

GOAL PLANNING FORM Part I

Based on a school/student problem/need, devise a goal to carry out as the school librarian to meet this need/problem. It must be approved by both your site supervisor and the course instructor. Submit this form for your proposal (Part 1) answering numbers 1 - 6, then, for the final product, (Part 2) update/complete this form (adding your response to #7). You will present your goal at our last class.

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1) Discussion of need/problem (how you came up with this goal project based on school improvement/student achievement, or other need)

As previously mentioned, I am not working in the school library, but rather in a kindergarten classroom. I am familiar with this library, as I had previously put in lots of volunteer hours here last year while working part-time in another elementary school library in the county.

There was a lot of struggling on my part to narrow down a goal that was attainable by the time this class ends. I am friends with the librarian at VCA and I work at its after-school program as well as work in the library during my lunch and planning periods. She is newer to the library (she came in two years ago) and has done a few changes already. When I brought this assignment to her for ideas, she had many ideas that she wanted to change about the library. One of the biggest ones was expanding the library space to double its present size. Well this was something that I know wouldn't be attainable by this assignment's due date so we moved on. She had other ideas like purchasing online encyclopedias, creating a makerspace, getting parents more involved in Accelerated Reader, and many other big ticket items.

You see, since VCA is a private school, they do not get any funding from the government. The main source of money for the school library comes from the small annual budget, the two book fairs each year, donations, and sometimes the PTO. So I knew whatever goal I decided on had to be something that was at a minimal cost.

It finally hit me when I was in the middle of a conference with the parents of one of my students who is struggling with beginning reading. The mother stated, "This is a rigorous curriculum for kindergarten!" She wanted to know whatever happened to kids just learning how to play and their colors and numbers in kindergarten? When did they need to know how to read books and write paragraphs? The quickened pace and how fast we are moving in the curriculum now has brought concern to many parents and even among the students. I can see in some of my students who are struggling that they know they are falling behind because they still don't have the concept down from what we learned previously. They are struggling to keep up.

We have moved from CVC words and are now on special sound words (trust, go, with) and about 5% of the students are becoming frustrated as they are having trouble keeping up with the accelerated pace. Looking at test scores (verbal and phonetical recognition weekly tests) of the kindergarten students in my class as well as the other two classes, along with classroom observations of the student population, point to evidence of this frustration.

Students are screened before they are accepted into the kindergarten program at VCA. Screening consists of letter and number recognition, color and shape recognition, verbal questioning about things like positional words, comprehension of a reading passage that either they read or the screener reads to them, and problem solving questions. While kindergarteners take the Terra Nova Test in April, along with the rest of the elementary and middle schools, the scores and data from these tests help first grade teachers but really cannot help kindergartener teachers because this test is given so late in the year. It is more of a tool to help the first grade teachers get a picture about the rising kindergarteners. So the screening given by the school at the beginning of the year and the assessments given at the beginning and ending of each of the four marking periods are other tools that aide the teachers (along with the weekly tests given by the teachers in math, ELA, and reading groups) in determining the comprehension of the students and how well they are understanding the materials being taught.

Using a student of mine as an example, whom I will call EC, I was quickly seeing her struggle escalate. In her original screening, EC tested average, according to the testing scores. However, EC quickly began to drop off after Christmas when the pace began to pick up, moving from reading CVC words and recognizing short vowels to reading words with long vowels and special sounds that were multi-syllable words. EC's grades on her weekly tests began to fall, her quarterly assessments dropped from E's (the highest grade) to S's and N's and even U's (the lowest grade). These were coupled with the frustration observed in class when EC stated school wasn't fun anymore, or when she would find excuses like having to go to the bathroom or wanting to get a drink of water when we began our ELA blocks. The picture was quickly being drawn for EC and two other students in my class as well as seven

students between the other two classes. These students were not keeping up and they knew it.

