



# Better Together:

Building Effective Partnerships with Public Libraries  
to Support Literacy & Community Transformation

# WHO

**Meridith Wulff**

Regional Youth Specialist  
First Regional Library

**Hanna Lee**

Youth Services Coordinator  
First Regional Library



# **PUBLIC LIBRARY & SCHOOL LIBRARY**

## **COLLABORATION TOOLKIT**

Created by the AASL/ALSC/YALSA Interdivisional Committee on School/Public Library Cooperation



American Association  
of School Librarians  
International Standards



Association for Library Service to Children



Young Adult Library  
Services Association

YOU






# Objectives

- Learn why it's worth your time to partner with your public library.
- Brainstorm easy ways to get started collaborating with your public library to achieve common goals.
- Get inspired with ways to take partnerships to the next level.
- Leave with practical steps and best practices for building successful partnerships.
- #1 Takeaway: Libraries WANT to work with you!


# WHY



**“Both public and school libraries are community centers at heart, with the same goal: to provide a safe, welcoming environment for all patrons and access to information in a variety of formats. When public and school librarians and library workers engage in collaboration, community members reap the benefits.”**

-- Public Library & School Library Toolkit (available for free)

American Association of School Librarians (AASL), Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA)



**“If you’re not collaborating, why aren’t you collaborating? The end result improves services for kids and makes them better researchers and lifelong learners.”**

— SUSAN BALLARD

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS PRESIDENT, 2012–2013



# COLLABORATION WILL:



## EXPAND & ENRICH

services and programs



## BROADEN

talent pool and resources



## REACH

new audiences



## CREATE

new connections and  
strengthen existing  
relationships with libraries as  
well as other community  
organizations



## INCREASE

visibility to community and  
potential partnership and  
funding resources



## CONTRIBUTE

to overall community vitality



GET  
STARTED

**COMMUNICATE**

1

**REACH OUT**

2



**IDENTIFY**

3

**PRIORITIZE**

4

PLAN

5

**5 ESSENTIAL  
ELEMENTS OF  
SUCCESSFUL  
PARTNERSHIPS**

A close-up photograph of two hands, palms facing each other, holding a horizontal strip of torn, off-white paper. The word "COMMUNITY" is printed in a bold, dark red, sans-serif font across the center of the paper strip. The background is a solid blue color on the left side of the image.

**COMMUNITY**



# Effective communication



Respect and  
reciprocity

2

**Positive,  
can-do attitude**

3

Saying thank you  
and giving credit...  
over and over  
again!



**Evaluating and  
keeping in touch**

5



LEVEL UP



**Build on existing relationships.**

**Plan and implement projects together.**

**Join existing coalitions and networks.**

**Meet with leaders individually and in small groups in informal settings.**

**Invite partners to your internal meetings from time to time.**



**Hold joint trainings and cross-train each other's staff.**

**Use written agreements as appropriate to clarify communication and  
create positive expectations.**

**Write collaborative grants and initiate new programs and services in  
partnership.**

YOU



**Ready, Set, Go!**







**Summer Reading Program**

**Storytimes**

**Homework help**

**Access to computers, printers, scanners,  
copiers, etc.**

**Help with school projects**

**Encouraging reading for pleasure**

**Volunteer opportunities**





**Field trips**

**Author visits**

**School book fairs**

**Back-to-school orientations**

**Children's Book Week (May)**

**Every Child Ready to Read**

**Teen Read Week (October)**

**Teen Tech Week (October)**

**National Library Week (April)**

**School Library Month (April)**

**Library Card Sign-up Month (September)**



Ready for more?





A photograph of two women sitting at a wooden table in an indoor setting. The woman on the left has dark hair, wears glasses, and a red and black striped long-sleeved shirt. The woman on the right has short, curly reddish-brown hair and wears a black top with a patterned scarf and large hoop earrings. They are both looking down at an open book on the table. In the background, there is a window with horizontal blinds and a grey office chair.

**Book collections & kits**

**Bookclubs**

**Displaying school projects**

**Professional development**

**Stocking summer reading titles**

**Maker and STEM programs**

**Services for families and adults**





**Community Reading Project**  
**Little Free Libraries**  
**Local Coalitions**

YOU





**Manage Obstacles**



**Libraries WANT to  
work with you!**



The way to get started is to quit  
talking and begin doing.

- Walt Disney



# ANY QUESTIONS?



You can find us at  
[mwulff@firstregional.org](mailto:mwulff@firstregional.org) and [hlee@firstregional.org](mailto:hlee@firstregional.org).



