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*OSCR: Finally
a WWW
Resource that
the User
Tailors to
Meet Local
Needs*
Dian Borek,
Gail
Richardson,
Walter Lewis,
and Frank
Loreto

Includes a
demonstration
of OSCR.

As dialogue continued a consensus solution emerged. A single universally accessible resource could ensure consistency and quality for all students in school, at the public library and even from home. Both public librarians and teacher-librarians work on resource lists so why not create and share a single resource?

It was determined that the six high-need areas (Curriculum Support, Special Education, At-Risk/Remedial Students, E.S.L., French Immersion and Love of Reading) could best be addressed with this single one-stop, interactive, dynamic curriculum resource. Thus the idea of an Ontario School Curriculum Resource (OSCR) was born. It was obvious from the beginning that the success of such a project would be driven by the input and guidance of teacher-librarians. Indeed, this was deemed essential.

However, in order to be practical as well as useful this tool would have to:

- ◆ have limited 'best source' content (so as not to waste space with obscure resources not available to all schools and public libraries)
 - ◆ be professionally controlled (by librarians)
 - ◆ have the ability to jump into a local library catalogue (to show local availability)
 - ◆ be interactive, with an interface that had pull-down menus (easy to use, and intuitive for the user)
 - ◆ include built in mechanisms to allow for easy updates to both www links and print resources.
 - ◆ have the ability to act as a conduit to facilitate the sharing and exchange of information between professionals
 - ◆ have built in communication links between public librarians, teachers, teacher-librarians, boards, administrators, OLA, and the Ministry of Education
 - ◆ be customizable at the local level, and would need to include tagged fields for easy data management.
 - ◆ allow full access data input for hosts, with no geographic or technological limitations:
 - i. accessible for all networks and platforms
 - ii. ability to interact with local networks and catalogues
- ◆ be available provincially for all, downloadable and easily accessible online.

Once the parameters were agreed upon, the steering committee grudgingly acknowledged OSCR was a tall order, and there would probably be technological limitations to the dream. Fortunately, at this time TLC welcomed two new members to the project: Walter Lewis (Halton Hills Public Library) and Gail Richardson (Oakville Public Library). They had been working on a similar project for HALINET (www.hhpl.on.ca), and were very impressed with TLC's progress, especially the active involvement of teacher-librarians. It made sense to join forces. They brought a wealth of technological expertise that effectively moved OSCR from the drawing board to a prototype very quickly. One can imagine the excitement at the meeting when Walter and Gail told the committee that the technology existed to do everything TLC had dreamed of... and more!

OSCR continues to welcome new partners. Since OSCR is being developed as a tool for students, parents/caregivers, teachers, teacher-librarians and public librarians to meet both elementary and secondary resource needs, teacher-librarian input is essential for its success. Several days are being set aside for teacher-librarians to provide input.

If you would like to be part of OSCR's success story please contact Dian Borek at dian.borek@mississauga.ca. ■