

Demonstrating with Data: An Evidence-based Practice Curriculum for School Librarians

Introduction: The University of North Texas (UNT) College of Information, in collaboration with the University of Kentucky, requests \$249,999 in funding from IMLS to conduct a three-year project focused on advancing secondary school librarians' evidence-based practices (EBP), resulting in a free, easily accessible and widely distributed online professional development (PD) curriculum that will equip secondary school librarians to collect, analyze, integrate, and share evidence of practice in practical and sustainable ways. This nationwide project will lead to improved school library practice and has the potential to impact countless secondary students and teachers. This project addresses Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Goal 3: Enhance the training and professional development of the library and archival workforce to meet the needs of their communities, Objective 3.3: Create and/or refine training programs to build library and archival workforce skills and expertise. The new curriculum resulting from project completion will provide needed EBP professional development to school librarians to enhance their expertise and skills in this area; currently limited resources specific to EBP in school libraries exist.

Project Justification

The purpose of this three-year, seven-phase project is to develop and widely disseminate a free, online PD curriculum to prepare secondary school librarians to integrate EBP into their library programs and practice. Secondary schools include middle schools, junior high schools, high schools, grade-specific campuses (e.g. 9th grade centers), and campuses housing both middle/junior high and high schools. This project focuses on secondary school librarians rather than school librarians working with all age ranges. Secondary school libraries and librarians operate more similarly to academic libraries than primary school libraries (i.e. flexible scheduling, daily routines/tasks, etc.), and similar EBP work has been completed in the academic library arena (ACRL, n.d.). Creating an EBP curriculum for secondary school librarians is a logical next step in the EBP work done by public and academic libraries. It is anticipated that a future project will focus on developing a comparable curriculum specific to elementary school librarians. Participation in this PD will result in secondary school librarians being able to collect, analyze, integrate, and share evidence of practice. A school library-specific EBP PD curriculum currently does not exist, and this new curriculum will "be easily adoptable, sustainable, and widely implementable across the field" (IMLS, 2022).

School libraries matter and certified school librarians make a tremendous difference in the lives of students according to decades of research and dozens of impact studies (Lance & Kachel, 2018). School librarians' collaborative instructional planning, resource curation, technology leadership, intellectual freedom advocacy, and supportive literacy instruction enhance student learning (Ness et al, 2022) and empower students to think, create, share, and grow in their commitments to inquiry, inclusion, collaboration, curation, exploration, and engagement (American Association of School Librarians (AASL), 2018a). Nationally and internationally, data indicate that one of the most important factors in students' reading achievement is access to a school library (Krashen, 2021). As importantly, school libraries operate as safe spaces fostering student safety and comfort (Merga, 2020) with school librarians developing relationships with students, building their confidence, and bolstering their social and emotional well-being (Hay, 2005; Merga, 2020).

Despite the important contributions of school librarians and ample empirical evidence to demonstrate their value, approximately 20% of school districts in the United States have no school librarians, and the statistics are much more alarming in rural districts, high-poverty schools, urban districts, and districts serving English language learners (Lance & Kachel, 2018). The full potential of school libraries cannot be realized if local

educational decision makers are not aware of the contributions of the school librarian (Hartzell, 2002). To demonstrate their contributions and to improve their practice, school librarians must begin power broking, that is, they must demonstrate their importance using local evidence that ties the outcomes of library initiatives and instruction to school level goals and learning agendas (Todd, 2015).

Over the previous 20 years, leaders in school librarianship have emphasized the need for school librarians to collect, analyze, and share data for both advocacy and library program improvement (Church, 2012; Todd, 2001). EBP offers librarians a systematic, cyclical, and iterative process to do so. EBP is an “approach to information science that promotes the collection, interpretation and integration of valid... user-reported, librarian observed, and research derived evidence... applied to improve the quality of professional judgments” (Booth, 2002, 53). EBP has been identified as a strategy that librarians can use to reflect upon, measure, and share libraries’ impacts on the communities they serve (American Library Association, 2021; Adams, Gaffney & Lynn, 2016; Todd, 2015). Todd explains EBP in school libraries as a process that involves a) drawing upon existing evidence (foundational), b) calling upon professional knowledge as evidence (process), and c) collecting data as a means to measure impacts of library programs and services (outcomes) (Todd, 2001; 2015).

