the library. The library is without its “shield”. The next area is that it is difficult concerning the accessibility of the library due to the limited library hours and

the lack of public transportation in the area. Working parents can not get to the library to allow their children to get a card if the library closes at 5pm everyday and is not open on weekends. A book mobile that provided materials to the community would alleviate the need to get to the library during hours for students and provide services to the hundreds of families that do not have any access to transportation. With access to the library being addressed the ability for the library to allow students to utilize the online resources without a library card or to be able to obtain the card/access through the school libraries would improve this management. Last is the issue with not being able to find resources due to the much needed weeding of the library collection. Currently 24% of the materials are 16 years or older. The current staff admitted that the number of outdated books is an embarrassment to the collection.

### **The mission of the library and proposed changes**

Expanding the library's hours and providing a book mobile to the rural areas of the community will directly support the library's mission to "provide convenient access to information in useful formats." By weeding the collection of the outdated and underused materials the library will be able to "create an environment that fosters lifelong learning, personal enrichment, and more literate society" by ensuring that patrons of the library will be able to find needed and relevant materials. Last but not least by creating and implementing a collection development policy the library will "strengthen information partnerships...promote library services".

### **Collection development policy and Supportive Literature**

The need of the Shenandoah County Library to update its collection development and management policy is a common one and one that needs to be revisited often. Mayer (2018) says it best when addressing this practice, “good policies need regular review and updating...our collection management policy is a “living” document subject to regular review and revision” (p.11). Chaputala & Kangundo (2014) discovered that without a collection development and management plan a library will have no way to address questions or issues that arise due to the absence of such policy such as: what to do with donations?, purchasing multiple copies beyond the need, who will be responsible for preservation of materials?, and purchasing outdated materials (more than 10 years old).

Chaputula, A. Kanyundo (2014) studied that the Mzuzu University Library that was without a collection development policy and found that “the absence of the CDP (Collection Development Policy) greatly affected selection of information resources...there is no consistency in the way selection decisions are made because most of them are done on an ad-hoc basis, selection decisions that are done this way cannot benefit the library and its clients.” (p.322). This is very much the same situation at the Shenandoah County Library. Due to not having a usable collection development/management policy librarians do not have a policy on how to address the concerns of the patrons requests to remove items from the library due to being “inappropriate”. The library has not removed any items in the last 5 years but they also do not address how to keep items from being stolen or lost due to disagreement with the decision to keep them. These items are often not replaced. Another common

conflict that Mzuzu and Shenandoah County Library experienced is that weeding is not systematically done without a policy and it is only done on impulse. This most likely accounts for the next need to address which is weeding.

As mentioned above 24% of the collection is 16 years or older and 11% is over 21 years old. Jones (2007) reported in their study that by weeding materials there was an improvement in stock turnover (more items checked out and utilized). It is concerning to anyone with the limited budgets of libraries to want to maintain stock levels but by not weeding the collection less items are actually checked out. One reason is due to patrons now able to find the new titles.

Soma & Sjoberg (2010) found in their study that over 15% of the library of their study had not circulated since 1987. They used a random sampling procedure to focus on each library section regarding circulation that identified the need for weeding to be implemented within 3-5 years. This method can be utilized at the Shenandoah County Library. Methods that will not require this method will be to remove duplicate and superseded materials in addition to removing or replacing items that are in obsolete formats such as: VHS, audio cassettes, and CD-ROM (Soma & Sjoberg, 2010).

The other change to the collection would be to change policy to allow more to access the library. This can be accomplished with several interventions/changes. I purpose the need to extend or change the library hours, allow students to utilize the library online services through a school access portal/account without the requirement

of having a actual library card that requires a parent, and implementing a bookmobile program to reach the rural community or younger patrons who have parents who work during the open library hours. Fox (2000) addressed if the adult learners had access to their academic library due to working full time and family life by creating a survey that resulted in the following needs being expressed: “longer library hours, more electronic access to materials, and added remote and unmediated services will be very helpful” (p.125). Fox’s survey’s findings hit all areas that need to be addressed by the Shenandoah County Library.

McMeekin (2014) explained that their bookmobile was able to provide services to 20% of the city’s population with 23 stops that provided access to the collection and outreach services. Collection items to include are books (focus on children’s and young adult), audio books, magazines, DVD, video games, and materials in multi-languages (due to the increase in youth hispanic population). Also make sure that patrons are able to order items to be sent to a bookmobile stop for pickup would allow everyone but especially older patrons to have access to needed materials (McMeekin, 2014).

