Why Become a Leader?
- Educate others about our role
  - Administrators, teachers and others do not know
  - We work instructionally with all grade levels and all subject areas
  - We work with all students, teachers, parents and administrators
  - We are involved in reading, curriculum, technology, professional development
- Educate others about exemplary library media programs and their impact
  - So when teachers become administrators they demand an exemplary program in their school b/c they know what the impact will be
- Advocacy
  - According to Lankford, "Advocacy is organized influence"
  - Others are not going to speak up for us if they don't know what we do or why our programs are important to the educational process
  - Get others to take up our cause, help them see how our goals connect to what is important to them
- Growth
  - Desire to help others grow – students, staff
  - Intellectually
  - Increased confidence

Or else . . .
- Lose funding, staff, position
- Loss of services
- Loss of quality
- Be left out of the loop

Think of the influence you can have if you "use leadership skills in your every day duties and interactions" – Besara, 2007

One more reason why . . . Student Achievement
- Strong library media programs and strong library media specialists are linked to student achievement. (Hamilton-Pennell, Lance, Rodney, & Hainer, 2000)
  - Multiple studies show this link
  - According to Lankford, "schools with good library programs have students who do better academically as measured by standardized test scores"
- No Child Left Behind
  - How are you helping students to meet these standards?
- Accountability
  - To students who need the answers and skills to find them
  - To teachers who are to help students pass assessments

- To administrators who are held accountable for student achievement
- Partnerships with students
  - Where teachers give the assignment, library media specialists help students learn how to find the answers, thus helping the student complete the assignment

Notes for Wordle
- Prioritize, time management, expect interruptions
- Make yourself visible within your school, district and the profession
- Commitment – time and energy, and the ability to follow-through
- Strategic – anticipate, have a plan, take initiative, plan for change
- Attitude –, positive, and ready to take a risk for improvement
- Listen - be open-minded, understand your users' needs
- Encourager – sometimes you have to walk beside others or help them along from behind
- Find balance – know when to act and when to respond

Time to Change
- Old Way: "*Administration Down*" – Waiting for them to change for the benefit of my library program
  - We can't wait for change to come
  - We must ANTICIPATE change

- New Way: "*Media Specialist Up*" – I am the change that will impact my library program and my field
  - "Question the status quo – look for new ways to grow" Lankford, 2006
  - See something that needs to be done? Do it!
  - Adjust to meet the new demands, new expectations, new needs

Beware
- Change takes time – It does not happen overnight, may require flexibility, reflection and new approaches
- Conflict – Don't be afraid of it! It helps us change and solve problems

Get Your Administrator on Board!
- They don't know what we do so we need to show them!
- Communicate
  - Regularly – weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.
  - Know their vision and goals and match the library media program's to them
  - Let them know what's going on

- Big Picture
  - We see the big picture just like they do – "the entire educational program of the building in context" Anderson, 2009
- Support
  - Get their support – without it, you're not likely to be successful
  - They have the leadership tools to support you – flexible schedule, adequate technology, funding
- Influence
  - Get their support
  - They have the leadership tools to support you – flexible schedule, adequate technology, personnel and funding
  - According to Weisburg and Toor (2004) "your budget represents a tempting chunk of money to administrators needing to reduce expenditures. The less they know about your program, the easier it is to slash your accounts. If the media center is a hive of activity with students and teachers always present, administrators will find other ways to cut costs."

Lead by Using Data
- Do Your Homework!
- Different kinds of data
  - Circ stats, scheduling stats, collaboration stats
  - Budget numbers – what do you need, justification, short term v. long term, evidence of past expenditures on program and student achievement
  - Test scores –
    - How does Mr. Smith's class test scores compare with Ms. Jones' and is there a difference in their classes' circulations? Collaborated lessons?
    - Identify weak areas and strengths
- Use your data and student achievement to drive your instruction and collection development and program planning

Lead Within Your School
- Communicate
  - Everyday with everyone
  - In stakeholders' language, and in relation to what is important to them
  - Listen – find out what their concerns are
- Connect with others
  - "lessen the isolation . . . forge relationships with faculty and staff" Franklin & Stephens, 2009
  - Connect with those in charge – administrators, grade chairs, committee chairs, those in the know
  - Recognize the political hierarchy in your school

- Committees
  - Get involved in school committees – data, reading, writing, budget, parent/family involvement, PTA
  - Use that forum to help articulate the library media program's mission, goals and services
  - Become a part of the decision-making teams
- Visionary
  - Have a vision and be strategic about educating others in your building
  - Let it reflect your plans for the library media program and how it fits in with the school culture

Lead as Curriculum Specialists
- Big Picture
  - We know what is taught at each grade level and when
  - We know how to integrate curriculums through multiple disciplines
- Your Curriculum
  - Know it – and where it connects at each grade level
  - If you don't have one, write one
  - Make a Map
- Show them how
  - Model
  - Collaborate
  - Help them incorporate information skills into their classroom instruction
  - Teach
  - Assess
  - Know where to find the objectives and resources that support them