Multiple variations of EBP exist, but at its core, EBP in the school library context involves the school librarian identifying a need in the school library or school community; reviewing foundational evidence such as professional and scholarly literature as well as standards or guidelines to develop a program, service, or other solution to address the need. The school librarian then implements the solution, and throughout the process draws upon professional knowledge as well as formative evidence to make decisions and adjustments as necessary. The school librarian collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data to determine the efficacy of the solution and shares the findings, or outcomes, with a wide array of stakeholders. The school librarian then re-engages in the EBP cycle, revising and refining practice and retesting solutions. As Ross Todd (2003) wrote, “Evidence based practice revolves around the key question: What differences do [the] library and its learning initiatives make to student learning? That is, what are the differences, the tangible learning benefits, defined and expressed in ways that lead a school community to say: ‘we need more of this!’?” (p. 30).

When school librarians have a thorough understanding of how to collect, analyze, use, and share both quantitative and qualitative evidence from a wide range of formal and informal practices across various programs and services offered within and by schools as well as those more specific to the school library, they are not only able to apply the evidence to improve their own practices and demonstrate the contributions of the school library program to a range of stakeholders, they are also positioned to serve in strategic leadership roles on school- and district-level decision making teams (AASL, 2018b).

Both the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and AASL, a division of the American Library Association (ALA), support the integration of EBP into school library programs. According to the *IFLA School Library Guidelines* “Evidence-based practice should guide the services and programs of a school library and provide the data needed for improvement of professional practice and for ensuring that the services and programs of a school library make a positive contribution to teaching and learning in the school” (Schultz-Jones & Oberg, 2015, p. 11). AASL’s *National School Library Standards* (2018a) guide librarians to engage in EBP as a means of formatively assessing and improving their work. AASL (2019)

re-affirmed the necessity of EBP in its strategic plan, positioning research as one of three overarching goals for the organization with a high priority objective of “facilitat[ing] evidence-informed school librarian practices.”

Yet, prior studies of evidence-based librarianship suggest that some school librarians are completely unfamiliar with the practice (Dowell, 2019; Subramaniam, 2015) while others find it to be nuanced (Gillespie et al., 2017) and difficult to apply (Boulden, Pellegrino, & Gerakios, 2019; Richey & Cahill, 2014). Our own recent investigation (Moore & Cahill, 2022) found that while most school librarians receive at least some instruction on data collection and analysis in their preparation coursework, many do not, and nearly all assert that additional PD is necessary. As one school librarian noted, “I wish I'd had more instruction in this area. A few assignments weren't enough.”

Both the public and academic library communities have taken active steps to equip their librarians to apply EBP principles into their work (Click, Wiley, & Houlihan, 2022; Public Library Association, 2019). The Public Library Association (PLA), a division of the ALA, developed [Project Outcome](#), offering “a FREE online toolkit designed to help public libraries understand and share the impact of essential library programs and services by providing simple surveys and an easy-to-use process for measuring and analyzing outcomes. Participating libraries also have access to resources and training support needed to apply their results and confidently advocate for their libraries” (PLA, 2019). Project Outcome partnered with the Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and launched a toolkit in 2020 to help academic libraries measure and analyze outcomes (ACRL, n.d.). In addition, IMLS has recently funded a number of other projects focused on supporting public, academic, and tribal librarians’ EBP infrastructure and professional development ([LG-250030-OLS-21](#), [RE-13-19-0076-19](#), [LG-07-10-0236-10](#), [LG-06-09-0152-09](#)).

While public and academic libraries have a solid EBP infrastructure and tools to support performance measurement, limited research and resources exist for school librarians to effectively implement EBP. This circumstance coupled with findings of a recent study indicating that school librarians are not collecting evidence of their practice nor are they sharing the evidence they do collect with their peers and stakeholders (Moore, Cahill, DiScala, & Wang, 2023) point to the necessity for additional tools to support school librarians’ EBP knowledge and skills so that they are equipped to improve practice and demonstrate the impact of school library programs and services.

