Advocacy Plan for Parkway Elementary School Library
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December 5, 2012
Introduction

Community Demographics

Parkway Elementary School is located in Watauga County, North Carolina.

According to the 2010 census, there are approximately 51,000 people living in Watauga County (United States Census Bureau, 2010). Of these 51,000 people, 95.3% are White, 3.5% are Hispanic or Latino, 2% are Black, and 1% are Asian (United States Census Bureau, 2010). 24.8% of people living in Watauga County are below the poverty line, as compared to 15% of North Carolina (United States Census Bureau, 2010). The median household income for this area from 2006-2010 was $31,967, as compared to $45,570 for the state (United States Census Bureau, 2010).

School Demographics

Out of the eight PreK-8 schools in Watauga County, Parkway Elementary is the second largest with a student population of 500 students in school year 2011-2012 (NC School Report Cards, 2012). The average class size for Parkway ranges from 15-27 students (NC School Report Cards, 2012). The following chart is an overview of class size per grade level at Parkway, as compared to the Watauga County School district and the state of North Carolina:

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<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
<th>Grade 6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
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<tr>
<td>Our School</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>27</td>
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(NC School Report Cards, 2012)
As can be seen, Parkway’s average class size is generally above that of both the district and the state, except in the lower grade levels. This is an issue that persists, even with three teachers per grade level.

As per the faculty at Parkway, in school year 2011-2012 there were 37 classroom teachers employed at the school (NC School Report Cards, 2012). Of these, 100% are fully certified and 51% have completed advanced college degrees - comparable to only 31% of teachers in the state (NC School Report Cards, 2012). 20 teachers at Parkway have received their National Board Certification and 54% of all teachers at Parkway have been teaching for 10 or more years (NC School Report Cards, 2012). Clearly, the faculty at Parkway is highly qualified and thoroughly experienced.

The experience and caliber of the faculty at Parkway shows clearly through the performance of its students. This chart from the NC School Report Cards website displays Parkway’s performance on end-of-grade tests as compared to that of the district and the state:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>85.8%</td>
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<td>92.5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>86.4%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>89.2%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
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<td>84.2%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>92.3%</td>
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As can be seen, Parkway’s students scored higher than the state average on both reading and math tests at every grade level. They also scored higher than the district average in most instances. This chart illustrates that in a district that performs, on average, better than the state, Parkway is performing even higher than the district. In addition to this, 85.8% of Parkway’s students were performing at or above grade level on the reading EOG in school year 2011-2012 and 88.7% were performing at or above grade level on
the math EOG (NC School Report Cards, 2012). Broken down into even more detailed demographics, 64.6% of the ED (Economically Disadvantaged) students at Parkway passed both the reading and math tests, as compared to 54.2% of the state; 89.4% of NED (Non-Economically Disadvantaged) students passed both tests, compared to 84.1% of the state; and 37.2% of the students with disabilities passed both tests, as compared to 33.8% for the state. In almost all categories, Parkway’s students consistently perform higher than state averages (NC School Report Cards, 2012). When looking at the science EOG tests, Parkway’s percentages for all demographics are even higher (NC School Report Cards, 2012).

School’s Mission Statement

Parkway’s above average performance is consistent with its mission statement, which is as follows:

Our Mission

Parkway School is a community committed to nurturing the whole child, developing the student’s mind, and rising to meet challenges while REACHing toward a successful future.

Reaching
Every Student's Potential in
Academics and
Character Development with
Hope for the Future

Our Motto
The 3 R’s:
Respect + Responsibility = Results

This mission statement is reflected in Parkway’s consistent performance as a NC School of Distinction, with more than 80% of students performing at grade level and with the school as a whole reaching expected growth (NC School Report Cards, 2012).
Parkway’s School Library

Parkway’s library has had a different librarian/media specialist for the past three years in a row, so currently there is a significant lack of program development, as each librarian has not had time to develop his or her own vision of where the library program is headed. That said, this plan will do its best to present a vision of the library as is and that will build a basis for the overall vision of where the library is headed to spring from.

First off, we’ll look at the physical layout of the library through its separate sections. The total square footage of the library is 5,530 feet, which is well above standards for the 500 students at Parkway (NCDPI, 2005). The three main sections are the Non-Fiction, Fiction, and Easy sections. They are distributed evenly around the library with an attempt made to keep them in appropriate areas according to the NCDPI’s IMPACT document (NCDPI 2005). For example, the Non-Fiction section is located in the main instructional area, for ease of access during instructional times; the Fiction section is located near a reading area; and the Easy section is located close to the story-sharing steps/lower elementary instructional area (Gray, 2012).

