

Changing Places: Personnel Issues of a Joint Use Library in Transition

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ABSTRACT

A field study of a joint use library in transition was undertaken to identify personnel issues that arose when a public library program moved from a middle school setting to a college campus in the same community. Qualitative research methods were employed to collect data that would provide insight into the impact of change in employment status (from school board employees to college employees) and identify implications for staff adopting new work roles, management practices, and training models. The research was a follow-up of the 1995 doctoral dissertation that reported findings of a six-month field study of the combined Azalea Public Branch Library/Azalea Middle School Media Center in St. Petersburg, Florida, "Factors Affecting the Operation of a Combined School/Public Library: A Qualitative Study."

INTRODUCTION

On May 15, 2005, a new joint use library facility opened in Pinellas County, Florida, after more than three years of collaborative planning and development between the city of St. Petersburg and St. Petersburg College. The West St. Petersburg Community Library replaced the Azalea Branch Public Library/Media Center that had operated in a shared facility at the Azalea Middle School for eighteen years. This partnership change came about through the efforts of college leaders and city officials following successful implementation of a public/college joint use program at the Seminole Community Library in the same county. The Seminole collaborative provides library services to community users and St. Petersburg College

students in a library facility operated by employees of the city of Seminole on college property. Although there are significant differences between the Seminole and St. Petersburg Intergovernmental Agreements that set forth provisions of partnership with the college, the first collaborative exemplified the benefits of sharing library space and resources, paving the way for a second joint venture. The following research report specifies personnel issues that arose with dissolution of the Azalea partnership with the School System and transition of school board employees to a college setting. In this report the City of St. Petersburg will often be referred to as the City; College will be used to denote St. Petersburg College; and the Pinellas County School System may be identified as the District or School System.

THE 1995 AZALEA LIBRARY FIELD STUDY

In order to provide context for a story of personnel concerns in a period of dramatic change, the researcher must first provide details of the collaborative partnership as it was before the transition. These details are found in a doctoral dissertation, the report of a qualitative case study of the Azalea Public Branch Library, which identified factors that affected the operation of a combined middle school/public library in densely populated Pinellas County on the Gulf Coast of Florida (Bauer, 1995). The Azalea joint-use facility operated under the leadership of a librarian who acted as manager of the public library branch and worked collaboratively with a school library media specialist employed by the District to run the school media program. The branch was one of six libraries in the St. Petersburg Public Library System, and the system, as a member of the Pinellas Public Library Cooperative, was involved in resource sharing with twenty-four public libraries in the county.

The salaries of all employees of the combined library at Azalea (with the exception of the teacher in the media position) were paid by the St. Petersburg Public Library System but, as School Board employees, all Azalea Library personnel were supervised and evaluated by middle school administrators. This staffing model, one of the provisions of the agreement between the city and the school board when the program was implemented in 1988, was the result of careful consideration by a feasibility study committee under the leadership of the director of the St. Petersburg Public Library System. A change in employment status was possible only through a change in the formal agreement between the city and the school board.

The goal of the six-month field study conducted in spring and summer of 1994 was to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex reality of a combined school/public library by examining the methods of operation. The researcher used the methods of naturalistic inquiry, which included observations, interviews, focus group meetings, and examination of library documents. Using a "process" framework as defined by Schein (1987, p. 15) meant that the researcher focused on how things were done

rather than what was done. It seemed, therefore, appropriate to use qualitative methodology.

The library was viewed as an agency, "a strategy for performing a complex task which might have been carried out in other ways" (Argyris and Schön, 1978, p. 14). Presenting "slice of life" episodes, the researcher focused on the human processes common to all organizations that make a demonstrable difference to organizational effectiveness in general. These processes are identified by Schein (1987, p. 15) as communication, building and maintaining a group, problem solving, group growth and development, leading and influencing, performance appraisal and giving feedback, and the intergroup processes of cooperation and competition.