The *Demonstrating with Data* project goals are as follows: (1) pinpoint current EBP knowledge and EBP activities implemented by school librarians; (2) expose the challenges school librarians face when attempting to engage in EBP; (3) identify EBP best practices from others in the field of librarianship and translate that into what could work in school library settings; (4) design a PD curriculum for school librarians that addresses their unique situations and challenges with incorporating EBP into their professional practice; (5) test the efficacy of an EBP curriculum with practicing school librarians; and (6) provide a freely-accessible online learning tool that will advance school librarians’ EBP, thereby supporting their professional growth and value to their school communities. The International Association of School Librarians (IASL) and 30 regional- and state-level school library associations recognize this need and fully support this project. Formal letters of support are included as Supporting Documents 2 and 3

The target group and beneficiaries who will directly be positively affected by this free online curriculum are the school librarians working in the 94.8% of middle schools and 79.6% of high schools in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2019), but the ultimate beneficiaries of this project are the millions of students attending schools in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022) who will have a school librarian who applies EBP to evaluate, improve, and advocate for the school library program.

Project Work Plan

Project overview

The project team will engage diverse groups of practicing school librarians, school librarian educators and supervisors, and school administrators (e.g. principals and superintendents) in focus group interviews aimed at identifying school librarians' existing knowledge, practices, and challenges within the context of EBP. Based on the foundational evidence gathered through the focus groups, we will develop a curriculum for school library professionals designed to empower them with knowledge and strategies to gather, analyze, apply, and share evidence of their practice and, ultimately, their impact and value to their school communities. The curriculum will be integrated into an online learning tool and pilot tested with a purposive sample of in-service librarians. Using performance indicators and feedback from these librarians, we will work in collaboration with an advisory board to revise and refine the curriculum and online learning tool. We will then widely publicize the freely accessible curriculum and professional learning tool for broad use throughout the field.

Project team

Key Project Staff and Consultant:

A three-member research team will oversee project activities and a graduate student will provide assistance. All three researchers serve as school librarian educators and have expertise in EBP within the school library context. Additionally, each is knowledgeable about and experienced with school librarian professional learning, curriculum development, online course development, and federal grant administration.

[Dr. Jennifer Moore](#) (Co-PI): Associate Professor and Director of the School Librarian Certification Program in the Department of Information Science at the University of North Texas, has 19 years of experience as a classroom teacher, school librarian, and school librarian educator. She has developed and/or revised multiple school librarian certification courses online, and she has an extensive research record, primarily studying EBP in school libraries and computational thinking. Moore is the current Chair of AASL's Community of Scholars, the current Co-chair of the International Association of School Librarianship's Research Special Interest Group (SIG), and a Co-director of UNT's Multiple Literacies Lab (MLL).

Dr. [Maria Cahill](#) (Co-PI): Associate Professor and School Librarian Program Chair in the School of Information Science at the University of Kentucky is an LIS and literacy scholar with over 20 years of experience in school librarianship. Cahill has developed multiple online courses and overseen curriculum development. She served on the American Association of School Librarians Board of Directors and is currently serving on the Board of Directors for the Kentucky Association of School Librarians.

Dr. [Christie Kodama](#) (Consultant): LIS scholar with 14 years of experience in school librarianship. Kodama has experience and expertise in instructional design/curriculum development, online learning, adult learning, and professional development for school librarians.

The graduate assistant will be enrolled at UNT during the project. We will mentor the graduate student through the process of scheduling of focus groups, communicating project information with participants and advisory board members, and transcribing focus group interview transcripts.

Advisory board:

The project team will convene a strategic advisory board comprised of diverse members identified as leaders and experts in their field, with experience on the front lines and in leadership capacities. Over the course of the 3-year project, the research team and advisory board will meet twice per year, for a total of six meetings. In addition to meeting with the research team, the advisory board will

- review focus group protocol and questions;
- review preliminary analyses of data from focus groups and provide feedback on curriculum development plans;
- review curriculum as it is being developed to verify alignment with the needs identified by the focus groups;
- pre-pilot the curriculum prior to school librarians piloting it;
- review analyses of pilot participants' feedback data and provide guidance on curriculum revision; and
- review revised curriculum and ensure navigability of the online site prior to final curriculum dissemination.

Advisory board members agreeing to participate include:

- one state education agency school librarian lead or one [AASL Chapter Assembly](#) representative (pending),
- Heidi Fendrick (expert in data management for libraries),
- Lindsey Kimery (Coordinator for Library Services for Metro Nashville Public Schools),
- Dr. Steven Lockard (P-12 leader with nearly 25 years of administrative experience at the building- & district-level), and
- Dr. Megan Oakleaf (expert in data and learning analytics in library settings).