In addition to these main three areas, Parkway’s library also has a number of special areas. Most notable among these, of course, is the reference section (Gray, 2012). Other special sections include a Young Adult Fiction section, for serving the reading/recreational needs of Parkway’s middle school (6-8) students; a North Carolina section for collecting Non-Fiction materials specific to our state (which is also located within the Non-Fiction section); a Spanish section that collects both fiction and non-fiction materials for Parkway’s Hispanic and Latino students; and a newly added Easy Spanish section for Hispanic and Latino K-2 students who need materials that support
their language development in both English and Spanish (It should be mentioned that this section was added since Parkway was last evaluated for its facility plan) (Gray, 2012).

The total number of materials contained in all of the library’s areas together equals 16,294 items (Gray, 2012). Given Parkway’s student population, this total is more than 29 books per student, well within NCDPI standards (NCDPI, 2005). During a recent collection analysis, however, it was determined that there were a number of areas that needed updating in order to better place them within standards from both the NCDPI and from the Follet Library Resources (FLR) core collection (Gray, 2012). The main areas that need updating are located in the Non-Fiction section and are the 300s, 500s, 600s, and 900s (Gray, 2012). These are time sensitive areas whose materials become out of date after they are more than 5-10 years older than the current date. The following chart shows subjects contained within these areas and the percentage of each subject area that is out of date.

![Chart showing percent of collection beyond age range](chart.png)
Another issue with Parkway’s collection is that many of the different sections are not within percentage standards when compared with the whole collection, i.e., these sections should be more fully developed than they are. The following chart shows the actual percentage of each section at Parkway compared to what the FLR core collection recommends.

As for access, The Parkway library collection is available to both students and faculty through an Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) that can be accessed 24/7 via the Media Center page on Parkway’s school website (http://wataugasd.pes.schoolfusion.us/). The name of the catalog is Destiny. In addition to digital access, Parkway’s library is physically open to students and faculty during regular school hours- generally from 7:30 am-3:30 pm Monday through Friday.
During the hours that it is open, the library operates on a Fixed-Flex schedule. This means that grades PreK-5 have a designated “Library Time” (usually 30-40 minutes) on different days and the middle school (grades 6-8) uses the library as needed. Open Checkout is available to students during all flex-hours (the times when there is no scheduled class in the library). Teachers are aware of these hours and know to only send their students for Open Checkout during this time. Students are also trained in how to checkout on their own, so it is not necessary that the librarian be available to help with checkout at all times during flexible hours. This is helpful if, for instance, another teacher has taken advantage of the library’s flexible hours to co-teach a lesson with the librarian; during these times, the librarian can be fully present wherever he is most needed because of the ability of students to manage check-in/checkout on their own.

One full-time librarian/media specialist accomplishes all of the work needed to maintain the facility and schedule of Parkway’s library. A number of volunteers have also been scheduled to come in at different hours of the week to help with tasks like shelving and general organizing. It is the responsibility of the librarian to coordinate these volunteers. There used to be one part-time assistant in the library, but it was determined that this person could be better used elsewhere in the school.
Goals and Objectives for Advocacy

In order for the community that Parkway’s library serves to better understand the vitality of its existence in their lives, the following two goals have been developed. Each goal is supported by two separate objectives/activities.

**Goal 1:** The students who attend Parkway will understand that, beyond being a fun place to take a break from class, the library is a place where they can learn skills that are not only necessary to their ongoing education, but to their everyday lives as well.

- **Connection to mission statement:** This goal is at the heart of Parkway’s mission statement. If students know and appreciate that the library is a place that can help them develop their future, then they will indeed begin to reach for success.

- **Objective 1a:** The librarian will collaborate with each teacher that is on the fixed schedule (grades K-5) on at least one major project/unit before December 2013.

- **Objective 1b:** Students will understand and be able to explain the library’s importance to their education and their daily lives by the end of school year 2013-2014.

**Goal 2:** Teachers, students, and parents will perceive the library as a place that they can access at any time and will also understand the importance of doing so.

- **Connection to mission statement:** If the library is truly available 24/7 via digital access and the school community knows and appreciates this, then the library is a constant, nurturing presence in the lives of the students. It will have extended
beyond its physical walls and become an educational entity that is providing resources and support at all times.

- **Objective 2a:** Traffic on Parkway’s digital access points (OPAC, website, etc.) will increase 20% by December 2013.

- **Objective 2b:** Circulation of e-books will be increased by 50% before December 2013.