Lead as Instructional Specialists
- Best practices and theory
  - Strong understanding of learning and teaching
  - Knowing best strategies and resources
  - "enable effective learning, teaching, and assessment" Levitov, 2007
  - Model, collaborate, team-teach
- Student-centered
  - Authentic lessons to engage students
  - Support higher-level thinking skills
  - Involve them in assessing the program
  - Develop independent information users
- 21st Century ready
  - Overload of media
  - New AASL learning standards – inquiry-based
  - Help teachers incorporate these new standards to meet the needs of today's learners

Leading through Reading
- As key to student achievement
    - Reading skills are a must for success on standardized tests
    - Understand how children learn to read – professional development
    - 21st century reading skills
- For all readers
    - All reading levels
    - High-level interest / low readability
    - Fiction and non-fiction
    - Picture books for higher reading levels
    - Other languages for ELL students and parents
- Promotion
    - As a pleasurable experience
    - As a life-long habit
    - Through displays, book talks, student reviews, morning announcements
    - Model
    - Other reading materials outside of the school library – public library
    - Sustained silent reading activities
    - Author visits

Lead as Resource Sharers
- For Teachers / Library Media Specialists
    - Not just books
    - Websites
    - Journal articles
    - Technology resources
    - Lesson plans
    - How – Grade-level meetings, collaboration days, newsletters, emails, one-on-one
- For students – According to Campbell, we have "a responsibility to provide adequate, diverse materials to all students."
    - Books, websites, other places and experts within the community
- For parents – Books, websites, other places and experts within the community
- Seek out those who are not using the LMC or you or your resources – and help make the connection for them

Lead as Mentors for New Teachers and Media Colleagues
- Connect
    - First year teachers
    - New to school or district

- o Provide encouragement
- Share expertise
  - o Handbook
  - o Lesson plans
  - o Resources
  - o Instructions on how to use databases
  - o Planning sheet
  - o Favorite candy bar, coffee mug, good read

Lead by Facilitating Learning for Colleagues
- Plan
  - o Use student data to drive content – ex. Reading scores → reading instruction strategies
  - o Content should be directly applicable to the classroom
  - o Set goals and objectives
- Do
  - o Newsletter
  - o Podcast
  - o Staff meetings
  - o Staff development
  - o Book study
  - o One-on-one
  - o Technology
  - o Best practices
- Reflect
  - o Provide time for reflection
  - o Ask for feedback
  - o Follow-up
  - o Not just one day or one time

Lead through Technology
- Break out
  - o Get out of your comfort zone
  - o Work to become comfortable to become an expert
- Be aware
  - o Stay up to date on new software and hardware
  - o Be the first to recognize new technology
- Implement
  - o Be the first to introduce new technology
  - o Incorporate into instruction and professional development
  - o Wikis, blogs, interactive boards, podcasts
  - o Go beyond the basic services
  - o Show teachers how to use it to meet various learning styles

Lead in Ethics and Integrity
- Intellectual Freedom
    - We are advocates of open-minds, multiple perspectives
    - We maintain neutral environments for learning and expression
- Ethical use of information
    - We teach our students and our staff how to ethically use information
    - Intellectual property, copyright
    - Internet safety
    - Effective and ethical use of technology
    - User privacy
- Integrity
    - Be fair to all users
        - Not just the students you like
        - Not just the teachers you are buddy-buddy with
    - Use the same rules for everyone
    - Stay true to library values as supported by ALA Library Bill of Rights
    - Others will respect and recognize you as a leader with integrity

Lead in the Greater Community
- Network
    - Find other leaders – in your district, your state, and at the national levels
    - Partner with others outside of the library media field, especially other areas of education
- Get involved
    - Professional organizations – state, regional, national
    - Committees
    - Community – school board, city councilo
    - Politically – legislative reform, lobbying, writing or calling representatives and voters about library issues

Lead as a Learner
- Read
    - Journals, books, websites, blogs
    - Library media, education, administration, leadership
- Professional development
    - In-service, staff development
    - Workshops
    - Conferences
    - Coursework
- Professional learning communities

- o Professional organizations
- o Listservs
- o PLC's
- Portfolio
  - o Helps you and others see how you've grown
  - o Helps direct areas to work on
  - o Great for interviewing on the job hunt
- National Board Certification
  - o Try it – go into it with the attitude of doing your best
  - o The experience will make you a better leader
  - o Or if not, at least look at the standards and principles and apply them to how you approach your role as an SLMS
- Reflect
  - o What have you accomplished
  - o What worked? What didn't?
  - o What would you do differently?
  - o Where do you want to go next?
  - o Ask for feedback from others

Becoming a Leader is a learning process.
- You might not choose to become a leader – you might be put into a leadership position – and then you have to learn the skills needed
- Some qualities and skills will come naturally and others will not – that's okay.
- Collins, 2001 – "Understand what you can and cannot be best at . . . . Clearly, each library media specialist has strengths in some areas of expertise. Leaders will work to be the best at those areas, and strive to be as good in other areas as is reasonable."

Plan of Action
- Start small – new program, new service, new committee, whatever
- According to Weisburg and Toor, "After making your presence known in small ways, you will be ready to take on bigger challenges . . . [and have] built up trust with the faculty."
- Learn from your mistakes – you are not likely to succeed every time, just as risk comes with the chance that you will fail. This does not make you a failure, it just provides you with an opportunity to learn and try a better way next time.
- Slow and steady wins the race – think of the turtle – he was slow but he got there; and as long as he stays in his shell he is safe but he's also not getting anywhere.