Advisory board members will each receive \$500 per year for three years, for a total of \$7,500.

Work plan & Timeline

This three-year, seven-phase project will result in the development and dissemination of a free, online professional development curriculum focusing on EBP in secondary school libraries. The project team will work with diverse groups of school librarians, school librarian educators, school library leaders and consultants in state departments of education, school administrators, and EBP thought leaders through a series of focus groups and curriculum pilot testing. Participants will be strategically and intentionally selected to represent diverse geographic areas and population densities, ethnicities, genders, languages, abilities, and socioeconomic status.

YEAR 1: FOCUS GROUP ADMINISTRATION AND ANALYSIS (August 2023 - July 2024)

Phase 1: Plan and Recruit for Focus Groups (August-October 2023)

Phase 1 will focus on planning for in-person and virtual focus groups with up to 54 school library professionals, school library educators, and educational decision makers. Based on current focus group discussion methodology and best practices (Liamputtong, 2011), we will create the protocol and questions to guide the focus group sessions.

To ensure that the final EBP curriculum meets the needs of the broadest possible number of secondary school librarians, it is our aim to understand the perspectives and challenges of school librarians in as many different situations and circumstances as possible. To meet this goal, various avenues will be used to recruit focus group participants. We will identify and recruit participants who: (a) have expertise and experience with preparing school librarians to integrate EBP in school library settings (e.g. educators of school librarians, district-level school library supervisors, state and regional school library association officers); (b) experience first-hand the acute challenges facing school librarians in a variety of school environments when it comes to demonstrating their impact and value to students, teachers, and the school community as a whole (e.g. school librarians from rural/urban/suburban, tribal, multi/bilingual, public/independent/parochial/charter schools, etc.); and/or (c) are positioned to provide insights into EBP practice from a stakeholder perspective (e.g. school/district administrators, teachers, parents/caregivers, community members, school library leaders and consultants in state departments of education).

We will employ a systematic and intentional approach in our recruitment efforts, first identifying the areas of diversity that shape individual identity (e.g. geographic location, language, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc.). People, groups, and/or organizations that we will contact to build a list of possible names for focus group participants include the advisory board, school library associations, [ALA Spectrum Scholars](#), and/or members of the five organizations of the [Joint Council of Librarians of Color](#) who are school librarians. Focus group members will include representation from all [U.S. Census regions and divisions](#). Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval will also be sought and gained during Phase 1 in order to report on the results gleaned from focus group conversations.

The final activity of this phase will be the first online meeting with the advisory board to explain the project, discuss advisory board members' roles and responsibilities, and to review and refine the focus group protocol and questions.

Phase 1 Performance Indicators: Recruitment of 54 focus group participants that represent the diverse identities of people, schools, and community settings across the US; IRB approval; focus group protocol and questions

Phase 2: Conduct in-person and virtual focus groups (October-December 2023)

During Phase 2 we will conduct two in-person and seven virtual focus groups, each expected to take approximately one hour. The nine focus groups, each with a maximum of six participants, will be grouped as follows: one group of school librarian educators; one group of school district school librarian supervisors; one group of school- and district-level administrators (e.g. principals, superintendents, school district CIOs, etc.); and six groups of secondary librarians. Six groups of school librarians ensures a multitude of front-line

perspectives and data saturation, as four-to-eight groups have been identified as an ideal number to reach data saturation (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022).

In-person focus groups will be conducted with intentionally selected members of AASL's ESLS and AASL's SPVS sections at the 2023 AASL National Conference in Tampa Bay, Florida. These sessions will be audio recorded to facilitate data analysis. Virtual focus groups will occur online using a video conferencing platform, such as Zoom, with intentionally selected individuals who broadly reflect the diversity of school librarianship and school communities within the US. Each focus group session will be recorded for data analysis purposes. Each focus group member will receive a \$50 Visa e-gift card upon completion of the interview. The graduate assistant will begin transcribing recorded focus group interviews during Phase 2 and continue into Phase 3 if needed. Outcomes of these focus groups will be to identify: (a) knowledge gaps, ability gaps and challenges with quantitative data collection and/or analysis, qualitative data collection and/or analysis, data visualization and sharing, etc., that school librarians face in implementing EBP in their everyday practice and (b) areas in which school librarians need to demonstrate their impact/value to the school community.

