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Turning Advocacy into Action: Inclusive Makerspaces



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Background

Advocacy in the school library typically includes securing funding, collection development that is representative of special populations, and campus leadership roles. The librarian can, and should, create services and programs that are inclusive and supportive of special populations. One special population of students that are often overlooked in the secondary school library are special education (SPED) students. Special education students can have a variety of cognitive or physical disabilities that make the act of learning more difficult without the proper support.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to develop a methodology in which the school librarian can follow to support the varying needs of students that receive special education services through the use of library makerspaces. Makerspace activities will be suggested for use that can be easily modifiable for students who require SPED services in the general education classroom.

Related Literature

- **Inclusive makerspaces:**
 - Farmer, 2008
 - Brady et al., 2014
- **Advocacy:**
 - ALA, 2019
 - AASL, 2019
- **Collaboration with Special Education Teachers**
 - Farmer, 2009
 - Small, Justus, & Regitano, 2014

Research Questions

- **RQ1:** What services and programs can the library offer to support students of varying cognitive and physical disabilities?
- **RQ2:** How can makerspaces accommodate students with learning disabilities?
- **RQ3:** How can school librarians collaborate with special education teachers to support students?

Design & Method

- This study is qualitative in nature. This study will utilize questionnaires, focus groups, and student feedback forms to identify components of an inclusive makerspace. The field notes from the special education teachers and the transcriptions from the focus group will be converted into electronic documents. The documents will then be uploaded into the text processing software, WordStat, to determine the frequency of keywords used by participants throughout the study.
- Data analysis includes term-frequency inverse frequency and content analysis.

References

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