### Activities for Achieving Objectives

1. **Objective 1a:** The librarian will collaborate with each teacher that is on the fixed schedule (grades K-5) on at least one major project/unit before December 2013.
   
   a. **Overall Description of the Activity:** The librarian will attend all grade team meetings on a quarterly basis and provide teachers with information regarding how the library can help meet the needs of different projects or units. This will help teachers understand that collaboration with the librarian could be beneficial, necessary even, to the success of their unit.

   b. **Description of the Audience:** The audience for this activity is all teachers at Parkway Elementary. It should also include the principal and assistant principal.

   c. **Responsible Persons:** The librarian will be the one primarily responsible for ensuring his attendance at the meetings. The librarian will have to coordinate accordingly with teachers to let them know he is coming to their meetings and plan properly so that he has time to make it to all grade level meetings every quarter.
d. **Statement of the Message:** The primary message communicated here will be exactly what resources/lessons the librarian can provide to bolster the teachers’ units.

e. **Description of Communication:** The librarian will have developed a website that lists resources, sorted by grade level, which the librarian can provide access to. This website will be presented either on the Smart Board in the meeting room or on the librarian’s personal device.

f. **Timeframe:** The timeframe to complete this activity will be until December 2013. With 6 grades to collaborate with and 4 quarters in which to do so, this allows for just over one major unit every quarter.

g. **Evaluation Strategy:** The librarian will develop a rubric that can be filled out by each teacher after the completion of each unit. A rubric will also be provided to the principal and assistant principal. This rubric will include a list of Information and Technology standards that could have been met by each unit so that teachers and administrators can judge if they believe these standards were met.

2. **Objective 1b:** Students will understand and be able to explain the library’s importance to their education and their daily lives by the end of school year 2013-2014.

   a. **Overall Description of the Activity:** The librarian will create “How the Library Can Help Me” posters, display them prominently near instructional areas, and incorporate them, or parts of them, into each lesson done during library time.
b. **Description of the Audience:** The students at Parkway are the audience for this activity, at least those in grades K-5. Students in PreK and grades 6-8 are a peripheral audience in that they will see the posters but will not have them explained as frequently as those students who come in for fixed library time.

c. **Responsible Persons:** To help develop the posters, the librarian will turn to the Media and Technology Advisory Committee. The teachers on the committee will help with the wording of the posters so that they are appropriate for various grade levels. Parent volunteers on the committee could be tasked with the specific creation of the posters. The librarian will be in charge of any necessary funds and the actual placement of the posters.

d. **Statement of the Message:** There will be two or three separate posters, depending on what teachers on the MTAC think is appropriate for students, and each one will be geared to explain the message to specific grade levels (K-1, 2-3, 4-5, etc.). Each poster will provide a list of ways, inspired by Information Technology standards, that the library can help the students. In a sense, the posters will be a list of the library’s standards, but they will be worded in a way that connects with students.

e. **Description of Communication:** In this case, the communication method will be the librarian explaining to the students at the beginning of each lesson, which part of the poster relates to that particular lesson. The librarian could also develop mini-posters that can be either taped into
student’s notebooks so that they remember about the library or sent home to parents so that they are also made aware.

f. **Timeframe:** Initiation of this project will begin with the start of school year 2013-2014.

g. **Evaluation Strategy:** The librarian will ask students to either write or record (on a video camera) personal statements as to how the library can help them in both their education and their daily lives. These videos/written statements can then be shared with the library’s other stakeholders (administrators, central office, teachers, parents, etc.).

3. **Objective 2a:** Traffic on Parkway’s digital access points (OPAC, website, etc.) will increase 20% by December 2013.

   a. **Overall Description of the Activity:** The librarian will develop and promote a fully integrated and accessible website. This will include giving usernames and passwords for access to the Destiny OPAC to all students and faculty at Parkway. It will also include the gathering of a number of different online resources that can be made accessible through the library’s website. The main part of this activity is the promotion of the site, which will initiate through a special staff-development/student sign-up day. The librarian will sign classes up to come to the library and explore the website and its resources. Students and teachers will be assisted in the creation of usernames and passwords for the OPAC and shown one or two of the really fun aspects of the site.
b. **Description of the Audience:** The faculty, students, and parents of Parkway are the target audience for the website. The faculty and students are the audience for the special day of development/sign-up.

c. **Responsible Persons:** The librarian will be the primary responsible party for this activity—gathering resources, developing the overall look and feel of the site, planning for the staff development/student sign-up day. Help will be sought from the Technology teacher for development of the website. Permission for both the site and the staff development/student sign-up will need to be achieved from administrative faculty.

d. **Statement of the Message:** The message here is presented through the resources and access available on the website. It will show to all stakeholders that the library is available to help and is a fun and educational experience at the same time.

e. **Description of Communication:** The staff development/student sign-up day will be promoted through special invitations given to each class. Coordination of the schedule will be presented to faculty through a shared document on Google Drive, so they know when their time to come and experience the website is. Social media tools such as Blabberize or Animoto could also be used to promote the event to classes.

f. **Timeframe:** This website should be up and running right before the beginning of school year 2013-2014. Its development will be an ongoing thing, so there is no timeline of completion. The sign-up/development day
will be held prior to midterm of the first quarter for school year 2013-2014.

g. **Evaluation Strategy:** Surveys will be sent home in student’s folders as well as electronically through services like Survey Monkey. Surveys will be sent to staff electronically through email, linked to Survey Monkey. There will also be a running link on the website that allows visitors to the site to provide continuous feedback.