Phase 2 Performance Indicators: All perspectives related to EBP practice and challenges for school librarians collected and recorded through the 9 focus group interviews.

Phase 3: Focus Group Analysis & Dissemination of Findings (January-July 2024)

In Phase 3, with the expertise provided by the advisory group, we will analyze focus group data, which will serve as the foundation for the development of a virtual asynchronous professional development curriculum centered on practical and sustainable ways that school librarians can incorporate EBP into their professional practice. The graduate assistant will continue transcribing recorded focus group interviews if needed. Data will then be analyzed using inductive coding and a thematic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Inductive coding allows themes to emerge from the data. Findings from the preliminary analysis will be shared with the advisory board for review. The advisory board will meet with the research team for the second time to share their perspectives and to discuss curriculum foci. Focus group findings will be shared through UNT's [Multiple Literacies Lab \(MLL\) "Living Multiliteracies" Series](#) (a monthly webinar, free of charge, and open to the public) and through at least one practitioner-focused, openly accessible channel, such as AASL [Knowledge Quest Blog](#), a [School Library Connection webinar or article](#), and/or an IASL webinar.

Phase 3 Performance Indicators: Analysis of all focus group discussion data; dissemination of findings through at least two professional venues.

YEAR 2: CREATE AND PILOT EBP CURRICULUM (August 2024 - July 2025)

Phase 4: EBP Curriculum Creation (August 2024-February 2025)

During Phase 4, we will create a prototype of an online EBP curriculum for school librarians based on the focus group findings and best practices in instructional design and curriculum development. We anticipate the curriculum will consist of lessons, sessions, or modules that: highlight the importance of using EBP; provide examples of EBP in action across all phases of the cycle: planning, collection, analysis, use (to refine practice), and sharing, and with both quantitative and qualitative evidence; and guide school librarians on how they can apply EBP in a variety of contextual situations. As we begin creation of the curriculum, we

will hold the third advisory board meeting to gather feedback on the curriculum. Possible questions we will ask to the advisory board are: (1) do they perceive the curriculum aligns with school librarians' needs based on themes identified from the focus groups' responses?; and (2) are there any gaps? After we have created the curriculum, the advisory board will test the pilot curriculum. We will then convene the fourth meeting with the advisory board. During this meeting advisory board members will provide feedback on the curriculum in terms of both content and structure/design. We will then refine the curriculum for implementation with three diverse cohorts of 8 school librarians each (24 librarians total) in Phase 5. Each cohort member will receive a \$500 remuneration. Recruitment for our three pilot cohorts will begin during Phase 4 and continue into Phase 5. See Phase 5 for more information on recruitment processes.

Phase 4 Performance Indicators: Creation, testing, and refinement of pilot curriculum.

Phase 5: Recruit Pilot Group Cohorts & Pilot EBP Curriculum (March-July 2025)

During Phase 5, we will finalize our recruitment processes for piloting the curriculum and pilot our curriculum with three diverse cohorts of 8 school librarians each (24 librarians total). We anticipate the EBP curriculum will be used by school librarians across multiple group and individual learning situations; for example, as a structured PD for all librarians within a single school district, as a semi-structured PD of school librarians learning in collaboration with informal professional learning networks (e.g. school librarian association colleagues), and by individual school librarians who approach the curriculum independently. Therefore, we will have one pilot cohort from a single school district, one cohort formed in collaboration with a state library organization, and one cohort comprised of selected individual school librarians collectively representing the diverse communities school librarians practice in. To ensure diversity in terms of identity and community factors, we will recruit participants through multiple channels. For the school district cohort, we will identify a school district that encompasses a diverse group in terms of location size, language, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status from one of the 142 Texas school districts that are members of the [Education Service Center Region 11](#) Technology Resources Education Consortium (TREC). For the cohort affiliated with a state library association, we will work in collaboration with one [AASL Chapter](#) to identify and invite school librarians amongst their membership. For the cohort of individual librarians, we will work in collaboration with school library associations, [ALA Spectrum Scholars](#), and the five organizations of the [Joint Council of Librarians of Color](#) to solicit school librarians to participate. As indicated, throughout our recruitment efforts, we will be attuned to representation of school librarians across multiple diversity indices.

