Daniel Webster Middle School

Library Plan

Andie Kantor Bender

ELIB 550

**Introduction**

Daniel Webster Middle School

Daniel Webster Middle School is located in Los Angeles Unified School District, District 3, in West Los Angeles. There are 753 students in grades 6-8. Eighty percent of our scholars are on the free/reduced lunch program. Our 2010 API is 658 and is moving forward every year. DWMS operates on a traditional school year. Student demographics by ethnic group are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student Enrollment by Ethnic Group | Percentage |
| Hispanic/Latino | 63.2 |
| African American | 29.9 |
| White | 3.9 |
| Asian | 2.1 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0.2 |
| Filipino | 0.2 |
| Pacific Islander | 0.1 |

 Daniel Webster Middle School welcomes all learners. We have many special groups on campus: Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), Math, Engineering, and Science Academy (MESA), and Visual and Performing Arts Academy (VAPA), We also cater to many special needs students with Gifted and Talented in Education (GATE), School for Advanced Studies (SIS), and Special Education (SPED). One-fifth of our scholars carry an Individual Education Plan (IEP),

The big push at DWMS is toward reading novels. Students are expected to attempt to read one million words each year, as the California State Standard for eighth grade dictates. Numbers are tracked through a program called Accelerated Reader, and there are prizes for students who complete this. There is not much of a focus on reference or research in the school culture, although the TL has been making great strides in getting teachers to bring their classes to the library for research assistance.

**Daniel Webster Middle School Library Media Center**

 The library at Daniel Webster Middle School currently has a full time teacher librarian who is working on completing her LMT credential at CSULB. More and more student assistants are added to the library aide roster each day, which presents issues with counselors who place students in the library that they have nothing else to do with. This does not create a space that is easy to make the library great. We do not have an adult library aide, but Mr. and Mrs. Kantor are parent volunteers who come in to help out once a week.

The oldest photo of the library found so far is from 1954, which is the year the school opened, so the assumption is that the library opened the same year. The current shelves and desks are originals and in need of refurbishment. There are twelve working computers for student use, six of which actually work, and one computer at the circulation desk.

 The books need to be weeded. When the current TL began her work there she found a book titled something to the effect of, “Woman Can Join the Work Force, Too!” which explained that woman truly can be teachers, secretaries, and nurses if they truly work hard enough. This sample demonstrates the great attention and care previous librarians have given to their daily home.

 DWMS has a collection of over 13,000 titles. The average age of books is from 1996. Here is the breakdown by classification:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Classification** | **Average Age** | **# of Items** | **% of Collection** |
| 000 Computer Science & General Works | 2000 | 89 | 0.7 |
| 100 Philosophy & Psychology | 1999 | 62 | 0.5 |
| 200 Religion | 1996 | 103 | 0.8 |
| 300 Social Sciences | 1996 | 923 | 7.2 |
| 400 Language | 1999 | 19 | 0.1 |
| 500 Natural Sciences & Mathematics | 1998 | 971 | 7.6 |
| 600 Technology | 1999 | 618 | 4.8 |
| 700 The Arts | 2000 | 684 | 5.3 |
| 800 Literature & Rhetoric | 1994 | 274 | 2.1 |
| 900 Geography & History | 1997 | 1,760 | 13.7 |
| General Fiction | 1994 | 5,413 | 42.2 |
| Reference | 1995 | 887 | 6.9 |
| Biography | 1997 | 1,002 | 7.8 |

 Students have access to the library before school, at nutrition and lunch, and after school. During these times you will often find students reading quietly, collaborating with classmates on assignments, searching for a book for pleasure reading, and conducting research online for a class. Sixth and seventh grade English classes come to a library orientation at the beginning of each year. Teachers are encouraged to bring classes in for research, workshops, or just to give their students access to books.

 Daniel Webster Middle School’s library can accommodate approximately 115 bodies at one time, although that would be quite full for this one room. In the back room we have a faculty lending library, a professional library, and a media section.

 While Webster’s library is packed with students before school, and during, nutrition and lunch, it is relatively empty in comparison during the school day. Of the forty-two teachers here, there are only a handful that bring their classes to utilize and access information from our library media center. Encouraging teachers to fully utilize the library is a primary goal, so that students have access to the knowledge and resources housed here.

**Library Committee**

Andie Kantor Bender, Library Media Teacher – As TL, I would serve as the leader/chairperson and facilitator of the library committee. I am a National Board Certified Teacher in ELA, I am on School Site Council, and I am currently in graduate school for School Librarianship.

