

Crestview Elementary School Library

Collections Planning

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Introduction

Crestview Elementary School is a small school, serving 325-400 students, from preschool through grade 5 (Virginia Department of Education, n.d.a). Crestview's student population remains diverse with approximately half of the population consisting of Hispanic, Black, Asian, or multiracial students (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019a). Crestview also continues to serve a number of English Language Learners and students with disabilities (Virginia Department of Ed, n.d.a; Virginia Department of Ed, n.d.b). Crestview has achieved full accreditation for each of the last 3 years (Virginia Department of Education, n.d.b). However, there is a decrease in passing rates among Hispanic students and English Language Learners. This discrepancy holds true across all SOLs, with an increased gap for English and Mathematics. Crestview has one full-time librarian and part-time assistant. Each grade level has access to open check-out and weekly time in the library for instruction and/or check-out.

Crestview's collection was evaluated in February and March of 2020. The collection displayed strengths in Spanish-language texts, with more than 80 print items. However, the collection displayed weaknesses across three areas identified for analysis: Latinx representation in novels, immigration, and geometry. These topics were selected due to the relevance to the diverse community, their ties to grade-level standards, and the decreased passing rates on the SOLs. Latinx representation in the novel collection was 4.4%, while the population of the school is 24.8% Hispanic. Similarly, less than 0.7% of the print collection features stories of immigrants, despite history of serving an immigrant community. A limited number of texts related to geometry were available, primarily early picture books featuring shapes. Additional books are available via interlibrary loan, but reliance on this can create a barrier to access. Limited audiobooks, e-books, and video were available to meet the needs of different learning styles, English language learners, reluctant readers, or readers with disabilities. The library would benefit from being more reflective of the community it serves by increasing Latinx representation in fictional texts, immigration stories, and upper elementary texts on mathematics, as well as ensuring each of these

additions include multiple formats. Crestview library's space limitations impact the ability to add realia, learning kits, or bulky materials. There are also typically limited resources in the library budget due to low PTA participation, although other sources, such as DonorsChoose, may supplement this.

By increasing diversity and accessibility, the Crestview library can better meet the HCPS mission to "create equity" (HCPS Libraries, n.d.a). Equity cannot be found by adding just a few items in a library, but through creating a rich network of resources in multiple formats. These additions will also serve to "harness curiosity, model responsibility, inspire exploration, promote creativity, and deepen understanding" for all students through increased access and variety to multiple, diverse perspectives (HCPS Libraries, n.d.a). This is also in line with the HCPS collection policy which emphasized the need for collections to have "diverse representation regarding religion, ethnicity, and cultural groups, and place" (Henrico County Public Schools, 2019, para A).

Literature Review

With Crestview's current population of Latinx students, culturally responsive texts that feature stories of Latinx students and immigrants (both fiction and nonfiction) are essential to students' ability to find mirrors in the collection. These mirrors "become a means of self-affirmation" (Bishop, 1990). Students who participated in year-long studies using culturally responsive text reported increased ownership of learning, increased self-efficacy, and even increased reading skills (Carnesi, 2018). Students in this study did also report a preference for fantasy, which was not represented in the selected texts, but should be considered in the selections for Crestview. In a similar study across fourteen teachers in an urban school district, teachers reported that students showed an increased interest in reading and high levels of identity investment, where a child connected the text to their personal experiences (Clark & Fleming, 2019). These teachers reported that reluctant speakers were also more engaged. Indeed, the Association for Library Service to Children stresses the importance of diversity in library collections for strengthening a child's self-image (2014). They note that "the absence of a child's culture" from the

library collection also creates problems, where “they receive a resounding message that the librarian does not think their culture is important enough to feature in the library” (Naidoo, 2014).

This diversity in literature also creates windows for other students in the community (Bishop, 1990). These stories support understanding of complex situations and offer an opportunity for students to strengthen their empathy with groups other than their own (Mar & Oatley, 2008). After using culturally responsive texts in class, teachers reported seeing gains in all students (Clark & Fleming, 2019). Importantly, adding a few stories is not sufficient as we risk strengthening “the danger of a single story”, where a child’s culture or language is limited to one representation, instead of the rich diversity of the human experience (Adichie, 2009). Diversifying the collection means that there are many items, used throughout the year, so that no child struggles to find themselves on the shelves (Naidoo, 2014).

Crestview students have displayed difficulty with achieving at the same rates on standardized testing of mathematics in comparison to other tests. Strengthening children’s literature in mathematics offers opportunities for students to engage with mathematical concepts. In one review, researchers found that children’s literature could be used to increase children’s interest, increase vocabulary development, develop mathematical communication skills, connect mathematical concepts with students’ lives outside of school, and offer opportunities to explore problem-solving (Flevaris & Schiff, 2014). Students in a second grade classroom displayed statistically significant improvements of attitudes towards geometry and scores on a post-test about geometric concepts (McAndrew, Morris, & Fennel, 2017). In a kindergarten class, teachers noted increased conversations that highlighted students’ conceptual knowledge, problem solving, and ability to reason (van den Heuvel-Panhuizen & van den Boogaard, 2009). Flevaris and Schiff note the difficulty that teachers may have in finding high-quality and mathematically relevant texts (2014). A similar difficulty was noted by Leonard, Moore, & Brooks when directing teacher candidates to locate texts that were both culturally relevant and mathematically

robust (2014). Only 28% of candidates were able to locate an appropriate text. This could be alleviated by ensuring that the school library contains books that have been selected to meet these needs.

