

(398 words)

Making Connections with Others

By the AASL Standards and Guidelines Implementation Task Force

When was the last time you collaborated with another school librarian? If it has been a while since you've had this experience, then it's time to consider deepening your connections with librarian colleagues this year. This might mean convening more frequently with those you have already developed collegial relationships, nurturing new contacts, or creating new venues for conversations. Here are a few ideas:

- Consider centralizing your librarian contacts. Are you a bullet journalist? Consider adding a page for librarians with whom you have enjoyed good conversations—at conferences, summits, or in meetings. Make a note of your valuable conversations and the people who inspire you. Be intentional: stay in touch!
- Be The One. That's right: be the librarian who invites others to have a conversation on Google Hangouts, at a breakfast, an upcoming Twitter chat, a phone call, or other virtual or face-to-face meeting.
- Start a “lesson sharing” Google+ community with your school, district, or state colleagues. Give feedback!
- Create virtual experiences. Are you all alone in your district? Mine the internet: search for librarians in neighboring districts. When perusing opportunities, it doesn't matter if a district is bigger or smaller than yours, let others know about your interest in sharing. Virtual environments are plentiful: Zoom, Google Hangouts, Skype... Know that others are looking or wishing they were having important conversations, too.
- Look at the membership roster of your state organization—who is in the news? Who might be looking for a collaborative partner? Librarians in-the-news are often excited to hear that their work has invigorated other's practice. Send them an email. Ask them questions. Share your work with them!
- Join in the conversation. If you aren't attending #yourstatetwitterchat, you are missing an entire culture of learning—it is free, and you can later reach out in a private message to those with whom you resonate.
- Enter lessons and ideas on the AASL Discussion board! standards.aasl.org/forums

Collaborating is empowering, fosters creativity and innovation, and provides platforms for growing and learning. Reaching out will reinforce your good work, provide a new space for creating solutions to old problems, inspire you to further your practice, and create lifelong friendships! Enjoy a cuppa' tea or coffee with a librarian and enter your own Hogwarts transformation—you will never be the same!