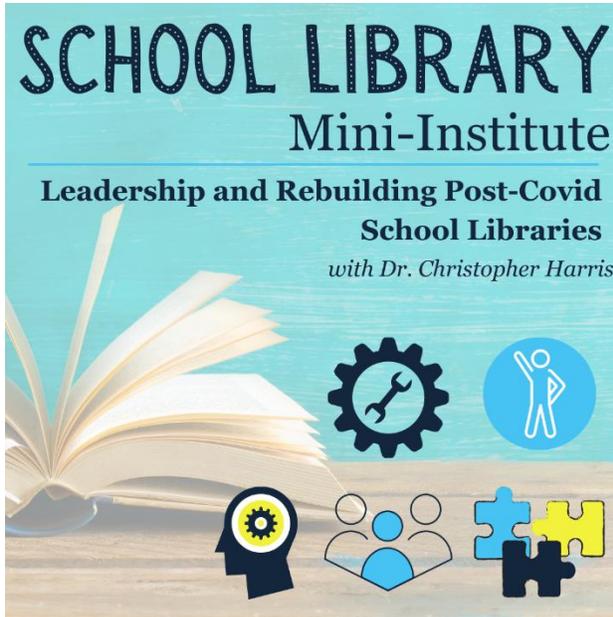


# For 2021-22, NEFLIN is excited to offer a new opportunity: the **School Library Mini-Institute!**

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This program is designed to provide interested school librarians the opportunity to build knowledge and leadership skills through a series of five face-to-face workshops throughout the school year. In addition, participants will connect and network with a cohort of school librarians from the NEFLIN region.

Led by Dr. Christopher Harris, the overall theme of this Institute is **Leadership and Rebuilding Post-Covid School Libraries**. During the COVID-19 pandemic, school libraries across the country made changes to

procedures, spaces, and instructional practices out of necessity. Across the many models of in-person, hybrid, and remote instruction adopted by districts around the country, there were even more models for school librarians and the services they provide. It is essential that we take time after the immediate pressure of the pandemic emergency to reflect, understand, and evaluate those modified practices. In fact, Dr. Harris and the [School Library System of the Genesee Valley Board of Cooperative Educational Services](#) have recently been awarded a National Leadership Grant for Libraries to lead four national forums on this topic.

**Questions?** Email Jenny Eason at [jenny@neflin.org](mailto:jenny@neflin.org).

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**Location:** [Clay County Public Library](#) (Orange Park Branch), 2054 Plainfield Avenue, Orange Park, FL

**Dates:** The five sessions will take place from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm on the following dates:

Friday, October 15<sup>th</sup>  
Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup>  
Friday, January 21<sup>st</sup>  
Friday, February 25<sup>th</sup>  
Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>

**Cost:** Free. Lunch for each session will be provided.

**Who can attend?** Any K-12 School Librarian/Media Specialist in the NEFLIN region. Participants must commit to attend all five face-to-face sessions.

**Can I earn Continuing Education points?** While this is determined by your school district policies, NEFLIN will provide a certificate of attendance after each session and a certificate of completion at the end of the program. For specific documentation needs, contact [jenny@neflin.org](mailto:jenny@neflin.org).

**How do I register?** Register at <https://conta.cc/3ym2qOB> or on the NEFLIN Website (<http://neflin.org>).

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## Topic One - Program Development



The school library program viewed as a whole is actually a complex system that includes three distinct, yet interconnected aspects. A nuanced approach to program development includes awareness of how each of the parts can be leveraged individually to meet specific needs as well as combined together to address complex situations.

Throughout this session, Dr. Harris will guide participants through an exploration of the library's *Space, Resources, and Staffing*.

During the COVID pandemic, exigent circumstances required a rapid shift in our understanding of and application of the three parts of the library program within our buildings. In some cases, library *spaces* were closed to students, which impacted the physical collection of *resources*; the response was a shift to digital resources. In other situations, library *staffing* was pulled for other duties which necessitated a change in the instructional program. This session will explore the complex interactions of the three program aspects to allow participants to better understand how the system works as a whole and can be modified to meet emerging challenges.

## Topic Two - Instructional Leadership



School librarians, though classified as instructional staff in most situations, actually have more in common with the principal of a school than with their classroom teacher colleagues. Librarians can and should take on an expanded role as pedagogical and curricular consultants to teachers as well as students. The challenge is making

this happen in a situation where the library program does not have full respect and support within the building.

Dr. Harris will focus on ways to develop leadership standing through the creation of a “tribe” of teachers that recognize your expertise and value. We will explore how to move from cooperation to collaboration to empower instructional relationships. The session will also explore marketing concepts that can help librarians build their brand within the school.

### **Topic Three - Computational Expertise**



One way to actualize the instructional leadership discussed in the last session is to demonstrate expertise in areas of emerging curriculum focus. For example, the Florida Department of Education’s [standards for computer science education](#) include K-12 components of instruction. In this session, Dr. Harris will share results from his dissertation research on supporting the development of computational confidence in teachers with no prior computer science learning.

Participant librarians will learn how to move from analog explorations of computation thinking concepts into subject-embedded computer science applications. This will let librarians demonstrate instructional leadership in their schools in an emerging field through a focus on curriculum aligned approaches to computer science instruction.

### **Topic Four - Community Engagement**



The school library program cannot stop at the walls of the physical library space. In this session Dr. Harris will introduce ways to engage with the larger community in which the school library lives. Participants will explore models for community interactions, approaches to marketing, and opportunities for collaboration and partnerships.

Building a supportive community around a school library can take a variety of approaches. Together we will explore small steps like creating a student advisory board as well as larger initiatives like political advocacy.

### **Topic Five - Systemic Playfulness**



Dr. Harris will bring games and play to this session, but with a serious purpose. Encouraging the systemic integration of playfulness in your library. Play-based instruction is being embraced in more schools and for good reason. Participants will learn about the use of games as another type of instructional resource aligned to classroom and curriculum standards.

A play-based approach to the systems of the school library can also help participants reflect back on the prior sessions and make plans to play a little bit and try new concepts in their buildings.

### **About Dr. Christopher Harris**



Dr. Christopher Harris is the Director of the [School Library System](#) for the Genesee Valley BOCES, an educational services agency supporting the libraries of 22 small, rural districts in Western NY. He was a participant in the first American Library Association Emerging Leaders program in 2007 and was honored as a Library Journal Mover and Shaker in 2008. Since then he has been involved with ALA as a Fellow for Youth and Technology Policy and a participant in ALA ebook and digital content efforts. Dr. Harris received his Ed.D. from St. John Fisher College in 2018 for dissertation research on helping teachers become more confident teaching computer science.

Returning to his earlier work as a member of the ALA/Verizon gaming initiative panel of experts on games in libraries, Christopher started [Play Play Learn](#) in 2014. The site provides educational resources and consulting services to connect games and learning in libraries, schools, and homes for students of all ages. In 2015, the first titles in Christopher's [Teaching Through Games](#) series were released by Rosen Publishing as professional books with lesson plans for using tabletop games in classroom and library instruction. [The Playful Classroom](#), a series of books with artwork tied to games from HABA were released from Rosen Classroom in 2018. The [Unplugged Activities for Future Coders](#) series with play-based approaches for computational thinking was published by Enslow in 2019.

An avid gamer and reader, Christopher lives with his wife, a K-12 school librarian, their daughter, and cats outside of Rochester, NY.