A frequent struggle I have found between teachers and the parents of the students who go to VCA is that they believe since they pay for their child's tuition (as opposed to public school where students' schooling is paid for by taxes), the teacher should be able to work with them at school and no follow through at home is required. I started out my school year assuring parents that we need to work together as a team for their child's best success to be obtained, but there are many parents who believe this is not the case. They feel that since they pay for their child's education, everything should be done in school and that if there are any struggles going on with the students, this is the fault of the teacher and the teacher alone should fix it. This is frustrating because anyone who knows about education knows that learning takes place everywhere, not just in the classroom. There is no follow through at home with EC, and this was brought up at the latest parent-teacher conference. The parents of EC believe no follow through at home is necessary. EC should be able to read and write because they pay for her schooling. When I asked if they read to EC, they stated that they really don't have time for that and they thought the librarian read to them. This is truth for more than EC's parents however, when I questioned the students in my class and asked them how many of them read with their parents and only about half of my class raised their hands.

I remembered reading about how teacher-librarians help increase student achievement in reading and I thought to myself, our school could benefit from a program that helped struggling readers. One such article was taken from a study done in Florida for the implementation of small group reading in a program, Florida Reading First Schools. This is a program that targets struggling readers and shows how setting up small reading groups and differentiated lesson plans within these groups can help struggling readers meet their goals.

The article by Kosanovich, et al (retrieved 2018) stated that the program, Florida Reading First, "requires the teacher to use data to form small, flexible groups so that each group meets the specific needs of the students assigned to it," (p.2). Groups were set up by teachers and concentrated on the following factors:

- •size of each group (e.g., 3-5 for struggling readers, 5-7 for other students, etc.)
- number of days per week each group attends the Teacher-Led Center (e.g., daily, twice/week, 3 times/week)
- number of minutes per day (e.g., 10 minutes, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, etc.)
- type of lesson structure for each group (i.e., *Skills-Focused Lesson* or *Guided Reading*) content and level of the lesson (i.e. area(s) of reading skill and level of instruction).

There are a few students in my class and the other kindergarten classes who I know would benefit from a program that would help them work on their reading skills in a

small group or even one-on-one setting. "Teacher-librarians play a vital role in the success of literacy programs in a school, and they can help strengthen students beyond that," (Antrim, 2010, p. 24).

In a federally funded study performed by Bryk (retrieved 2018) about the impact that guided reading in smaller groups has on students and the success of meeting their reading goals, it was determined that this approach to reading was a valid one. The team found in their studies through fall and spring DIBELS and Terra Nova scores and data along with 240 teacher observations on 8,500 children in grades kindergarten through third grade substantial evidence that small group reading was successful. One of the primary findings was:

"The average rate of student learning increased by 16% over the course of the first implementation year, 28% in the second year, and 32% in the third year—very substantial increases," (Fountas), (Biancarosa, Bryk, & Dexter, 2010, p.19).

This literacy program could help the kindergarteners develop stronger reading skills and promote a love of reading but in a smaller group setting, not unlike reading groups. Because it could be done during their library time, this would supplement the time that they work on reading in the classroom. It has been my observation that lots of times when a student has trouble reading, s/he will shy away from reading. The integration of a reading program that could be tailored to students' needs done through teacher and librarian collaboration would help them gain confidence with reading as well as, I believe, develop a love of reading once they see for themselves how their reading skills have improved.

"Research has demonstrated that small- group instruction helps students improve achievement," (Fountas, 1996, p.3).

Taylor, Frye, Short, & Shearer (2008), found that there was success for first grade students when there was an intervention in reading done with the struggling readers and the teacher. There was an improvement index of +18 when there was a small group reading intervention done with struggling readers.

I am focusing on the kindergarten grade level because that's what I teach and those are the students I am familiar with, but I hope to implement a program that would be an aide to a variety of grade levels once I get this one up and running. I ran it past the librarian and she really loved the idea.

2) What school library research/best practice says works for your need/problem (minimum one citation).

Beard & Antrim (2010) state that librarians who focus on the teaching part of being a librarian, "...are able to promote literacy by placing the right book at the right time in the hands of a student (p. 24)." Along with collaboration with the classroom teacher, the librarian will be working closely with students. This will give her the opportunity to assess individual needs and help individuals find books that will interest them and motivate them to read.

