

Introduction

Hello, my name is Christine Alston. I am the media coordinator at Y. E. Smith Elementary. I am also called the media specialist, the library teacher, and that person you go to when your computer or password doesn't work.

I started at YES at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year as your librarian, but prior to that I was an ELA and social studies teacher. I have two adult daughters. My oldest daughter works at the VA Hospital in Durham. My youngest works at a record store in Wake County. I am also the grandmother of a little girl named Josie.

My goal as a library teacher is to help students find books that they 1) love and 2) can read by themselves or enjoy having someone read to them. I believe that becoming successful readers (and loving reading) will open up the world to children, helping them to value themselves and others.

How are titles (books) selected for the media center?

Titles (books) are selected for the library in a variety of ways, but each way goes through a vetting process. Below are some examples of how a title might be selected.

1. Student curriculum covers the topic and there is a need for that title as a physical book.
 - a. While classroom research is generally conducted online, there are usually some students who need physical books for research purposes.
2. The title is one that was previously purchased; the book is widely circulated; and
 - a. We need more copies.
 - b. We need to replace the damaged or lost copy/copies.
3. A specific title or topic has been requested.
 - a. Students in grades two through five use title/call number bookmarks while searching the online library catalog each week and selecting a book (or books). These bookmarks help me keep track of titles that are in high demand and that are not readily available for check out when requested.
 - b. The above-mentioned bookmarks can also be used to request books the library-media center does not yet own.
 - c. Staff members may also request titles or topics for books they would like purchased for the library.

Final Selection and Vetting Process

Each year a portion of the library budget is used to purchase new titles. These new titles are selected by using recommendations, when needed, from sources that include but are not limited to:

- a. Elementary Librarian Exchange
- b. Future Ready Librarians
- c. School Librarians/Library Technicians Programming and Procedures
- d. Searches for "best of"
- e. Searches for current and past years' children's book awards

After compiling the recommendations, I locate the book on YouTube and scan the book to make sure that the content is 1) appropriate and 2) interesting. If a YouTube version of the book is not available, I find a preview of the book online. If neither is available, I skip that book and do not buy it.

There are some books that were already in the library collection prior to my employment. I regularly go through the inventory and “weed” (remove) some of these books. Some books are removed due to age and some due to content. Please see the entry on [“Weeding”](#) if you would like to learn more about this topic.