To evaluate the efficacy of our EBP curriculum we will collect multiple forms of evaluation data and feedback from participants who pilot the program. First, we will conduct pre- and post-tests with cohort members to measure their change in understanding of and ability to use EBP in their current contexts. The pre-test will measure what the school librarians currently know about EBP and what they are currently doing in their libraries to evaluate and advocate for their programs. The post-test will measure changes in knowledge and abilities as a result of completing the EBP curriculum, ascertaining how they are already applying what they learned in their current practice, and identifying how they intend to implement EBP across all phases of the cycle in the next academic year. Throughout the curriculum pilot, participants will be prompted to supply feedback via "exit tickets" and other formative feedback activities. For the culminating activity of the curriculum, participants will create a deliverable using actual data from their libraries that they can use to communicate with their various stakeholders. After completion of the pilot, we will interview

participants, either individually or in groups, to identify curriculum strengths and areas for improvement. Interviews will be conducted online using a platform such as Zoom and recorded for data analysis purposes. Based on the pre- and post-tests, participant feedback, and our own reflective evaluation throughout the pilot phase, we will iteratively revise and refine the curriculum for wide dissemination in Phase 6.

The pilot testing will begin in late June and conclude in mid-July during part of the school librarians' summer break. This time frame will allow the participants to complete the curriculum and assessment measures during a time when they are not working full-time during the day and have cognitive capacity to devote to new learning.

Phase 5 Performance Indicators: Collection of multiple forms of evaluation data and feedback from the 24 school librarians who pilot tested the curriculum.

YEAR 3: REFINE, PUBLISH, & SHARE CURRICULUM (August 2025-July 2026)

Phase 6: Revise EBP Curriculum & Publish It Online (August 2025 - December 2025)

Phase 6 will focus on curriculum revision and publication. First, we will evaluate feedback and work products from the pilot test. After we further revise the curriculum based on pilot testing feedback, the advisory board will evaluate the most recent iteration and then meet with us for the fifth time to provide feedback. With the input and feedback from the advisory board, we will refine, package, and publish the curriculum online using [Course-in-a-Box](#) as an open-source resource for individual school librarians, school districts, and other school library organizations to use in their professional development activities, and for school librarian educators to integrate in full or in part within their existing coursework. The Previous IMLS-funded projects, such as [Project READY](#) and [ConnectedLib](#), will be considered as models for how to best publish the curriculum online. A PDF version of all content will also be freely available to allow for an alternative option for accessing and completing the curriculum. We anticipate introducing the curriculum at a concurrent session at AASL's National Conference in October 2025 in St. Louis, MO.

Phase 6 Performance Indicators: Publication and promotion of final curriculum

Phase 7: Communicate Findings (January 2026 - July 2026)

In Phase 7, we will organize webinars and lead conference presentations to convey project activities, disseminate findings from analyses, and promote the online curriculum. Confirmed sources include [UNT's MLL "Living Multiliteracies" Series](#), an IASL webinar, advisory board members, project participants, and regional/state library organizations. Other potential communication outlets include the AASL [Knowledge Quest Blog](#), a [School Library Connection webinar](#), IASL's 2026 Conference, ALA's LibLearnX, and/or various state library conferences. The curriculum will also be promoted via school librarian discussion lists, such as LM_NET, and through social media avenues, such as tagging on Twitter using #librarytwitter and posting in Facebook groups such as Future Ready Librarians. We will host our sixth and final advisory board meeting during Phase 7 where we will wrap up their work with this project and share any next steps that emerge from this project.

Phase 7 Performance Indicators: Delivery of a minimum of two webinars, publication of at least one article, and a presentation at a minimum of one professional conference.