This project will take into consideration multiple literacies as a strategy to support struggling readers. Through collaboration, the classroom teacher and librarian could, "use their expert knowledge in acquiring and evaluating, developing and promoting the effective use of learning resources in different formats and media, both on-site and remote, to support the instructional program," (Johnson, 2008). Considering their different learning styles, students may choose to read print, digital, or audio books. Taking into consideration students' multiple literacies in a reading workshop would allow students to interact with reading material in formats that more closely mirror their learning styles and therefore should make the experience with reading more pleasant.

Johnson (2008) indicates that reading workshops that take into consideration multiple literacies, "encourage and engage students in reading, viewing, and listening for understanding and enjoyment." Developing a pleasant relationship associated with reading for pleasure with a student who has had unpleasant experiences struggling to read may allow him/her to see that the task of reading is not something to be dreaded and may give him/her motivation to persevere. "The majority of kids ages 6–17 agree, "it is very important for their future to be a good reader" (86%) and about six in ten kids love or like reading books for fun (58%), a steady percentage since 2010," (Kids & Family Reading Report Website, 2016).

Finally, to "integrate information literacy standards for student learning into the content and objectives of the school's curriculum," (Kids & Family Reading Report Website, 2016) is a help to achieve a successful reading workshop goal. Tying the reading workshop into the school's curriculum will not only give guidance to the librarian of the issue at hand but will give the classroom teacher knowledge that what is being fostered in the reading workshop can be tied into their classroom teaching. The librarian's work with struggling readers in a reader's workshop through her instructional partner role in collaboration with the classroom teacher demonstrates the librarian's commitment to student achievement.

3) Proposed Goal (suggest S.M.A.R.T. goal guidelines): **Specific:** Co-teaching with the kindergarten teachers, the librarian will conduct biweekly reading workshops with small groups made up of no more than 3-4 students of struggling readers from three kindergarten classes of 40 for 12 weeks

that will complement the classroom reading groups and provide additional support for struggling students. Students will be selected for the workshop based on reading assessments such as skills tests, STAR test, phonics skills tests, reading group placement, and teacher recommendation. By the end of 12 weeks or by April 18, students who participate in the readers' workshop will show reading growth as measured on a reading assessment that students took earlier in the year. Additionally, I will interview students both before and after the intervention to see if students working more closely with someone had an effect on their thoughts about reading to see if their beliefs about reading changed.

Measurable- Reading growth can be measured based on before and after classroom reading assessments. Students attitudes towards reading will be measured through an interview before and after to determine if a reading workshop helped struggling readers become more confident and positive about reading.

Achievable- this goal is achievable because it would not interfere with classroom time. Students are already coming to the library during their block scheduling (as well as flexible scheduling in the afternoons for the older students) so they would not lose out on their library time either. The cost would be minimal as many of the resources are already in the library. The goal should be achievable in the time frame given of 12 weeks.

Relevant- this goal is relevant because there are unfortunately students who struggle with reading across the grade levels in our school as evidenced by test scores, parent concerns, school leadership concerns. Success in school goes hand in hand with reading ability. "High levels of leisure reading and reading proficiency are associated with greater academic, financial, professional, and civic benefits (Arts, 2007).

Time-bound- the workshop would be during the regular time that students come to the library during their block period which is once a week as well as once a week after school for one hour. Assessments would be given at the beginning of the program, at the end of the study in mid-April, and at least twice during the program to measure the student's achievement.

4) Proposed Objective(s): These are the measurable steps you will take to fulfill your goal and include justification for why you are taking these steps.

I have brought this goal to the attention of the librarian and hope to tell the principal about it (and get approval for it) on Monday. As soon as she approves it, a mass email to teachers in grades kindergarten through fifth grade will be sent out telling them about the reading workshop program and what we hope to accomplish with it. It will also go over how they can help in the assessment process. A time frame of one

week will be given to the teachers to respond if they are interested and another week will be given to help create a list of possible students that would benefit from the workshop so I can measure how many teachers agreed to participate and how many students participated.

Once the students are selected (depending on the above-mentioned measurements) the workshop will be started during their library time. Weekly collaboration between the librarian and the teachers about the student's achievements will take place. Collaboration will also help in making sure that objectives and standards are being met. I can measure and document these collaborations (what I talk about, progress, changes that need to be made, student attitudes, parent comments, teacher observations of students, etc.) as well.

