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BLAKE HOPPER
Librarian
Tazewell-New Tazewell
Primary School
New Tazewell, TN

DESTINY - THE NUMBER ONE LIBRARY SOFTWARE FOR 13 SCHOOLS IN TENNESSEE DISTRICT

TAZEWELL-NEW TAZEWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL
NEW TAZEWELL | TENNESSEE

There aren't many school librarians in the country who can say they were introduced to Follett Destiny® Library Manager when they were in high school. But Blake Hopper, librarian at Tazewell-New Tazewell Primary School in Tennessee, is part of that select circle.

"I have used Destiny Library Manager for 14 years, going back to my senior year of high school," Hopper said. "I was a library intern that year and later went on to automate three libraries in the district and re-automate my current library – all with Destiny Library Manager."

Located near the Kentucky border, Hopper's elementary school is part of the Claiborne County School District, which has 13 schools and more than 4,000 students. No matter the size of a district, however, Hopper says Destiny is a perfect fit.

"Using Destiny is an easy way to help manage your library. It is designed well, has a lot of functionalities, and is so user-friendly," Hopper says. "I love everything it allows us to do, the design, and the help of tech and customer support. It also allows for the ease of importing MARC records or manually adding books through Alliance Plus. This makes adding books to the collection a breeze. Destiny Library Manager has everything I need in one program."

Hopper also appreciates the ability to print his own barcodes and spine labels right from Destiny, which saves him money and time. Plus, when printing barcodes, he takes advantage of the ability to gather data and run various reports, including unused numbers. "After books are weeded," he noted, "this allows us to take advantage of all the unused numbers."

Thanks to Destiny Library Manager, Hopper, who has been with Claiborne County SD for nearly 10 years, says his libraries run efficiently and effectively.

"All the report options help me see where my collection is, allow me to see stats and usage of books, and let me keep track of books that students have checked out," he notes. "Destiny Library Manager is so user-friendly that I even let my students use the self-checkout option. I was looking for a way to help keep our library open all day, even when classes were in the library. I created a locked-down patron account called TNT. Each year, I go over how to do self-checkout and explain that students can use it at any time – they love the independence of it. I love the fact that it keeps books always circulating. Students also use iPads to browse the catalog, which helps them discover new books that they may not have seen by just browsing the shelves. It is also connected directly to Follett Titlewave® for collection analysis, which is another plus."

Additionally, Hopper says that communicating and collaborating with colleagues in the district has never been easier.

"One major way our district uses Follett Destiny® is for inter-library loan since all our schools are under one Destiny account," he says. "This allows us to search all the locations in our district for books we need. We can then email the librarians what we need. This is helpful when a teacher needs more copies of a book for students to read or if a student needs a book quickly."

The district also uses Follett Aspen® Student Information System, and the two programs work seamlessly together, Hopper says, enabling students to be automatically added or graduated in Destiny Library Manager.

THE PANDEMIC ILLUSTRATED NEW NEEDS – AND CAPABILITIES OF DESTINY LIBRARY MANAGER.

Hopper developed a new appreciation for the market-leading library management solution when the pandemic hit as he relied on it for student holds and getting kids the books they needed. He learned many things that are still relevant post-pandemic.

"Of course, when the pandemic first hit, I used Destiny Library Manager to track down as many checked-out books that I could," he recalls. "The reports were easy to print and share with parents. I also ran a report of books that were lost during this time — this allowed for easy reordering. And I really learned to rely on the hold feature. We have finally added Destiny Library Manager to Clever, which allows us to be able to let students place books on hold themselves. This helps students let the librarian know what they need at any time."

DESTINY DISCOVER – AND BEYOND

Hopper has embraced Follett Destiny Discover®, where students and educators can search and access all print and digital resources at one convenient interface.

"This catalog option is more appealing to my younger kiddos," he observes. "It is more eye-catching and more interactive. I like that it shows off new book and top checkouts. It has larger covers and says if that book is checked out, right on the cover. It makes searching for a book a lot easier."

Most of all, Hopper appreciates he can use Destiny Library Manager as his one-stop shop for all things library management.

"It helps save time and runs a library efficiently," he stresses. "I always tell others we have the number-one program with Destiny Library Manager."

For more on Blake Hopper, visit his blog — **travelingguybrarian.com***.*

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