### **Examples of Resources selected for each improvement**

If the collection policy was corrected then the library would have its “shield” to protect against those who request items to be removed. I would introduce *Teddy A Gentle Story about Gender and Friendship* by Jessica Walton, illustrated by Dougal MacPherson Bloomsbury published in 2016 as a resource to the collection. This

material meets the accuracy and currency requirement in that the material addressed is current in information, timely, and unbiased; the story addresses transgendered issues such as name changes and being accepted by your friends. It meets the authority requirements by currently being on the Recommended books from the ALSC Embracing Gender Identities list. The story is a relevant one due to it being a story of friendship and acceptance and that concept is a universal one. Appropriateness of this story is one of emotional level, it is a positive message and not one that would traumatize young children. At an interest level I think it will apply to many age levels due to how the author approaches such a controversial issue as one of friendship and caring about a friend. The story will add value to the collection and is needed due to transgendering becoming more and more of a common subject and will allow a difficult topic for some to be addressed in a non judgemental way.

Another material that I would choose for the collection after the material selection policy is utilized is *Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice* by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins, and Ann Hazzard, illustrated by Jennifer Zivoin. This book is in the ALA's Top 10 most challenged books for 2020. This book presents true questions that children have about today's current events. It presents current and timely materials that every parent should discuss with their children but are too afraid of how to address the topic of racial injustice and police shootings. This book is written by three psychologists that have years of experience in the field of working with children. The book has won the National Parenting Product Award Winner (NAPPA) and it a *New York Times* and *Indiebound* bestseller not to mention it has been referenced in over 20 different national magazines or newspapers. There is a need and



want of how to address this subject and how to acknowledge both perspectives by parents, teachers, and children of all ages. The reading/grade level for this book is pk-3 due to it being a picture book but it is appropriate for younger children, teenagers, and parents who are lost on how to discuss this topic of racism. It is easily understood and will result in an emotion reaction due to the realism of the topic. It will add value to the collection as a resource for parents and teachers of the community; it will be used by library patrons.

The bookmobile will be reaching several different populations with young adults being the most common. Patrons who don't drive yet but are able to pre-select books and other materials using the technology of the library and are able to walk independently to the different mobile stops in the community. For this reason I chose to add *Black Girl Unlimited: The Remarkable Story of a Teenage Wizard* by Echo Brown. This story is accurate and current in that it addresses poverty, sexual violence, depression, racism, and sexism with different metaphors of magic and fantasy. This story is very timely given the current state of the world and how we are addressing such issues. As for authoritative selection it is a 2021 Morris Award finalist and found on the Best Fiction for Young Adults 2021 list from [Booklistonline.com](http://Booklistonline.com) which Johnson (2018) recommends as a source for collection development. The author Echo Brown is an international storyteller whose focus is on women's stories, she teaches workshops and has spoke on Tedtalks 2x. This story is very relevant to today's youth and many social issues that our society likes to sweep under the rug and ignore; today's youth will identify with the material presented. As for appropriateness there may need to be a

trigger warning due to addressing addiction and sexual assault and it has a very emotional reaction to those who read it. It is written as an intellectual level that even though there are many metaphors in the story young adults will comprehend the material presented. I do believe that this selection will add value to the collection. It is needed due to the fact that it addressed some very hard topics that many want to pretend don't exist. Much like other selections that deal with controversial topics it will be used by the population (young adult) that it is created for. I feel that even older patrons of the library will read this and have an emotional reaction.

Another material for the bookmobile is the book *George* by Alex Gino. The library currently has the material and the random sampling demonstrates that almost 30% of the young adult fiction section has books with LGBTQ characters but *George* has only been checked out 6 times in the 5 years it has been at the library. This book would benefit from the bookmobile to be exposed to young adults that have not yet been able to utilize the library. *George* has realistic characters and the subject of gender identity is addressed in a very real way that addresses this timely struggle of today's youth. It is authoritative with Scholastic publishing it with their reputation of publishing children's literature. *George* has also received the following awards: Lambda Literary Award, Stonewall Award (American Library Association), Children's Choice Book Awards Debut Author, Juvenile California Book Award. Not to mention hundreds of must read book lists from multiple organizations. The reading level is grades 5-12 which indicates that it will hold the intellectual level of even adults who explore this book along with middle and high school students. The subject is very emotional and personal to those individuals who are going through this discovery and those who are friends and

family members of said population. I think that once this book is marketed better by the library or presented to more patrons it will be read.