Aside from the initial assessments given by the classroom teacher, two other assessments will be used throughout the period of the workshop to measure the anticipated growth of the student's reading abilities. A final assessment will be given to measure the overall success of both the student and the workshop mid-April.

- 5) Plan for implementing objective(s): Implementing the objectives will take place both in the library and the classroom. Again, careful and constant collaboration between the librarian and the teachers is of the upmost importance for implementing objectives.
- 6) How will you measure your success? (Instruments, data, interviews, etc.) How will you know if your objectives are successful? What data will you collect to show your goal helped meet the need?

The school-wide assessment for measuring a student's reading ability aside from the Terra Nova test given at the end of April is the STAR test given each quarter. Both of these will play a role in measuring the success of the goal or not. Along with these tests would be teacher analysis (both through interview and classroom assessments) and leveled readers and Accelerated Reader levels. Again, interviews with the students at the beginning of the study and at the termination of the study to determine students' attitudes towards reading will be performed.

I will know the objectives are successful when I can see that the student has improved in his/her reading skills, reading abilities, the change or improvement in attitude towards reading. Towards the end of the program, I can allow the student the ability to chose books they want to read and determine if they are picking out books on their level.

"Research (Pearson & Camperell, 1994; Pressley, 2000) suggests that readers adjust their reading to give attention to different aspects of texts when they encounter

different types of texts. To be a skillful comprehender, therefore, readers need exposure—with teaching—to a wide variety of texts, " (Fountas, retrieved 2018).

I'll also look at types of books (subject and print vs digital or audio) whether they are choosing a variety of books (fiction versus nonfiction, different topics versus the same subject, etc.) and ones that they can read successfully. Also, are they checking out more books?

7) Analysis of goal project at completion and your reflection on the project overall. (What was successful, what was not, how do you know? How did you advocate for your library because of this project?) See assignment for more specifics on addressing this.

GOAL PROJECT FINAL Part II

Goal Summary:

Co-teaching with the kindergarten teachers, the librarian will conduct biweekly reading workshops with small groups made up of no more than 3-4 students of struggling readers from three kindergarten classes of 40 for 12 weeks that will complement the classroom reading groups and provide additional support for struggling students. Students will be selected for the workshop based on reading assessments such as skills tests, STAR test, phonics skills tests, reading group placement, and teacher recommendation. By the end of 12 weeks or by April 18, students who participate in the readers' workshop will show reading growth as measured on a reading assessment that students took earlier in the year. Additionally, I will interview students both before and after the intervention to see if students working more closely with someone had an effect on their thoughts about reading to see if their beliefs about reading changed.

Results:

The program was, for the length of time it took place in, and for the time frame it was practiced in, overall successful. I believe if started at the beginning of the school year next year, or maybe a month into the school year to give the classroom teacher a better idea of where the student's stand literacy wise, instead of half-way through the school year, this would help add to the program's success. Also, I believe if started more towards the beginning of the school year, parents would be more onboard. One of the factors I saw take place almost immediately when this program started was the interest

it drew from other students who were in the library at that time, as well as other teachers across varying grade levels. With a "practice round" under my belt, I feel that this program would benefit from earlier teacher-student-parent intervention. The longer a teacher has to work with a student, the better the results will be.

As I was involved with the program, I felt the best way to keep the parents informed was speaking to them directly about their child's progress when they came to pick them up as well as a kind of report similar to a progress report that outlined the student's strengths and weaknesses during the progression of the program. Again, if there had been more time, more reports could have gone out to the parents to keep them informed of their child's progress. I have included a blank form HERE and a form that I used with one of the students in my program HERE. I created these forms myself while thinking of areas that we measure students on to be successful readers.

For this program, I had a total of only four students, all from kindergarten, who participated. I believe this was partly due to the fact that this was a program started mid-year and partly because I am a new teacher at the school. Since I am not the librarian and I am not very well known to parents outside of my kindergarten class, perhaps people didn't really know what to expect. Three of the four students were from my kindergarten class, the other student from one of the other kindergarten classes. There was one boy and three girls. We met together in the library for an hour twice a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays). The program started full-time on January 30, 2018 and ran through April 19, 2018.