Diversity Plan:

Obtaining a diversity of perspectives and experiences with EBP is necessary to ensure that any professional development curriculum or program is broadly applicable to a variety of school libraries and communities. Diversity is the lens with which we frame and carry out this project. To achieve national diversity, we will recruit focus group and pilot cohort members from all [U.S. Census regions and divisions](#), paying careful attention to recruit people based on their own diverse identities as well as the types of schools and communities they serve (e.g. ELLs/bilingual, urban/suburban/rural, tribal, border communities, public/private/charter school, etc.). With these diversity indices in mind, we will also identify those in the project team's and Advisory Group's networks as well as [ALA Spectrum Scholars](#), state-level library organization recommendations, and/or members of the five organizations of the [Joint Council of Librarians of Color](#) (JCLC) who are school librarians and invite them directly to participate. JCLC is comprised of five divisions of ALA: the American Indian Library Association (AILA), the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA), the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA), the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA), and REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library & Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-speaking.

Project Results:

The resulting EBP curriculum will be freely available online, housed on a Course-in-a-Box website. A PDF version of the curriculum will also be available for download on the website, and a video explaining how to use the curriculum will be available on the website's home page. School districts, state organizations, and individual librarians will have the ability to freely access and utilize the curriculum. Project information, successes, and findings from analyses will be shared via multiple professional outlets. Confirmed venues include UNT's [Multiple Literacies Lab "Living Multiliteracies" Series](#) (a monthly webinar, free of charge, and open to the public) and an IASL webinar. Other possible venues include the AASL [Knowledge Quest Blog](#), [School Library Connection webinar](#), the IASL Annual Conference, ALA's LibLearnX, and the AASL National Conference, among others. We will also share information about the project directly with the 30 state- and regional school library associations (AASL Chapters) who wrote a letter of support for the project. Additionally, we will notify all focus group and pilot cohort participants when the curriculum is published to share with their circles of influence. Through this project, the school library profession will have its first comprehensive resource that teaches and guides them in implementing EBP in their programs. Secondary school librarians nationwide will gain the additional professional development necessary to be competent and confident in gathering, analyzing, and sharing evidence of their practice with their various stakeholder groups.

Budget Summary:

Anticipated project costs are \$249,999. This request includes \$35,658 for faculty salary support, \$8,586 for faculty fringe benefits, \$1,500 to support one hourly graduate student assistant, \$133 for student support fringe benefits, \$5,152 for travel, \$500 for focus group room rental, \$2,700 for focus group member remuneration, \$12,000 for curriculum group member remuneration, \$7,500 honorarium for advisory board members, \$51,482 for a project and instructional design consultant, \$47,316 in indirect costs, and \$77,472 for a subaward to the University of Kentucky.

References: Supportingdoc4.pdf

Schedule of Completion

Activities related to this 3-year implementation grant are expected to commence on August 1, 2023 and conclude on July 31, 2026.

Year 1: Phases 1, 2, and 3

Activity	8/23	9/23	10/23	11/23	12/23	1/24	2/24	3/24	4/24	5/24	6/24	7/24
P1: Obtain IRB approval												
P1: Reserve in-person focus group location												
P1: Recruit focus group participants												
P1: Develop focus group protocol/questions/plan for data organization												
P1: Meet with Advisory Board #1												
P2: Conduct in-person focus groups												
P2: Conduct online focus groups												
P2: Send e-gift cards to focus group participants												
P2 & P3: Transcribe focus group recordings												
P3: Analyze focus group data												
P3: Meet with Advisory Board #2												
P3: Disseminate focus group findings												

Year 3: Phases 6 and 7

Activity	8/25	9/25	10/25	11/25	12/25	1/26	2/26	3/26	4/56	5/26	6/26	7/26
P6: Transcribe interviews												
P6: Evaluate feedback												
P6: Refine curriculum												
P6: Evaluate curriculum with Advisory Board												
P6: Meet with Advisory Board #5												
P6: Finalize curriculum												
P6: Publish curriculum												
P6: Attend AASL 2025												
P6 & P7: Promote curriculum												
P7: Submit conference proposals												
P7: Organize and deliver webinars												
P7: Meet with Advisory Board #6												
P7: Attend conferences												

Digital Products Plan

Type

The primary digital product resulting from this project is a [Course-in-a-Box website](#) housing the EBP curriculum. The website will include HTML web pages, JPEGs (for images used in resources), Adobe PDF documents (ancillaries), MS Word and/or Google Docs (ancillaries), MS PowerPoint and/or Google Presentation (presentations), and videos (MP4). At least two webinars will be recorded, and there will be an instructional video demonstrating how to use the curriculum. All videos will be captioned.