In the tradition of naturalistic inquiry, the study took place in a naturally occurring program that had no predetermined course established for the researcher (Patton, 1990, p. 39). Assuming that the best way to study process is to observe it directly, rather than to infer its nature from the known input and the observable output, and using an illumination model, the researcher sought to describe and interpret rather than measure the effectiveness of the combined program. In the spirit of naturalistic inquiry, the observer sought to avoid imposing constraints on outputs. Whatever outputs occurred were collected, analyzed, categorized, and interpreted after the fact (Guba, 1978, p. 3). This discovery of theory from data that is systematically obtained and analyzed is grounded theory. In this discovering of theory, the researcher generated conceptual categories or their properties from evidence, and then the evidence from which the category emerged was used to illustrate the concept (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 110).

The findings of the field study were organized into five major categories, identified as factors affecting the operation of the combined library. Findings within these categories were further divided into themes identified as indicators of these factors. The factors and their related themes were (1) planning, indicated by community readiness, formal agreement, and governance; (2) leadership, indicated by influence and power, leadership style, and program excellence; (3) cooperation, indicated by networking, sharing, and reaching out; (4) community fit, indicated by the facility, customer satisfaction, and interagency articulation; and (5) personnel, indicated by school board status, adaptability, and work roles (Bauer, 1995, p. 97).

A closer review of the findings in the personnel category reveals that the Azalea Library manager had been resilient, adapting to changes in leadership at all levels in public library and school district personnel. She had managed change within her staff by moving present employees up to positions that became open and involving the school principal and branch coordinator in hiring new people. The library manager and her office manager (Library Assistant II) had shared tasks such as preparing reports of library activities, preparing statistics and revenue reports for the main public library, and assembling work schedules and payroll reports. It was

vital to the operation of the combined facility that these duties were shared due to the heavy programming responsibilities and outreach activities of the library manager. It was essential that employees had been willing and able to function in a variety of roles in a library open for fifty-eight hours a week and averaging twenty programs each month. Work roles at the Azalea Library were characterized by flexibility in scheduling, freedom of choice in task assignment, and recognition of special talents of employees. In addition, the manager's commitment to the success of the combined venture and her humanistic leadership style had contributed to stability in the organization and excellence in programming for library users (Bauer, 1995, p. 102).

Data analysis of personnel as a factor in the operation of the Azalea Library illuminated management practices that had been in effect since the opening of the library in 1988. The indicators of school board status, adaptability to change, and cross-functional work roles (that emerged after extensive observations, interviews, document analysis, and focus group meetings in the first study) were assumed to be important organizational characteristics that have continued to affect library operations under a management system unchanged in the past ten years. Therefore, these indicators provided a framework for the current study, which examines the implications for staff adopting new work roles, management practices, and training models.

THE 2005 AZALEA LIBRARY FIELD STUDY

Background

In 2002 the city of St. Petersburg began to consider an end to the collaborative relationship with the school district in response to a proposal from St. Petersburg College to create a joint use facility in a new building on a college campus located in the Azalea neighborhood. While discussions about this change were under way the researcher revisited the Azalea Library to begin a field study to examine the personnel issues that would arise with dissolution of the partnership between the Pinellas County School System and the St. Petersburg Public Library System. The field study employed qualitative methods (as described for the earlier research) including examination of documents; attendance at important meetings during the transition; observations in the Azalea and West St. Petersburg Community Libraries; and interviews with stakeholders.

A document prepared by the College in late 2002 to answer frequently asked questions proposed that the community and the College would receive increased library resources, hours, space, and services from this new partnership. The public library collection of 41,000 volumes would be combined with the college collection of 80,000 volumes, 1,500 periodical

titles, and an array of online databases. This new West St. Petersburg Community Library would have a minimum of 69.5 hours of service weekly (on at least six days), including 4 nights (compared to 48 hours and 2 nights at the Azalea Branch). The new library would be a joint use facility of 50,000 square feet, in comparison to the current facility of 17,000 square feet, with special spaces for children's programming and separate space and services for teens. The new community library would also have separate, small study and conference rooms for quiet study and meetings as well as a large community meeting room complete with the latest technology. Another benefit to library users would be a small café with comfortable seating for leisure reading. In addition, the new partnership would provide for two instructional computer classrooms to be used by both the community and the College, maintained by a staff of computer specialists ("Frequently Asked Questions," 2002).

An Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of St. Petersburg and the Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College was entered into in January 2003, and the joint use facility was opened in May 2005. The initial term of the agreement is for fifty years with two options to extend the agreement for ten-year periods. The document outlines details for establishment of a joint use facility on college property, administered and operated by the college with participation from the city. In the sections that address library management and staffing, the College is identified as the party primarily responsible for these activities. The College will hire and manage the Community Use staff but will seek the City's input prior to hiring new employees for the Community Use area. The Community Use staff includes the positions paid for by the City; they are considered grant-funded employees by the College (meaning that the funds for their salaries will come from an account established to receive funds from the City) subject to College employment policies and direction ("Intergovernmental Agreement," 2002, p. 9). The agreement does not require that Azalea Branch Library staff make the move to the College, but it offers this option for employees who choose not to remain employees of the Pinellas School Board.

Another important provision of the new agreement is that the College will fill vacancies that occur in any library staff positions, ensuring participation of the City library director in making these decisions while reserving the right to make final decisions in all employment matters of the College. The head librarian of the new joint facility is to be appointed by the College after conferring with the City library director. The head librarian will report to the College library director and the College campus provost and will be responsible for the management and operation of the library, including but not limited to coordinating community activities and services, hiring and evaluation of all library staff, scheduling, training, and development. The head librarian will ensure the participation of the City

library director in hiring and performance evaluations of Community Use staff and in assigning community library duties and responsibilities to the librarians, staff, and faculty of the combined library ("Intergovernmental Agreement," 2002, p. 8). These management provisions set forth major changes in work roles, management practices, and training models for the staff of the Azalea Library.

With the signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement between the College and the City in 2003, a two-year transition process was begun. A date was set for the dissolution of the partnership with Pinellas District Schools and discussions were begun for meeting the terms of the 1987 Azalea agreement relating to this process. As in the case of any school system that gains thousands of new students each year, the District was quite agreeable to the change proposed by the City since the Azalea Middle School would gain use of the entire 17,000 square foot library facility at no cost to the school system.

All Azalea staff members who were former School Board employees paid by the City subsequently elected to become employees of the College in the new West St. Petersburg Community Library, with the exception of one person who retired. Difficult decisions were made over a period of months by everyone involved through careful consideration of the many changes in the work lives of staff. During this uncertain period the Azalea Library manager and other staff attended meetings with School Board, City, and College officials responsible for complying with applicable laws concerning these eight employees in transition. During these sessions the Azalea Library manager, working through her supervisors in the District and City, sought answers to employees' questions concerning changes in their work roles, salaries, benefits, vacation and sick days, schedules, and training. As these and other questions were answered, the researcher, in close collaboration with the Azalea Library manager, gained insight into staffing issues of this combined library that would be transferable to other facilities.

Making the Decision: What Factors Affected the Staff?

It is significant that the employees at Azalea, when given the choice, elected to make the move as a team. They had a combined total of more than seventy-five years of experience in the public school system, but a provision in the partnership gave them the opportunity to weigh the advantages and disadvantages inherent in their employment status with the School System as opposed to the College. The Azalea employees could elect to stay with the District, but they were also guaranteed a position with the College. An obvious advantage in choosing the College over the School System was the ability to continue to work with their colleagues in a public library setting serving familiar clients. Even though they had served in a shared school/public library setting, they truly had focused on Community Use

patrons. Choosing to remain with the School System would have certainly meant assignment to different schools throughout the district in roles to which they were not accustomed and separation from a well-established team focused on providing quality public library programs and services.

With the School System they would have no longer been assured of the twelve-month employment to which they had become accustomed. By moving to the College they would have this assurance. With the School System they had worked 37.5 hours a week, as opposed to 40 hours with the College, but in their new status as College employees they would be in a position to earn time and a half for overtime. This meant that they would earn three hours of compensatory time for every two hours they worked overtime. Another work practice that the Azalea employees considered was that they would no longer be required to work on weekends. The Azalea Library observed Saturday hours and all staff had been on a rotation to work every fifth Sunday at the main St. Petersburg Public Library. Even though some staff might elect to work Saturdays at the College to earn time and a half, it would be their choice. For a staff accustomed to working during school holiday breaks, the fact that the new West Community Library would observe abbreviated hours during College holidays was also considered.