A well-developed collection includes a variety of formats: print, magazines, graphic novels, ebooks, audiobooks, and more. Children have a variety of motivations for reading and will select formats that best meet their motivation (McGeown, Bonsall, Andries, Howart, & Wilkinson, 2020). Students will also self-select ebooks or audiobooks to meet their needs, whether it is access to a more challenging text or ease of reading when tired. Access to ebooks can increase students' view of reading as something that can be done for recreation, as well as offering easy tools to increase access or comprehension -- highlighting, word definitions, changing font size (McVicker 2019). In multiple studies, a significant section of students indicated a preference for either e-books, indicating the students would like to be able to make the choice (Maynard, 2008; McVicker, 2019; Barnyak & McTelly, 2016). The pandemic has only strengthened the circulation of digital formats in libraries across the country, with ebook circulation rising almost 30% (Hoffert, 2021). Crestview's library must be ready to meet the 21st century needs of their learners through an increase in the variety of formats available.

Latinx Diversity in Fiction: Sample Selections

Sal & Gabi Break the Universe, Carlos Hernandez (Fantasy, Grades 4-7)

Booklist starred, Booklist Editor's Choice: Books for Youth 2019, Pura Belpre, Kirkus starred

As an "own voices" author in the Rick Riordan Presents imprint, Hernandez' Sal & Gabi has both accuracy and authority, emphasized by multiple starred reviews and editor's choice. Sal & Gabi's relevance to the curriculum is through increasing interest in reading and meeting student preference for fantasy reads, while also featuring Latinx primary characters. Sal & Gabi is at an appropriate reading and emotional level for the upper elementary level reader. It adds value to the collection as a best-selling, award-winning book that increases Latinx representation and incorporates diverse points of view. An audiobook of this story has been recorded and should be considered for inclusion.

A Dash of Trouble, Anna Meriano (Fantasy, Grades 3-6)

Booklist, Kirkus starred, School Library Journal starred

Dash of Trouble opens a three book series that features an elementary school Latinx daughter who works in a magical family bakery in the heart of Texas. Meriano and Ortega bring authority and accuracy as they impart their own Latinx heritage and cultural traditions to the story. Dash is relevant to the curriculum for its celebration of Mexican-American culture, increasing interest and reading, and having cultural relevancy. Dash will also appeal to a slightly younger student than Sal & Gabi, with a reading level and light-hearted emotional appeal for middle elementary students. Dash adds value to the collection by increasing the variety of Latinx representation for younger readers with high quality writing and illustrations. An audiobook of this story has been recorded and should be considered for inclusion.

Latinx Immigration Stories: Sample Selections**Efren Divided, Ernesto Cisneros (Contemporary Fiction, Grades 3-6)**

Booklist Editors' Choice 2020, Notable Children's Book 2021, Pura Belpre 2020, Kirkus starred

Efren Divided follows the emotional story of Efren as he copes with life after his undocumented mother has been deported. Recently published, the story of Efren has accuracy and currency for today's immigration stories. Efren's relevance to the curriculum is highlighted in the celebration of diversity, the description of immigration journeys, and the connections to current events. The reading level is appropriate for the middle to upper elementary school student. The emotional challenge of this book can be weighty, but is handled with care appropriate for elementary school readers -- some of whom may already be living these stories. As an award-winning book, Efren adds value to the collection by increasing Latinx representation, telling an important story of today's children, and adding modern immigration stories in the fiction section. An audiobook of this story has been recorded.

Dreamers, Yuyi Morales (Nonfiction picture book, PK - 2)

Booklist Editor's Choice 2018, Pura Belpre 2019, Notable Children's Book 2019, Kirkus starred

_____ This is only a small fraction of the awards and notable reviews that Dreamers has been awarded since its release. In Dreamers, Morales tells her own immigration journey to the United States, with illustrations that emphasize the accuracy and authority of her story. It is relevant to the curriculum as it features immigration stories that tie with standards through a culturally relevant texts. Dreamers adds value to the collection by increasing non-fiction, current stories of immigrants and Latinx representation. Of note, a parallel, Spanish language text, Soñadores, is available and recommended due to its value as an award-winning Spanish-language texts that centers Latinx stories.

