Vision for the Gering High School Library

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Gering Public Schools

Vision for the Gering High School Library Media Center

This vision for the high school library was prepared by Annie Boggs, High School Librarian and Robin Schadwinkel, High School Paraprofessional with School Profile information provided by Terri Martin, Director of Curriculum & Assessment. In this vision for strategic planning we have researched our external and internal environment, organizational strengths and weaknesses, established the library vision and mission statements and developed action plans for improving the high school library.

**External Scan**

**Social trends:** According to the Gering High School Profile Report, Gering loses approximately 10% of their students each year due to transfers to other schools or programs. The students are transferring to other schools for better perceived sports programs and alternative educational needs such as on line education or vocational programs. The attendance rate at the high school is 95.56% and the graduation rate is 87.21%.

**Economic trends:** Agriculture is a definite driving influence in Gering. However, several small businesses add to the charm of this close knit community. The percentage of free and reduced priced meals has consistently increased over the last four years and is currently at 43.58% (updated 2-3-12). The completion of a new elementary school in the district will increase taxes for homeowners by approximately $1.00/per $1,000. For example, a homeowner with a home valued at $200,000 will see an increase of approximately $200.00 annually.

**Political Trends**: This is an election year and small businesses in the state of Nebraska would like to see a change in the leadership of our country. After visiting with business owners in Gering, the consensus is that the government is trying to over regulate small businesses. For example, Chiropractic offices across the state have seen an increase in Medicare and Medicaid audits and construction companies have seen an increase in OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) visits. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics the unemployment rate in Nebraska is 4% as of February 2012, which is below the National average. **Demographic trends:** Gering Public School district enrollment has averaged 2,136 over the last five years. The high school enrollment was 641 students in 2010-2011. Enrollment in special education programs has steadily increased over the last three years to 8.40% of students. Gering High School enrollment by ethnicity is 69.4% white, 26% Hispanic with English Language Learner Enrollment up from 1.64% to 2.42% in 2010-2011.

**Summary:** In summary, Gering High School is affected and will continue to be affected by social, economic, political and demographic trends. Economic trends tend to have the most influence due to the tough economic problems our nation is facing.

**Internal Scan**

**Assessment:** Gering High School teachers continue to feel the pressure being placed on them due to student assessment scores. The ACT scores at Gering High School have shown a steady decline of 1% over the last five years. However, the high school has seen an increase in the number of students taking the ACT. The PLAN assessment is also given to every 10th grade student to determine college and career readiness. Gering High School has been slightly above the national average on the PLAN assessment. The Nebraska State Accountability Assessments Reading, Mathematics and Writing were piloted online during the 2010-2011 school year. Therefore, no assessments scores were available. In the school year 2009-2010 the high school was meeting the standards in all three areas.

**Climate:** *The Bulldog Way* has become a district wide slogan that is displayed on letterhead, posters around the district, on t-shirts, etc. *The Bulldog Way* translates to the district doing thing the “right” way with honesty, integrity and to the best of one’s abilities. Gering Public Schools received District Accreditation in November, 2011 from AdvanceED. In the current school year the average years of experience for teachers at the high school is 21 years and 53% of them have has a Master’s Degree. Two certified staff members will retire this year and the head of maintenance. The staff works hard to maintain a positive attitude and collaborate for the best interest of the students. The administrative leadership is strong and supportive of the staff and students.

**Standards:** The Nebraska state standards are updated every five years in Language Arts, Mathematics and Science and Social Studies. The staff works hard to meet the state standards in these areas. Reports must be sent to the state department and an annual state report card can be viewed by the public at <http://reportcard.education.ne.gov>.

**Curriculum:** Our Director of Curriculum and Development is in her third year with the district. She is working hard to align the k-12 curriculum and incorporate collaboration between schools in the district. The school improvement goals are to improve and apply literacy and math skills. The high school would also like to improve students’ social skills to allow them to be accountable and productive in their personal future endeavors.

**Organizational Analysis**

**Strengths and Weaknesses of Gering Public Schools:** Gering is a small community that is supportive and proud of Gering Public Schools. The community is supportive of the school’s sports activities, club activities, parent teacher conferences and school sponsored events. Each school has two or three business partners each year that help provide volunteers or help financially. The community understands that it takes several people working together to raise a child. The school board and administration strive to implement new ideas and keep pace with a neighboring and larger district across town. Challenges do face the district and these challenges include:

* Financial challenges to keep updated facilities
* Keeping technology secure and efficient
* Providing up to date training sessions on technology
* Communication to staff and public from administration
* Curriculum alignment between schools

