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One Librarian's Success Story

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Abstract: Christine Poser, a middle-school librarian at Myra S. Barnes I.S. 24 on Staten Island, NY, is one of the educational leaders in her school's Common Core State Standards (CCSS) implementation. Her students have been guided in the inquiry process and taught how to make connections. They are learning how to develop intriguing questions for further discovery and research. These teaching practices, all of which are called for throughout the CCSS, place this school librarian at the core of education in her school and a model for others to follow.

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Full text: One Librarian's Success Story Christine Poser is helping her school move on CCSS Christine Poser, a middle-school librarian at Myra S. Barnes I.S. 24 on Staten Island, NY, is one of the educational leaders in her school's Common Core State Standards (CCSS) implementation. Having spent several years teaching from New York City's Information Fluency Continuum, she already had a strong foundation teaching, supporting project-based learning experiences, and using formative assessments to capture and evaluate student learning. In turn, her students have been guided in the inquiry process and taught how to make connections. They are learning how to develop intriguing questions for further discovery and research, investigate a topic, construct new meanings, develop opinions and supporting arguments, apply new understandings, create final products, and reflect on what they learned. These teaching practices, all of which are called for throughout the CCSS, place this school librarian at the core of education in her school and a model for others to follow. As Poser's familiarity and understanding of the Common Core grew, she realized she had an opportunity to take a strong role in the implementation of these new standards. With the ongoing support and encouragement from her principal, Lenny Santamaria, she attended several workshops on the Common Core and alignment with NYC's Information Fluency Continuum. She began to recognize where the information literacy skills she has taught for the past 17 years merge with the CCSS. She also noticed, however, most educators did not express the same confidence. Success with teachers and parents To make inroads, Poser started to share her knowledge of inquiry with staff, parents, and students. She gave a workshop on text complexity for staff and attended curriculum-planning meetings, providing resources and informational text to complement instructional units. She expanded her collaborative relationships and developed engaging projects with new teachers in the school. She analyzed the collection and looked at how to enhance it. The shift to Common Core called for more non-fiction texts, and Poser thought outside the box when it came to expanding the library's collection. She won a grant for a specialized collection on the American presidency that provided \$5,000 for new materials. Then she developed a collaborative inquiry unit with the art teacher around the new collection, introducing students to primary sources, speeches, policies, and biographies of these U.S. leaders. Meanwhile, Poser created book displays thoughtfully highlighting engaging nonfiction at varying reading levels. The titles circulate often and change regularly, focusing on Poser's Picks of the Month, which features tie-ins across subject areas with both fiction and nonfiction. Collaborating with the principal and parent coordinator, Poser helped create an informational pamphlet for parents that explains the Common Core and highlights the resources available through the library. Additionally, she facilitated a workshop at a PTA meeting, introducing parents to the library's website, walking them through databases, and demonstrating how to use the online catalog from home. She even showed them how to cite sources. Poser also developed new programming that reached out to parents

and students, inviting them after school hours to Warm Up with a Good Book and Vote for Books. Both programs focused on nonfiction titles and brought parents into the physical library space, helping them make connections with their children and the resources available to support the Common Core. Real-world connections The Common Core forces students to connect ideas outside of the classroom to the real world. To meet the standards, students and teachers need to develop new dynamics like the ones modeled by Poser. They also require us all to overcome the angst that these changes make many educators feel. Librarians like Christine Poser are key to a successful transition. With the support of administrators, they can have a huge impact on the implementation of the new standards. AuthorAffiliation Melissa Jacobs-Israel (Mjacobs7@schools.nyc.gov) is Coordinator, NYC School Library System, NYC Department of Education, Office of Library Services. To submit an On Common Core opinion piece, please contact Rebecca T. Miller at rmiller@mediasourceinc.com.

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