Geometry: Sample Selections

The World Is Not A Rectangle, Jeanette Winter (Biography, 5-10 years)

Booklist Editor's Choice: Books for Youth, 2017, Kirkus, Washington Post's Best Children's Book of 2017

Jeanette Winter has written several previous award-winning biographies, bringing authority and accuracy to the genre of picture book biographies. Teachers will find relevancy to the geometry standards that repeat across grades as the story follows Zaha Hadid's exploration of patterns and shapes through her architectural designs. Students may find more relevancy in the story of defeating the odds, as well as cultural relevancy as they see a Muslim woman in science. It is a perfect text for class discussions and creating text-to-self and text-to-math connections. The reading level is appropriate for younger students to listen to in a read-aloud, while middle elementary and above can read the story to themselves. The World Is Not A Rectangle adds value to the collection by expanding texts that feature mathematics, while also increasing diversity in the collection. This book is also available as an e-book.

Seeing Symmetry, Loreen Leedy (Nonfiction, Grades 1-4)

Booklist, Kirkus

Seeing Symmetry explores different types of symmetry through bold, beautiful art. Leedy's authority includes having previously written over 40 different children's books, many of which tie to mathematical concepts. Symmetry accurately explains shape, spatial awareness, and symmetry.

Relevance is established through the ties to 4th grade standards, but the reading level and participatory elements are appropriate for early to mid-elementary as well. This book adds value to the collection due to its alignment with upper elementary school standards in geometry. It is most likely to be used for class and small group discussion, as it entices students into mathematical conversations.

Collection Plan

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Assessment |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| <p>Latinx Representation Goal: Increase Latinx rep in novels to 20% or greater</p> <p>Goal: Increase student engagement, positive self-identity, & interest in reading</p> | <p>Purchase 30-40 novels featuring Latinx primary characters using school funds and/or DonorsChoose grants</p> <p>Weed inaccurate representations of Latinx characters or culture</p> | <p>Purchase 40-50 novels featuring Latinx primary characters using school funds and/or DC grants</p> <p>Collaborate with one grade level to increase culturally relevant texts in at least one unit</p> | <p>Purchase 50+ novels featuring Latinx primary characters using school funds and/or DC grants</p> <p>Collaborate with one grade level to increase culturally relevant texts in the full year of curriculum</p> | <p>Formative: Random sampling Circulation numbers Obs. Checklists</p> <p>Summative: Standardized tests Unit projects</p> <p>Student interviews at the beginning and end of year 2/3</p> |
| <p>Immigration Goal: Diversity immigration stories</p> <p>Goal: Increase engagement, positive self-ID, & understanding</p> | <p>Purchase 30 immigration stories, half Latinx</p> <p>Weed inaccurate or outdated stories on immigration</p> | <p>Purchase 30 immigration stories, half nonfiction</p> <p>Collab on school's International Dinner Integrate to classes</p> | <p>Purchase 30 immigration stories, half nonfiction</p> <p>Evaluate "who's still missing?" from our immigration stories</p> | <p>Formative: Circulation numbers</p> <p>Summative: Y3 Coll. Analysis Int'l Dinner Projects</p> |
| <p>Math / Geometry Goal: Establish a collection of culturally relevant texts (CRTs) in math for both teacher and student use</p> | <p>Purchase 4-5 selections that are appropriate for class discussion</p> <p>Contact other school librarians to learn which items circulate the most</p> | <p>Purchase 4-5 additional items in geometry and/or mathematics</p> <p>Create a CRT guide to the collection to inform & support teacher use</p> | <p>Purchase 4-5 additional items in geometry and/or mathematics</p> <p>Collaborate with art teacher to use CRTs and art to support math concepts</p> | <p>Formative: Circulation numbers Observations during read-alouds Informal interviews with teachers</p> <p>Summative: Standardized tests Math Grades</p> |
| <p>Format Variety Goal: Increase the variety of formats available t</p> | <p>Create & implement class lessons on the use of Sora to find and use materials on school or home devices.</p> | <p>Survey students on their preferred format for reading</p> <p>Pilot stand-alone audiobooks & track</p> | <p>Conduct a collection analysis on graphic novels and comics.</p> | <p>Formative: Ongoing eval of coll. demographics Circulation numbers</p> <p>Form & Summative:</p> |

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|---|---|--|--|--|
| Goal: Increase library access & use by <i>all</i> of community | | circulation to determine whether to purchase further | | Use by ELL students & students with IEPs |
| | This is an area where I may have little control, as purchases are made by HCPS library supervisors, but learning & using the recommendation process will be continuous. | | | |

New materials will be highlighted to get the right book into the hands of the reader. First, new items will be featured in library class or morning news book talks with students highlighting their favorites. Excited students are one of the fastest ways to spread the word to the rest of the school. Second, displays will be used to highlight books *throughout the year*. These displays will also feature real objects, student projects, or student art to increase allure. Lessons and scaffolded support will be used to teach students how to access Sora for digital materials. Most importantly, collaboration with teachers will be used to embed culturally relevant texts into classroom read-alouds and/or curriculum. These collaborations will begin small (e.g., one unit within one grade level, one project with the art teacher) to ensure success and create buy-in. Resources such as the CRT guide or highlighting books at meetings will allow for teachers to begin dipping their toes in the water of change without overwhelming them.

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