**Strengths and Weaknesses of the Gering High School Library:** The Gering High School Library has support from high school administrators and staff. However, district support could be stronger. The district employs one Library Media Specialist for the Jr. High and the High School buildings. Enrollment between these two locations in 2010-2011 was 950. The high school media center employs a half time Library Media Specialist, a full time paraprofessional and nine student librarians. The library is centrally located with enough space to meet the needs of three classes simultaneously. The library has 28 desktop computers, three mobile labs and 12 Kindles. The library would like to purchase 12 additional Kindles for the school year 2012-2013. Technology can be a weakness in the library because of the amount of gaming, music streaming, interrupted internet service and lost student documents. It should be recommended that each student carry a flash drive. The primary use of the library is computer access by student. Secondarily, a classroom area with smart board is used by teachers. Thirdly, the library is used as work center/hang out for students before school, after school and during lunch. The library staff would like to educate staff and students on the proper use of the library materials. With use of the internet, it has become more and more difficult to purchase nonfiction print materials. The library is in need of a physical update. The current flooring is 19 years old and we will receive new furniture this year.

**Vision Statement**

The high school library media center shares the same vision statement as the high school. “All Gering Public Schools Students will maximize their own potential”.

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Gering High School Library Media Center is to create a warm, safe and collaborative learning atmosphere that supports the district mission statement and the high school improvement goals. As the largest classroom in the school, we seek to provide equitable access to resources while promoting the integration of information literacy skills. The library media center strives to foster a lasting appreciation of reading and a life-long desire to learn. The library media center will accomplish the mission by:

* Collaborations with staff members on technology based projects.
* Prepare technology for use by teachers and students.
* Keeping current on the latest materials available for purchase for the library and for book club.
* Keep the library media center website updated.
* Create an atmosphere where staff and students feel valuable.
* Development curriculum for student librarians.

**Action Plans**

Goal One: Collaborations with staff members on technology based projects.

*Action steps for goal one*

* Develop and offer training programs over the Destiny Library System, Professionals Databases and the Use of New Technology
* Develop an interest card to be placed in the teacher mail boxes. The card will promote collaboration projects.
* Continue to attend at least one technology conference per year

*Schedule for goal one*

* Three different training workshops will be offered throughout the year.
  + Destiny Library System (Beginning of the year in-service)
  + Professionals databases (January in-service)
  + Use of new technology (once a quarter during monthly staff meetings)

*Resource Requirements for goal one*

* Permission to present during in-service days and monthly staff meetings
* Computer lab
* Training seminars

*Anticipated Student Outcomes for goal one*

* The students will be more prepared to meet 21st-century standards because of the collaboration and the increased knowledge of their educators.
* The teachers and administrators will see a value added to the library media center.
* The teachers will have more confidence with technology and therefore use it more often.

Goal Two: Keep an accurate inventory of library materials and keeping current on the latest materials available for purchase for the library and for book club.

*Action Steps for goal two:*

* Read library magazines, study reviews, attend library conferences and read books to stay current on the latest library trends.
* The library will complete an inventory twice a year to maintain accurate records.
* Have knowledge of the annual budget for the library and stay current with state requirements.
* Promote book club using announcements and the website.

*Schedule for goal two:*

* Place a quarterly order for books.
* Inventory will be scheduled at the end of November and again at the end of April.
* Update budget records every Friday.
* Book Club will meet every 1st and 3rd Friday of the month. Promotions and announcements will be published on the following Monday.

*Resource Requirements for goal two:*

* Multiple laptops for inventory.
* Knowledge of the amount the library has budgeted for 2012-2013.
* Reserve meeting place for book club.

*Anticipated Outcomes for goal two:*

* Patrons of the library will benefit from the most up to date print and nonprint materials.
* 24/7 access to the library.
* Book club will keep students involved in school activities while cultivating their love for books.

Goal Three: Development curriculum for student librarians.

*Action steps for goal three:*

* Create goals for student librarians broken down by quarter.
* Create assessments for student librarians.
* Create a grade book in Infinite Campus.

*Schedule for goal three:*

* Complete a curriculum by August 2012.
* Complete a goal sheet with student librarians at the beginning of each quarter.
* Complete grades for each student librarian each quarter.

*Resource requirements for goal three:*

* Increased productivity and performance from student librarians because the goals and expectations for the position are clearly defined.
* The atmosphere in the library will be warm, welcoming and productive.
* A written curriculum for student librarians will exist.

**Priority of Action Plans**

We have multiple action plans for the Gering High School Library Media Center. However, in order of priority we will spend a number of additional hours working toward goal three. Currently the job descriptions in the library are vague. When goal three is accomplished, goals one and two will become easier to fully accomplish because of the ability to delegate responsibilities to student librarians.

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