**Katie Douglas**

**ISTC 601: Field Observation**

**Elementary School Media Specialist**

For the field observation I interviewed and observed Leslie Johnson an elementary Media Specialist at Maple Elementary School in Cambridge, Maryland. Leslie has been at her school for the past several years. She received her Master’s of Information Science at the University of Tennessee. This was a career change for her and this has been her first job in the public school setting.

Maple Elementary School has approximately 450 students in grades pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. This school is Title I and they have approximately 60% free and reduced. Currently, there school is on the watch list for not making adequate yearly progress and if they don’t have success this year they will go into school improvement through the state. They have approximately 45% of their population scoring basic on the Maryland State Assessment in reading. This causes Leslie to work really hard to promote the library to encourage reading.

She describes her job from the description from Human Resources. “Teach research and information literacy skills, maintain inventory of books and AV equipment, assist students in locating books to check out, train staff as needed in using technology, trouble shoot tech equipment and act as a liaison between staff and IT department, maintain collection by weeding and repairing books, analyze the collection to prepare budget request, and to purchase books in indentified need areas to maintain currency of collection.” Her main mission of the library is to develop life-long readers and to help improve the reading achievement in the school. Leslie follows the elementary media voluntary state curriculum and the technology standards.

As a Media Specialist, Leslie Johnson see herself being used as a teacher, instructional partner, informational specialist, and as a program administrator. However, Leslie does feel that approximately 90% of her time is spent as a teacher. Leslie teaches media skills, computer skills, and focuses on research skills with the upper grades.

Leslie is evaluated on a Non-Teaching Professionals Performance Appraisal Form. She focuses her objectives or goals on consulting and planning with school staff in providing an integrated program of instruction. She also wanted assist in guiding reading and intervention programs for indentified students. My favorite goal of Leslies is to provide students with background and resources to encourage life-long readers and provide instruction in accessing and using information in all formats. These objectives are decided at the beginning of the school year and at the end of the year and then meet with their principal to decide what was successful and what she needs to work on.

The Elementary Media Specialist, Leslie Johnson does operate on a fixed schedule. When looking at her schedule with her she has a full load. Not only does she teach classes media skills she also is given several reading blocks to help with intervention. Leslie does receive a 50 minute planning everyday and gets an additional 45 minutes of administration time on Monday, Thursday, and Friday. During this administrative time she maintains the inventory of books and equipment and helps assist the instructional technology department. Unfortunately, due to this fixed schedule Leslie is not working on any collaborative projects and has not been able to do any. She is still overwhelmed with teaching the library skills but hopes to develop some in later years. Leslie follows the Dorchester County Media Handbook which contains our collection development policy. This policy helps her with the weeding of the collection and ordering books.

Leslie doesn’t have any support staff. However, she did state that if there is every an extra substitute in the building that does not have a class they do come help her shelve books. She currently does not have any parent volunteers this year but last year she was able to recruit one. Leslie does not utilize student helpers because she doesn’t have any students that she feels that she would trust to be careful enough to reshelve correct and she hasn’t taken the time to arrange schedules or train people that she would think that are responsible.

For funding, Leslie’s principal set aside $5,000 of the school’s budget for the library. This year however, she was told that she had to use that for laminating film which took $600 of the budget. Due to economic reasons she has not done any fundraisers but she did start something new this year. It has been her unofficial duty to video-record the music programs so that the kids can watch themselves in Music class, so this year she started copying the DVD’s of the programs and selling them to parents. She has made approximately $200 doing that and that goes in her media account.