4. **Objective 2b:** Circulation of e-books will be increased by 50% before December 2013.

a. **Overall Description of the Activity:** One activity that will be done to help achieve this goal is an “E-book of the Month” flyer to be distributed to staff via their mailboxes. The librarian will read a number of the e-books available on Parkway’s OPAC and choose one to share with the faculty.

b. **Description of the Audience:** The audience for this activity is Parkway’s faculty, all of who are interested in using materials that will support the Common Core. Fortunately, the e-books available through Parkway’s OPAC are all non-fiction, simultaneous use books that are perfectly suited for instruction that is centered on the Common Core standards.

c. **Responsible Persons:** The librarian will be the only one responsible for this activity. He will choose the book, determine what Common Core standards might be met using this book, search for lessons or other resources online that might make this book more appealing to teachers,
prepare the flyer using a template on Microsoft Publisher that he develops, and distribute the flyer. Media Assistants or Office Assistants could be used to help with distribution, or even creation of the template for the flyer.

d. **Statement of the Message:** The message will include the title of the book, a brief reminder on how to access it via the OPAC, a list of Common Core standards that might be met by this book, a link to a lesson that could be done using this book, and similar titles available on the OPAC.

e. **Description of Communication:** The method of communication will be to place a copy of the flyer in the box of every staff member. This is still the most effective method of sharing information at Parkway. The flyer could also be uploaded as a PDF to Parkway’s website, or the media center website, to ensure that it is also available digitally. The hard copy of the flyer will remind faculty that a digital version is available at the media center website.

f. **Timeframe:** This activity will be initiated the first month of school year 2013-2014 and will continue on a monthly basis indefinitely.

g. **Evaluation Strategy:** An archive will be kept of the books promoted through this program and their circulation statistics will be evaluated quarterly.

*Example Activity*

The activity that was chosen to be expanded for this paper is the one associated with Objective 2a, the staff development/student sign-up day. The name of this program
will tentatively be “Meet the eBrary!” Extra documents have been created to expand this activity. They include:

- A flyer promoting the fact that Parkway has a website
- A sample invitation letter that would be distributed to all classes
- A sample “Google Drive” schedule that teachers would use to sign up for time to come to the library for the event.
- A letter home to parents explaining that their child will be creating a username and password for the media center’s OPAC.

**Overall Evaluation Method for the Advocacy Plan**

1. **Survey to teachers about collaboration:** This survey will focus on the collaborative projects that the librarian completed with teachers. Questions could include: *Did you collaborate with the librarian? What was the experience like? Did it meet your objectives in addition to those of the librarian? How did the students react to the lesson?*

2. **Measurement of Circulation Statistics:** Not only will this help determine the status of Objective 2b, e-book circulation, it will also help determine if students truly appreciate the library in their lives. This evaluation will have to be completed either quarterly or every semester so as to get an accurate picture of whether or not efforts to increase circulation are working. This way the librarian will know to re-think things as to how best to meet the goals and objectives.
3. **Measurement of Website Traffic:** Measuring the traffic on the website will help determine if people are using it as intended. The ongoing feedback survey on the website will also help determine the quality of the site.

4. **Evaluation Survey sent out to teachers:** This survey will focus on how the library helped teachers on the whole over the course of the year. It will focus on what was beneficial to their instruction and what could be done to improve it the next year.

5. **Social Media critiques from students:** the librarian could use a number of web 2.0 tools as evaluative methods for the students. Blabberize or Animoto could be taught to the students and they can then be encouraged to make statements about how the library helped them this year. The librarian will create a discussion page on Edmodo and students can then be asked to contribute statements about the library’s value in their lives to the discussion board. These discussions and videos can then be linked from the media center page for sharing with stakeholders and reviewing by the librarian and the MTAC.

One of the main methods of evaluation will simply be word of mouth praise and the overall mood of the faculty and students regarding the media center, as sensed by the librarian. It is easy to tell when a school community is in love with their media center and if the librarian is sticking to a well developed advocacy plan, then the librarian at Parkway will be able to see it on the faces and mouths of those most affected by his work and efforts.