There were a number of resources and manipulatives I used with the program from the Abeka readers (this is the reading curriculum the school uses), leveled readers in the library (according to the Accelerated Reader Program), sight word index cards, reading word index cards, manipulatives/ games that I created or found on Teachers Pay Teachers, Boom Cards (digital resource), Epic website, and teacher input. All of these proved helpful in not only making the students successful readers but also with keeping their attention after a full day of school.

As mentioned above, parents were given feedback after every session as well as once a month with a student reading progress report. Parents were encouraged to read with their children on a daily basis. Sometimes they did and sometimes they didn't. It was evident when the students did not read with their parents. To improve this area of the program and to increase parent involvement, I am going to include either a reading log like the one found on the back of the Abeka readers (see HERE) or create a reading reward system that would be similar to summer reading programs done at public libraries. One of the main areas I felt needed to be improved upon was parent involvement. As I stated in my original Goal Plan, many parents at VCA feel that they do not need to work with their children and everything should be left up to the teachers because they pay a tuition. It was always evident when a student hadn't read for the long weekend (from after we met on Thursday all the way until we met again on

Tuesday). They appeared to have lost most of the progress made in the previous session. I tried to explain the importance of parental involvement but they didn't always see it that way. So by creating a prize for reading or a reward system, I am hoping this will increase parent involvement.

The reading program that I began in the library this year as an after-school program, has helped increase awareness of the importance of the library as well as the role of the librarian. The collaboration that took place between myself (acting as both teacher and librarian) and the other kindergarten teacher helped to increase the validity of the program. The third kindergarten teacher who did not have any students in the program was often interested in how things were going and the progress I saw with the students; I think she will be an involved teacher next year. Again, I can't express the importance of starting a program like this at the beginning of the year to determine its true value to the school. The principal and the superintendent were behind me but all materials (except for the Abeka materials) were purchased out of my pocket. Over the summer, I am going to eagerly search for grants and other funding that may be available to me and this program so that I may build upon the resource library that I have begun.

While I believe the four students involved in the program were successful, they achieved their successes at varying times and to varying degrees. For instance, Emma Claire was not very fluent, her recall and comprehension skills were minimal, and her decoding skills were low. By the end of the program, all areas that had needed work had improved greatly. She still can use to increase her fluency, and I am afraid that with the lack of her parents' involvement, she may backslide over the summer. Another example was Julius who struggled with almost every aspect of reading at the beginning of the program, but because of his parents' active involvement and Julius's desire to want to become a better reader, he had a far greater success than Emma Claire.

The following are work examples of documents I used throughout the program as well as some pictures of the materials I used. I found out through teaching kindergarten in the classroom that my best hope for keeping the attention of these kindergarteners was

to make this time together filled with games and fun activities. Straight reading from books for the whole hour was not going to work with these students.

THIS is an example of the beginning assessment I gave the students. It was very similar to the one used in the kindergarten classrooms at the beginning of the year. Many of the students did well with the identification and formation of the letters of the alphabet, but still struggled with their sounds (mostly the vowels). You can see from Julius's paper that he also struggled with rhyming words, sentence segmentation, onset and rime, and oral language. He has speech issues with the letter R and V, but I believe his parents are trying to find him a speech pathologist (VCA does not provide any services or special education services) and he has been recently diagnosed with ADHD but he is not being medicated for it.

In comparison, you can see Avaya's initial assessment <u>HERE</u>. She did better with the rhyming but about the same as Julius with the onset and rime and vowel sounds, especially short vowel sounds. She also did not do well with sentence segmentation.

Another way I tried to involve the parents and provide reinforcement for the student was by giving reading passages for homework on the days we met. I have included Julius's <u>HERE</u> and Emma Claire's <u>HERE</u>. I am more confident in Julius's results than I am in Emma Claire's as they may have coaxed her. So to get a better picture of the results, I gave them a different one when we met in the after school program. <u>HERE</u> is Julius's and <u>HERE</u> is Emma Claire's. While Julius appeared to have done about the same and Emma Claire did a bit worse, more importantly, I was able to see how they read the passage and whether they understood what they had read.