Another attractive aspect of a move to the College was that the sick days staff had accrued in the School System would not be lost and would be rolled over into retirement credit. This was possible because their retirement accounts remained with the state of Florida. On the College salary schedule as library technicians, library paraprofessionals, or library assistants, most received raises, with the notable exception of the Azalea Library manager, who actually took a 16 percent pay cut. (She was near the top of the salary schedule and the only school librarian employed by the District with a twelve-month contract; as such her salary could not be matched by the College faculty salary schedule.) It was important to this librarian nearing retirement that she continue in her management role during this two-year transition period to facilitate the move. She realized that, in order for the public library program to make the transition smoothly, the staff would need her continued guidance and support as Azalea Library manager. She also compared her new work role at the College as children's librarian, primarily responsible for services and outreach to children, to the role of a district school library media specialist and found that her special talents as storyteller and program specialist would best be applied in the new West Community Library. Acknowledging the reality that school media specialists in the district spend a great deal of time managing technology was an important step in decision making by the Azalea manager.

One possibly negative aspect of the move to the College for these experienced library personnel at Azalea was the probationary period of six months required of all new employees. This provision was clearly set forth

in the Intergovernmental Agreement and the staff was informed well in advance that this probationary period applied to them as it would to any new hires at the College.

Impact of a Partnership Change on Work Roles and Practices

Changing Places, Changing Spaces With a move from the Azalea Library to the much larger two-story College facility, with its many rooms designated for the various client groups and services offered, the staff soon realized that their roles would be different out of physical necessity. In their former setting (according to the library manager), "We could see everything going on from the circulation desk." From this central vantage point, which also served as an information desk and a work station, a staff member could easily see who might need help and felt comfortable leaving the desk to give assistance. While these cross-functional practices had worked well for the staff in the Azalea one-room setting, the College partnership presented challenges in defining work roles for scheduling purposes in a much larger, multiroom facility. Community Use staff assigned to the circulation desk are not able to serve information needs of children in the Community Use area of the library because of its location.

In the Azalea facility the manager and her assistant could plan or present programs for children while at the same time supervising other library activities from central vantage points. In the West St. Petersburg Library there are separate rooms for story hours and other children's programs. The new facility offers the advantage of appropriate spaces for service to all user groups, but it demands some adjustments in work practices for a public library team accustomed to multitasking. Presenting programs in a meeting room that is not immediately adjacent to the children's area means that the librarian and her assistant will not be able to monitor the activities of other young library users. More spaces for programming create a demand for more staff to ensure a safe and quality experience for children in the new facility.

In devising a schedule for the Community Use area, the College head librarian determined that a qualified person (meaning a person with a MLS degree) had to be at the information desk at all times. This rule reflects an academic library model where students have the expectation of a staffed information desk. This work practice on its face seemed a practical and reasonable one, but the impact on scheduling of staff was significant. For example, the children's librarian and her assistant are a team whose schedules are in tandem on days when they do programs for children. When they are doing their regularly scheduled programs they are not available to man the information desk, leaving the responsibility for that service to staff members whom the College may not deem to be qualified. In their former library facility, a professional librarian was not always available to

serve information needs of children in the public area of the library when a program was in progress. The College is not willing to allow this. A solution for staffing the information desk in the Community Use area would likely involve a change in definition of who is "qualified."

In their former facility, Azalea employees were accustomed to young adult materials being located in the middle school library adjacent to the centrally located circulation/information desk. Now that the teens have their own room and collection located near the adult collection, serving this user group will require scheduling staff for that area. Even though a separate and distinct space apart from the children's department is preferred by both librarians and teens, serving and supervising this client group in the College library will involve a more departmental approach rather than the cross-functional approach used in the past.