Judy Kantor, Parent Volunteer – Mrs. Kantor has volunteered her time in Webster’s library for the past year and a half.

Kendra Wallace, Principal – Being an English major from Harvard University, our principal is a true supporter of the library program.

Alma Salazar, Title 3 Access to Core Instructional Coach– Mrs. Salazar has worked at Webster for the last 6 years teaching English, History, and English Language Learners, and this year has moved into the Response to Intervention position. She is a National Board Certified Teacher in ELA and a strong supporter of our library.

Rich Mandl, Language Arts Teacher – Mr. Mandl effectively uses the library media center, collaborating with the LMT in teaching his students to utilize the center and access resourceful information. He has taught English and English Language Learners at Webster for nine years.

Bill Barrett, Visual and Performing Arts Teacher – Mr. Barrett is a supporter of the many programs at Webster that enhance and enrich student lives including the library media program. He is a member of CLT and an NBCT in Instrumental Music

Jessica Strong, Head of English Department – Ms. Strong has taught at Webster for the past ten years. This is her first year as department head and she is a strong voice for media literacy. She is on SSC and an NBCT in ELA.

**Mission Statement**

In support of the Daniel Webster Middle School mission statement and vision, the mission of Daniel Webster Middle School’s Library Media Program is:

1. To be an integral part of Daniel Webster Middle School and its community.
2. To collaborate with teachers to create authentic learning for all students
3. To provide instruction in information literacy
4. To support the content curriculum and reading initiatives
5. To promote life-long reading and learning, both for pleasure and for information
6. To provide our students with an inviting and safe environment

**Goals/Objectives**

Goal #1 - To facilitate programs throughout the school year that enable students to gain a further appreciation of reading.

Objectives: The Library Media Teacher will…

* seek input from teachers, parents, administration and students relating to literary events and activity ideas
* create an effective program that promotes the love of reading

Goal #2 - To provide current and up to date informational materials in both print and non-print formats.

Objectives: The Library Media Teacher will…

* update and analyze the current collection throughout the school year
* Create and maintain our Virtual Reference Desk (VRD)
* Seek input from faculty regarding sites to include on the VRD so that it complements current curriculum.
* serve as a personal resource to faculty and students

Goal #3 - To improve the achievement of our students by facilitating and taking part in collaborative planning and instruction with core content teachers.

Objectives: The Library Media Teacher will…

* meet with teachers of all content areas during department meetings to discuss possible collaborative teaching opportunities
* meet with teachers during individual teacher conference periods to create lessons involving research skills along with the core content curriculum
* provide on-going library trainings for faculty members including library practices, technological practices, Accelerated Reader and other such library related trainings.

**Action Plan**

**Goal #1**

To facilitate programs throughout the school year that enable students to gain a further appreciation of reading.

**Objectives**

The TL, with the aid of parents, students, administration and teachers, will develop and maintain a program that promotes the love of reading at our middle school. The target group is our student population, but my hope is that teachers, administrators, parents, and other adults in our community will join in as well.

**Activities**

*Girls Book Club*

With the help of one of our awesome PE teachers, I have started a girl’s book club, which meets every Wednesday during lunch. We have invited specific girls based on a loose criteria: maybe they need a little push in the reading department, maybe they could benefit from having lunch with a nice group of girls once a week, etc. Books have been requested through Donors Choose or other means, so that the girls can build their home libraries. We have, in the past, invited authors to come speak to the girls, and taken field trips to see motion picture versions of books read in order to have a compare/contrast conversation.

So far this year we have read *I Am Number Four, Fallen, Fanboy and Gothgirl, Better than Running at Night,* and *3 Willows*. We have taken a field trip to the Marina Del Rey UA Theater to see the film version of *I am Number Four*.

*Faculty Book Club*

The library hosts a faculty/staff book club that meets once a month during lunchtime to model literacy for our scholars. Books are chosen, and then voted upon by book club members. While we meet in the library, it is Mrs. Salazar, our Access to Core Curriculum coach, who sends out the email reminders and polls the faculty to find out which books to read. So far, we have completed the *Through Eyes Like Mine* and *The Lincoln Lawyer*, *Going for the Gold* and are currently reading *The Book Thief*.