Once the library weeds its collection it will have more materials that are current and this is especially true for the adult non-fiction section which is why I chose *Children of the Land* by Marcelo Hernandez Castillo. The non-fiction book is very accurate and current with today's immigration. The library serves a community that has an increasing hispanic population many of whom are migrant workers making this book relevant to this community. The subject matter of being a undocumented immigrant in the United States is very timely and one that many families are currently living with. The story is authoritative due to it being on the Notable Book list for the RUSA under the ALA organization. The author has won multiple awards and was among NPR's top picks of 2018. As for appropriateness it has appeals to the readers on an emotional level, interest level, and intellectual level. The focus being the emotional level with its poetic style of writing. This book is very much needed to give a different perspective on a very gray matter that many attempt to see as a black and white one. The book will be used by adults with a background in this area or who have an interest in political topics and would appreciate a first person perspective into the subject.

Another material to add to the nonfiction collection that I would add to the Young Adult nonfiction is *The Cat I Never Named: A True Story of Love, War, and Survival* written by Amra Sabic-El-Rayess with Laura L. Sullivan. This material is current in that it addressed Muslim refugees and the subject of genocide. Although it takes place in 1992 the topic of war and genocide is one that continues throughout our history and is still relevant. This book as a finalist for the YALSA Nonfiction Book Award, CCBC

Award, and was just published 6 months ago so it is new and sure to receive more awards in the future. Due to the serious nature of this topic the age range is 13- to adult. It has a very emotional reaction for the readers that even adults will want to read it. This material will meet the library's current need to add materials that are newly published and current to today's topics and interests of the patrons/community members.

### **Matrix of Plan**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year3	Assessment and how will the changes be utilized
Update Collection Development Policy	<p>Meet with staff and collaborate on procedures and identify common themes/goals</p> <p>Identify criteria that guide selection</p> <p>Collect data on current utilization of library materials especially the more challenged or controversial materials.</p>	<p>Train staff on utilizing the policy and implementing the collection criteria requirements</p> <p>Implement marketing strategies to address need to add more relevant materials to the library-market to populations that in past have may have felt the library lacked diversity</p> <p>Utilize Survey's of patron's feedback on</p>	<p>Address any problem solving concerns regarding patrons requesting removal of materials</p> <p>Continue to market material to diverse populations</p> <p>Continue to collect data on the circulation of diverse and challenged materials</p>	<p>Surveys</p> <p>Focus Groups</p> <p>Interlibrary Loan analysis- which materials are being asked for repeatedly that are not available</p> <p>Circulation data to the utilization of materials</p>

		the subject of diverse and challenged materials available.		
Create a weeding practice to address the outdated and under utilized collection	<p>Identify materials that have not been checked out in 10 years</p> <p>Have staff complete random samplings on each section to identify the % of materials needed to be weeded</p> <p>Pull the materials, keep records of the weeding, and store materials to dispose of responsibly</p>	<p>Be transparent with the community and offer to hear their concerns</p> <p>Provide a community book sale or give away the usable materials</p> <p>Get rid of any outdated formats such as CD-ROMs, Cassettes, VHS</p> <p>Train staff on how to create displays that will be utilized now that the library has more room to display items</p>	<p>Develop a weeding policy and continue to utilize it</p> <p>Continue to collect data utilizing random samplings to address outdated materials, and to ensure collection is diverse</p> <p>Continue to collect data of circulation</p> <p>Continue to use mapping to ensure the newer materials a be found</p>	<p>Measure the circulation of materials - how much of the collection is being checked out now that it is easier to utilize</p> <p>Continue with all data collections: mapping, circulation data, and random samplings</p> <p>Continue to create displays and create a welcoming environment in the library</p>
Allow for better access by changing hours and developing a Bookmobile program	<p>Survey the community to select at least two days to stay open after 5 pm</p> <p>Obtain grants</p>	<p>Train staff on utilizing the technology to provide materials in the book mobile</p> <p>Market to</p>	<p>Create additional stops or rotate different areas that need to be served</p> <p>Continue to</p>	<p>Survey the community to identify areas of need for the book mobile in the community and materials requested to</p>

	<p>or funding for book mobile</p> <p>Create request system to have materials delivered to patrons in the community</p>	<p>youth through social media - have students utilize online social media to discuss materials in the bookmobile - reach out to teachers to offer extra credit if students complete reviews and utilize materials</p>	<p>collect data with random samplings to ensure that the materials are diverse in the bookmobile</p> <p>Continue to collect circulation data for the bookmobile including what areas are needing what materials</p> <p>Make sure teens and patrons are made aware of the bookmobile - parent nights at school attend with bookmobile, also attend other community events</p>	<p>be available in the bookmobile</p> <p>Continue with data collection and make changes to collection as needed, make changes to availability of bookmobile, and the areas it serves in the community</p>
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## Resources

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