Another new work role anticipated by the Community Use staff involves the supervision of unattended children of College employees and those of College students taking classes or using the campus library. An unintended consequence of the City's library policy that all children over the age of seven may use library facilities and attend children's programs without a caregiver may be the reason for an increase in this user group. The two-story design of the library may also contribute to the "unattended child" problem since most college materials are located upstairs while the children's area is downstairs. The College students, some of whom are childhood education majors who will require assistance in selection and use of materials for their courses, represent another new user group for the former Azalea staff. In the early days of operation, the Community Use/children's librarian found herself relocating college students who were accessing the Internet on computers designated for children's use. (In order to better serve children and discourage College students from inappropriate use of the children's area, Internet access was subsequently disabled on these computers.) Serving academic clients' programmatic needs will offer Community Use staff the opportunity to gain new perspectives of the collection and develop skills in serving different client groups.

With the change to a work environment due to a departmental approach to assignment of duties, the staff must become accustomed to having more than one boss. The head librarian, the Community Use librarian/children's librarian, and the circulation manager will be collaboratively making decisions regarding their work assignments and schedules. The director of St. Petersburg College Libraries was very clear in expressing her plan for how the Community Use employees would work with the College library staff. The former Azalea staff will be viewed not as a team of public librarians but as individual members of the College library staff to be assigned as needed to serve library users in various spaces and departments of the West Community Library.

With the increased hours of operation and more library users, the need for more Community Use personnel is quite likely. The Intergovernmental Agreement provides that, "Even though the College shall have the final decision-making authority in all employment matters the City will provide staffing budget increases for additional staff for the Community Use areas of the library if use by the community indicates the need" ("Intergovernmental Agreement," 2002, p. 9). Serving alongside these new colleagues and developing collaborative work relations could result in major changes in established work practices of this staff in transition.

The Effects of New Management Practices With a change in partners, the staff at Azalea gained a new boss, the College head librarian at West Community Library, who reports to the director of libraries for St. Petersburg College and also attends management meetings of the public library system. The transition to the new facility provided "critical incidents" that illuminated inherent difficulties of a change in leadership for the both the Azalea manager and her staff of eight. The Community Use staff had been accustomed to working closely with the person who created work and vacation schedules, assigned work roles, and supervised and evaluated them. The Azalea library manager's new title, children's librarian, as designated by the College, indicated that she would be reporting to the head librarian and that she had been relieved of these management duties. However, the director of public libraries in St. Petersburg referred to the former Azalea manager as the "Community Use Librarian," in keeping with the language of the Intergovernmental Agreement (2002, p. 8), and made her responsible for all aspects of the move of public library materials to the new facility. In response to a newspaper reporter's question, the former Azalea manager said, "I am the Community Use/Children's Librarian" (Wilson, 2005). Herein lay the difficulty: the public library director looked at the Azalea manager and saw her continuing in the role of overseeing the public library area and delivering services to the community users, while the College head librarian saw her as children's librarian in the Community Use area.

An incident illustrating the difficulties inherent in the dual titles for the Azalea manager's new role took place during the planning phase for the move. The Azalea manager assessed her collection of children's books and realized that the number of bins that had been ordered for shelving the materials was inadequate. Even though the West Library's new children's librarian was in charge of the process of moving the collection, the College had not involved her in ordering the library furniture. The Intergovernmental Agreement stipulates that the College, in coordination with the City, would be responsible for the design, planning, purchase, and installation of furnishings, fixtures, and equipment for the new facility (2002, p. 6). Apparently, leaving the Azalea library manager out of the loop in planning for furnishing the Community Use area was not in the best interest of a smooth transition.