*Million Word Challenge*

Accelerated Reader use takes place every day of the school year. Students, faculty, and staff read books and take quizzes on them, all the while further developing their vocabulary and reading comprehension. At each semester end there is a luncheon in honor of students who have read 1 million words, a California state standard for 8th grade, where they are fed pizza and given certificates. I keep track of who has read how many words by printing the top three pages of the entire school’s word count each week and posting them outside the library for all to view. Additionally, encouraging messages and the names of the top readers are read over the PA to get students to try to read and take their quizzes. The pizza luncheons at each semester are paid for out of student body funds. As the point person, I delegate responsibilities by asking our Title 1 coordinator to create certificates and invitations, and our leadership sponsor to get the pizza, drinks, cookies, and gifts. I have had excited students run up to me just to share that they heard their name read on the announcements! It’s a consistently fun activity.

*Barnes & Noble Book Fair*

I am orchestrating a Book Fair at Barnes & Noble in Westwood on Friday, May 20, 2011. While it sounds like it’s “just a book fair,” this is going to be an incredible experience. In addition to the monies raised for our student body funds and being able to purchase summer reading books, students will participate in a reader’s theater where they read aloud excerpts from writings that are both their own and from their favorite authors. So far I have made copies of invitations, and spoken to other adults (Booster Club, faculty, staff) to get them involved. I’ve also spoken to our leadership class a number of times and they have gone classroom to classroom telling the rest of the student body about it. While I am the Barnes & Noble contact person, I have delegated activities to different people: there is a hospitality chair, a raffle chair, a reader’s theater chair, a children’s book chair, and a publicity chair. In addition to the book fair, our publicity person, a booster club parent, is going around to feeder schools to invite prospective parents and students to come see what we are all about. We will have a “questions booth” that will be staffed by a parent, faculty/staff, and students so that future members of our community can come get questions answered.

*Book Exchange*

Many of our students own books that they’ve already read and appreciate the opportunity to trade them in for more. With the help of the Leadership class, I created a designated area in the library for students to drop off books every day for the two weeks before spring break. Leadership students came to the library every day during nutrition and lunch to give students tickets for each book they brought in. At the end of the two weeks, a book viewing took place during nutrition, where students saw all the books that have been collected. Finally, during lunch on the Friday before spring break, students brought their tickets to exchange them for books. It was an extremely raucous event; the leadership teacher and I hawked books at the top of our lungs to about 50 kids who at the same time were grabbing books, peering at the back covers, and putting them back, only to pick up another one. There were about 30 books left over that are still being given away as prizes for various library activities.

This was a coordinated effort between leadership and the library to a) give students access to more books to own if they wish b) allow them to get rid of books they’ve already read.

*Celebration of Books*

Activities related to the celebration of books will take place on a continuous basis throughout the school year. Activities include bookmark contests, book talks, celebrating Read Across America, etc. and I will be the point person. The target audience is the entire student body, as well as faculty and staff. Using these different strategies to get students into the library and interested in checking out books will increase their reading levels and interest, and hopefully, raise test scores.

As LMT, I head the various committees needed to implement these activities. Webster’s library team, along with volunteer teachers and parents, will assist in the implementation. Additionally, the leadership class, the library media class, and the yearbook class can support these activities as well. Communication is vital with all parties involved in the planning and implementation process of such events, so I will utilize email to connect to everyone involved.

Publicizing events well draws attention to potential participants. For campus activities, the yearbook class will create posters, the leadership class can make announcements over the PA, and of course, my library media class can create fun posters to place on our website. Including these key students will also create a buzz around campus that will do more than anything I could ever do; word of mouth is always the best form of publicity.

Data will need to be collected relating to the number of students participating in such events. Sign-in sheets will log the number of participants. In addition, I will ask for specific written feedback from students, parents, volunteers, committees and teachers about what worked and what didn’t. A sample question might be, “what changes can we make that will improve these programs?”

**Goal #2**

To provide current and up to date informational materials in both print and non-print formats.

**Objectives**

The TL will update and analyze the current collection throughout the school year, create and maintain our Virtual Reference Desk (VRD), seek input from faculty regarding sites to include on the VRD so that it complements current curriculum, and serve as a personal resource to faculty and students. The target groups for this activity are the teachers and the library itself.

**Activities**

*Weeding*

Our average copyright date is 1996. As mentioned earlier, some of our books are incredibly outdated. A mass weeding needs to be done.

*Virtual Reference Desk*

The average copyright date is 1996 for our books. This means that some weeding needs to occur. Unfortunately, not only is there no budget to increase our library, but as the library will be closed next year, there is no push to purchase newer books. This means that I needed to find another source of information for our students to utilize. Thus, our Virtual Reference Desk was born.

