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Tulsa library, TPS to link resources

■ The agreement will be piloted with Memorial High School students.

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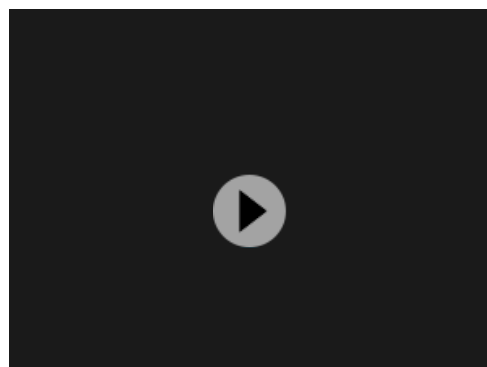
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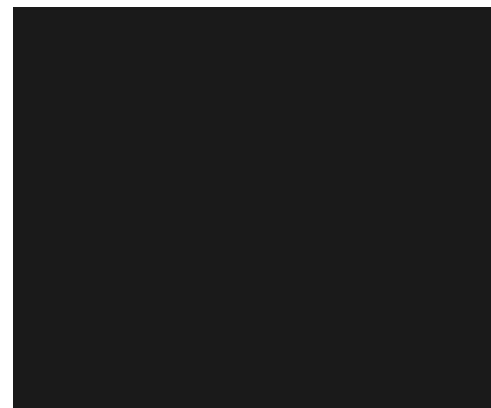
Ellen Duecker: "We have e-books and other resources, but together we have more," said the director of instructional media and library services for the Tulsa school district.

Posted: Tuesday, December 3, 2013 12:00 am | Updated: 7:02 am, Tue Dec 3, 2013.

By **ANDREA EGER** World Staff Writer | **0** comments

The doors to the Tulsa City-County Library's treasure trove of digital resources will soon be opened automatically for Tulsa Public Schools students.

The school district is finalizing an agreement to create public library accounts for all students that would be linked to their school library accounts.



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"We're just so excited to have the opportunity for our students so they have access to all of the resources of our community," said Ellen Duecker, director of instructional media and library services for the district. "We have e-books and other resources, but together we have more."

At a meeting Monday, the Tulsa school board approved a memorandum of understanding with the Tulsa City-County Library for this purpose.

Duecker said the cooperative agreement will be piloted with Memorial High School students at the beginning of the spring semester.

Barcodes with students' public library account numbers will be printed and attached to their student identification cards, which are already used for school library access.

The two entities have plans for technology links that would allow students to simultaneously search both the public and school library collections for information and resources.

Duecker said the desire to link resources for students automatically has been discussed for years, but it was thought to be impossible for the school district and public libraries to link their different card systems.

"We finally figured out if we could make sure each one of our students had an account to use the digital resources, it could work," she said. "We always promote the use of the public libraries, including through our initiative to encourage every second-grade student to get a library card, and librarians visit the schools. But if they don't use the card for an extended period of time, it expires, and if they lose it, they can't log in without their account number."

School librarians will work with teachers to get their students signed up. The plan is to keep working until all secondary school students are online and eventually extend the program to elementary school students.

Gary Shaffer, the Tulsa City-County Library's CEO, said the partnership helps address one of the system's five strategic goals.

"Goal No. 1 is that the children of Tulsa County be able to enjoy every resource they need to compete globally," he said. "We're all about kids and all about learning, so it just makes sense that we would provide this access."

Tulsa's is part of a group of library systems across the United States that combined resources to offer a program called Homework Help Now.

Through the partnership, the libraries employ a team of tutors who are experts in a variety of subjects and grade levels. Through an online portal, they are at the disposal of library member students who need help with problems, feedback on writing assignments, online tutorials and flashcards.

The public libraries offer access to different databases than Tulsa Public Schools has that students can use for research reports, but they also have a plethora of downloadable magazines, newspapers, videos, streaming movies and music, too.

"You give them something they're really enticed by, and then you've introduced them to a whole sea of resources they can fish from," Shaffer said.

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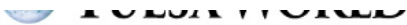


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