Another occurrence, involving inadequate shelving for the adult collection, confirmed this fact. When it became evident that there was no room for shelving new acquisitions of adult books in the Community Use area, the Azalea manager (the person responsible for moving the collection) discussed this with a member of the College library staff. The College librarian replied that the Community Use collection need not duplicate popular fiction held in the College collection and suggested that selection and acquisition of these materials would probably be done by the College and shelved in the College collection upstairs. Another College librarian implied that the City would retain these roles in collection development of adult materials, demonstrating that procedures for implementing policies that call for collaboration in collection development were not clear to staff in the early days of the partnership. The Azalea library manager also expressed some concerns about sending adult patrons upstairs to the college collection for their materials. This was understandable since her role at the former location had not required her to send patrons out of sight to retrieve materials. Working in a new facility requires learning new ways to serve patrons, and making decisions regarding acquisition and shelving of adult materials may prove to be an opportunity for learning collaborative work practices. A stipulation of the Intergovernmental Agreement stating that acquisition of new materials and resources to serve the College and community will be coordinated by the College and City to avoid unnecessary duplication (2002, p. 10) is an indicator that this collaboration will take place.

One of the most surprising of the “critical incidents” for the Azalea library manager during the transition to the College occurred when she was asked to give up her City-issued Visa card and a petty cash account that she accessed to buy materials for children’s programs and services. She also learned that the City would no longer be paying mileage for her travel to do outreach in local schools and recreational facilities. As the Community Use librarian, she had assumed the city would continue funding her programs and services. A provision of the partnership agreement spelled out that the City and the College would each provide annual funding for Library materials and resources and that the City’s annual minimum of \$50,000 would be used for materials and resources for community users (Intergovernmental Agreement, 2002, p. 9). As children’s librarian in the new West St. Petersburg Community Library, the former Azalea manager continues to attend meetings of the managers of the branch libraries of the St. Petersburg Public Library System. It is in this role that she may clarify how procedures such as purchasing program materials will be handled. At this writing, she had directions from the City that she should discuss this matter with the College, as the City would no longer pay operational expenses as in the former partnership.

Perhaps the greatest challenge of all for the former Azalea library man-

ager was letting go of a very important management role—that of scheduling employees. The Azalea schedule had been the collaborative effort of the library manager and her office assistant, but this complex chore became the responsibility of the West Community Library head librarian. In the early days of the new collaboration it was evident that preparing the work schedule required special knowledge of public library work roles and practices unfamiliar to the college librarians. An excellent example of this is an incident regarding preparation of an opening-day schedule. The children's librarian was scheduled to train an adjunct librarian (who would be working Saturdays in the Community Use area) at the same time that she would be doing outreach programs in nearby public elementary schools to publicize the summer reading program. The College head librarian, responsible for scheduling all faculty, had no knowledge of a prior commitment of the Azalea manager to make these school visits on the day prior to the last day of the school term. The new children's librarian carefully prepared a schedule showing her obligations, which included outreach, children's programs on Tuesday and Wednesday, and monthly mother/daughter and adult book discussions. This calendar, along with information about the importance of retaining the team approach for children's programs, enabled the College head librarian to begin to make sense of the complex assignment of creating a schedule whereby the information desk in the Community Use area could be staffed at all times with qualified personnel. Since the work schedule for staff (other than faculty) is the responsibility of the circulation manager, members of the two-person team that presents programs for children had schedules created separately by two different managers. This complicated an already intricate task.

It became evident that collaborating with the Community Use staff to create the work schedule would ensure the continuation of excellent programming and services for all user groups. To address the need for qualified Saturday staff, the head college librarian asked the children's librarian to contact the school system regarding school media specialists who might be interested in adjunct work, preferably for twenty hours a week to cover some evenings as well as Saturdays. A media specialist recently retired from a nearby school was identified, but this librarian's name was provided by the director of School Library Media/Technology with some reluctance, demonstrating, perhaps, that she was not eager to provide information that might lead to the district's losing any more library personnel to the College.

In the early days of operation of the joint use facility, several adjunct librarians were hired to cover week nights and Saturdays in the Community Use area, providing children and adult users with assistance. These hours represent timeframes when children and their caregivers can attend together to avail themselves of library services and programs. The former Azalea employees were accustomed to working flexible hours in order to offer the same quality of customer service on evenings and weekends as during

the regular work day. Providing extended access of 69.5 hours a week in the new facility by hiring adjunct librarians is a viable solution so long as they receive essential staff development. The new Community Use/children's librarian found herself in the position of being responsible for this training, which began immediately after West Community Library opened.