Exit tickets were used as a way for me to quickly see if they were comprehending what they read. They started out simple like the one <u>HERE</u> and then progressed like the one <u>HERE</u>. Examples of student work can be found <u>HERE</u>. They have to underline in the passage where they found the answers. This seemed to help them greatly rather than just saying "I don't know" or "I can't find it."

There were also pages that I used to see if they could hear ending sounds in words correctly. <u>HERE</u> (Melissa, 2018) is a student example. It was funny but he thought the loaf of bread was toast, in which case he would have colored it in correctly. These were simple enough in nature, but told me whether or not they could differentiate between the sounds.

To involve technology, we used the website, Epic. This is a great site to use as it has a load of digital books that students can either read along with or have it read to them. I use this a lot in my classroom and the user friendliness of the site is appealing to me. I also found a paper to see if they could follow written directions. I included QR codes with each direction to check if they were reading it correctly. You can see that page HERE (Elyse, 2018). Unfortunately, I forgot to keep a student example. Boom Cards

were another way for us to include technology in the program. These are digital cards on a variety of topics and grade levels. We used the ones with phonics like <u>THIS</u> (Boom Learning, 2018) example and <u>THIS</u> (Boom Learning, 2018). The students looked forward to this time when we practiced reading skills on technology.

Using follow up activities after reading certain books was another helpful aide for me to see how well the students retained information about what they had just read or been read to. Two books that I used and have student examples of are *Sneezy the Snowman* by Maureen Wright and *Snowmen at Night* by Caralyn Buehner. Sequencing was the task measured in THIS (Nicole, 2015) activity that used the story *Sneezy the Snowman*. Reading extensions were measured with THIS (Hook, 2018) activity using *Snowmen at Night*. Using other sources like this to measure a student's understanding and comprehension about what they read also incorporates writing.

Accelerated Reader (Renaissance, 2018) is a program that is used throughout VCA and is a useful tool in measuring a student's comprehension. Once the teacher has given the student their STAR test, the student is given a reading level that they may check out books and test on. While kindergarten doesn't participate in AR, I know this will be a useful tool to have at my disposal next year if there are older grade levels in the program. Looking back now, I feel I should have gone to the principal and librarian to enroll the kindergarteners in the after school program into Renaissance.

A final assessment tool that was used in determining the success of the student's reading skills was the Reading Records performed by the classroom teacher towards the end of the program. This gave me an indication of the student's reading skills I used both the first Reading Records administered by the classroom teacher at the beginning of the school year and then used the third quarter one since progress reports were going out at the time this program was ending.

Throughout the program I had the full support of the principal as well as the other classroom teacher. As stated previously, most of the parents were supportive as well. There was even collaboration between myself, the other kindergarten teacher, and one of the first grade teachers as well to find out what was to be expected of the students' reading skills who were entering first grade. The first grade teacher also pulled each of the students in the program during the school day to read with her. The first grade teacher's feedback was also used to help determine the successfulness of the students and their reading abilities. The students were all on track for first grade, but she recommended that we (kindergarten teachers) send home a reading skills and phonics packet over the summer with each of the students. Rising first graders also are given a reading list for the summer. I am in the process of finding and developing such a packet with the help of all of the kindergarten teachers and the first grade teacher.

This could be a really great program for struggling readers next year, especially if it is started at the beginning of the school year. Collaborating with classroom teachers, the

students will gain the greatest help. There was a positive impact for the four students that were involved with the program this year. They are all better readers and all of them have increased their fluency and comprehension as determined by the results of all of the assessments. I even believe that they have all come to enjoy reading. Towards the end of the program, I encouraged the students to find a book on a subject they hadn't known or read about before and while it was met with some resistance at first, they each saw the benefits in widening their reading choices. Throughout the program, we pulled books from both fiction and nonfiction and in many cases tried to compare the two areas. This program helped open the students' eyes to the awesome world of reading. They were able to gain reading skills and confidence in their reading abilities. This program was rewarding for me as well to see the students grow as readers when at the start of the program they all struggled greatly. To be in the position to witness this first hand was priceless and I hope to be able to see these results again next year with other students.

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