Products will be created according to standards recommended by the [Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative](#) and will be accessible to internet users. Primarily, formats will include HTML, PDF, DOC, and PPT. The software, apps, and/or programs that will be used to create products include Adobe Acrobat, MS Word and/or Google Docs, MS PowerPoint and/or Google Presentation, Screencast-O-Matic, YouTube, and Zoom. Hardware includes university-owned desktops, laptops, and/or tablets.

Availability

The curriculum and ancillaries will be freely available to the general public on a [Course-in-a-Box website](#). One webinar will be housed on [UNT's MLL "Living Multiliteracies" Series](#) (a monthly webinar, free of charge, and open to the public), and another webinar will be housed on the [IASL website](#). Any additional webinars will be housed on the host organizations' websites. Manuscripts resulting from this project will be submitted to open-access journals, such as [School Library Research](#), [School Libraries Worldwide](#), and the [Knowledge Quest Blog](#).

Access

All digital products created during this project will be licensed openly through a Creative Commons Attribution NonCommercial NoDerivs (CC-BY-NC-ND). This license information will be displayed on the project website and relevant documents.

The project team will hold intellectual property in accordance with their respective universities' intellectual property policies. The University of North Texas will own the copyright in accordance with Policies of the University of North Texas: [08.003 Intellectual Property: Definitions: 13](#). University-Owned Intellectual Property. The University of Kentucky will own the copyright in accordance with Academic [Regulation 7-6 Intellectual Property Disposition and Administrative Regulation](#).

Webinar and publication ownership will depend upon the policies of the hosting venues.

Each participant will have their privacy rights protected in accordance with UNT and UK's IRB policies. Data collected will remain confidential and protected. We do not anticipate any privacy or cultural sensitivity concerns.

Sustainability

Preserving and maintaining the website will be a collaborative effort among the project team.

The [Course-in-a-Box website](#) allows for all content creators to update content and structure as needed. After the project concludes, the project team lead will review website content twice per year to ensure links and files are active and accessible. Products resulting from this project will be submitted to [UNT Scholarly Works](#), which “brings together articles, papers, presentations, books, chapters, reviews, academic posters, artwork, and other scholarly and creative works and makes them readily accessible to showcase UNT’s research and creative achievements to a worldwide audience... [and] serves as the open access repository for UNT” (University of North Texas, n.d.) and/or [UKnowledge](#), the scholarly repository at the University of Kentucky.

References

University of North Texas. (n.d.). About. *UNT Scholarly Works*.
<https://library.unt.edu/scholarly-works/>

Organizational Profile

The University of North Texas (UNT) is a four-year public Doctoral University with a Carnegie Classification of Highest Research Activity (R1). The institution was founded in 1890 as a normal and teacher-training institute. Its name changed from North Texas State University in 1988. UNT is located in Denton, a town with over 148,000 people, and within the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area with over 7.76 million people. The university is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees. UNT is one of the largest universities in Texas, with a combined enrollment of over 44,000 students.

The [mission statement](#) of UNT: “At the University of North Texas, our caring and creative community empowers our students to thrive in a rapidly changing world.” The responsible party for the mission statement is the Office of the President; it was revised and approved on February 14, 2020. It is located in [Chapter 3 Governance](#) of the Policies of the University of North Texas.

The UNT College of Information (CI) is a member of the iSchools organization and is comprised of three departments: Department of Information Science, Department of Linguistics, and Department of Learning Technologies. Faculty and graduate students are highly productive in a variety of research efforts, including those related to development, delivery, and evaluation of information and education systems and services; information and education policies and ethics; digital library development and data curation; and language archiving and study of endangered languages. The CI has a record of success in obtaining government funding from sources such as the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Texas Education Agency, and others.

The Department of Information Science (DIS) currently employs 34 full-time faculty, including 27 tenure-system faculty. As of the Fall 2022 semester, DIS had 2,096 students enrolled in its graduate and undergraduate programs. The DIS master's degree programs in Information Science and Library Science are accredited by the American Library Association and ranked 20th nationwide by *U.S. News & World Report*. The DIS Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Information Science offers seven concentrations created and implemented jointly with other academic units, in addition to a general program of study. DIS faculty is diverse, and through residential and distance learning programs, proudly serves a diverse student population from across the state, nation, and world.