Training for the Transition A consultant from the College Center for Library Automation (CCLA), who was responsible for linking the automation systems of the City and the College, explained that the City wanted to retain a separate collection and automation system (and the Dewey Decimal classification of their materials) so that library materials at the College branch could be easily searched by the patrons throughout the St. Petersburg System and the Pinellas Public Library Cooperative. Terms of the Intergovernmental Agreement in the section addressing circulation systems specify that the College will provide training in use of the various operation and management modules (2002, p. 11). The director of St. Petersburg College Libraries (a system comprised of six libraries on campuses throughout Pinellas County) emphasized the fact that she expected all staff to serve Community Use and College students, employing an integrated work model. She suggested that the joint use program's customer service policies stipulate that all library employees serve all client groups. Therefore, moving the public library program to a college/public joint facility entailed creating a plan for training the Azalea staff in the College automation system, Library Information Network for Community Colleges (LINCC); Library of Congress Cataloging (LC); and use of computers that would enable staff to toggle back and forth between the public library automation system (Polaris) and LINCC as they serve community and college patrons. To receive a certificate in the LC classification system, staff must successfully complete modules of a software program, and they may access Web-based training for LINCC from the College Center for Library Automation. Azalea staff were encouraged to complete this important orientation prior to opening day in order to provide quality customer service. Employees of the new joint use library were expected to be adept in accessing materials in two distinct systems so that they could help patrons become familiar with the new OPAC that features both Polaris and LINCC.

The circulation manager of the new library set up basic training that involved a crash course (two to three hours) in working the circulation desk that serves both public and college patrons, and she devised a plan whereby every new staff member would have an experienced college partner when they worked circulation in their first six weeks on the job. In view of the fact that all college staff must become familiar with the public library circulation system, one might wonder if there will also be training in the Dewey Decimal System. The circulation manager indicated that new staff would also have technology training and orientation in serials acquisition.

Training employees to work at a circulation desk where they will be

required to serve different client groups means not only developing their ability to find patron records in the distinct systems but also their ability to recognize and appreciate the needs of both community and College users. College students seeking required reading materials for coursework are subject to different policies regarding the number of books on a particular subject a patron is allowed to check out. Implementing policies that draw such distinctions may prove challenging for Community Use staff that had not done so in the middle school setting. Students at their former joint use facility who had public library cards became public patrons when the last bell rang at the end of the school day, and circulation staff did not treat them as distinct from any other user group in the community. Working with their new colleagues, who are accustomed to serving college students' needs at the circulation desk, will provide an opportunity for professional growth for the Community Use employees.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This report of personnel issues of a joint use library in transition, while not exhaustive in its coverage, offers insights that could guide planners of future collaborative ventures, particularly those considering a change in partnership. Employment issues that emerged during the transition period for new members of the West Community Library staff can be divided into three categories: work roles, management practices, and training models. Work roles were impacted by the design of the Community Use space in the new facility, more diverse client groups, and longer hours of operation. Management practices that brought changes for former Azalea employees involved operating under a new chain of command and adopting a departmental mode for assignment of duties and scheduling. Training models that required adjustments for staff included use of technology for learning new skills, partnering with college mentors, and, most importantly, intensive on-the-job staff development. These personnel matters reflect concerns that, in some cases, were anticipated and addressed in the formal agreement and, in other cases, handled as they arose. Dealing with employment issues of a staff in transition required not only a document to guide the change but also close collaboration of partners eager to make concessions for the benefit of users of the joint program. The City of St. Petersburg and St. Petersburg College, in their desire to provide convenient and improved library service to citizens in the Azalea service area and all areas of the city, made mutual promises that included specifics of how the joint use facility would be managed. The Intergovernmental Agreement proved to be a detailed guide for operation of the combined college/public library that also provided some room for interpretation by those charged with implementation of the policies and procedures it set forth. As in the case of other successful joint ventures, it is through the process of reconciling

differences in these interpretations that the collaborators will become true partners.

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