Our Virtual Reference Desk website was created at the beginning of this school year for many reasons, but the two most important are to give students a small, focused collection of websites to work with on each topic, and ensure their information use is current. Because our nonfiction section is quite outdated, I began this site with all of LAUSD’s Digital Library sites and expanded from there, including the best links I could find from other school’s Virtual Reference Desks, as well. At present, when I meet with teachers to plan lessons, I ask them for websites —and I find them, myself— that connect with the research assignment they are doing in order to add to VRD. After some time of doing this our VRD will become specific to our school and personalized to our curriculum.

*Book Purchasing*

I will update Mackin, Follett, and Perma-bound with our MARC records so that they have a current idea of what is in our library. I know that Mackin offers a free service that includes suggestions for what to weed out. There is a small amount of money from fines that I might use to purchase new books.

It is my hope that students and faculty will use me as a resource based on my growing knowledge of our current collection. I would like to serve as a tutor of sorts, assisting students with the research process so they will become effective users of our materials. A weakness I see is that I am still new to this library, so still learning what books we have and don’t have, as well as where they are housed.

I, along with my student library aides will conduct library inventory. I will make the final decisions on purchase orders after consultation and assistance from students and faculty. I will make decisions about what books and topics are needed according to student request and teacher projects, even if there isn’t money or desire to purchase them.

Data will need to be collected, logging the number of students, classes and faculty members who use the library facilities. Sign-in sheets will log this information. Inventory will allow us to analyze our current collection and help determine such decisions as weeding outdated materials and the purchase of new materials. Additionally, I will utilize the suggestions form I created using Google Docs, so that library patrons can request books they wish to see in our library.

**Goal #3**

To improve the achievement of our students by facilitating and taking part in collaborative planning and instruction with core content teachers.

**Objective**

I will meet with teachers during department meetings and during individual teacher conference periods to collaboratively develop and create lessons using research methods to assist in learning the core content curriculum. I will also provide on-going library trainings for faculty members including best library practices, best technological practices, Accelerated Reader and other such library related trainings.

Here is where I see the greatest number of obstacles that may prevent us from achieving this goal. The teachers at Webster have been rather unwilling to collaborate with me and/or bring classes into the library to utilize its resources and research tools available. There are several reasons for this, the first being that I took over the library from a grouch that no one wanted their students near, and so a solid library habit has never been formed. Another reason is that every content area is now on a pacing plan and working together with other teachers of their content and grade level, and while I flit from department meeting to department meeting, they still don’t see me as a resource. Also, teachers need to teach according to this plan and stay within the recommended time frame. Many teachers are afraid that if they come into the library, the time spent here will impede on the pacing schedule, not realizing that the research skills taught would be embedded into their curriculum. Many of our teachers who assign the same projects every year are sometimes intimidated and unwilling to change and grow their curriculum. Even so, I will continue make a efforts through open and effective communication to get classes into the library even if for a read aloud and to get students surrounded by books and in a different environment other than their classroom. I will continue to attend department and team meetings to discuss possible lesson ideas. I will seek input from teachers relating to how they see the library benefiting their students. I will provide planning sheets for teachers to fill out so I can better understand what it is they would like their students to achieve. This way, we can better develop lesson ideas to achieve those goals. There are a few teachers who do utilize the facilities and are willing to collaborate. Some of the most impressive student work has been produced due to the collaborative efforts with core content teachers.

Student achievement will improve when students are exposed to a variety of informational materials and sources to aid in the studies of various curriculums. Teaching collaboratively exposes children to new ideas, ways of thinking and ways in which to work with others. In addition, the fields of technology and research are on a rise. Effective communication and collaborative planning time is so that we can execute a well thought out plan.

With the encouragement of the library team and administration, this will be a concerted effort on my part to encourage the participation from content classroom teachers. Collaborative teaching does include the cooperation and dedication from all those involved in the planning and implementation process.

I will share the services the library can provide through the writings of letters, memorandums, notes in teacher boxes and discussion. By keeping communication open I hope to achieve my desired outcome.

As the head of the library team, I will hold meetings to discuss issues relating to goal #3. I will need to be in constant communication with the administration, department chairs, and teachers. I will send reminders to teachers about the week and class periods they’ve signed up for both the Monday before their visit, and the day of. I will continue to ask that teachers fill out evaluation forms regarding visits to the library. I will ask that teachers have the initial planning sheet filled out to make the planning process a lot smoother. Finally, I will make it my mission to find out which teachers are doing research projects with their classes and how I can help support them.