



## Media Center Milestone: All Libraries Online

Remember when you were in elementary school? If your class was selecting mysteries to read, you would line up to take turns at one drawer of the card catalog: *M for 'mystery'*.

Now, your child uses a computer to check a title or author. In the computer lab, the entire class can look up fantasy or mystery and read the summaries to choose a good story, all at once. We shifted from circulation software to a web-based system, so we are not limited to a certain number of licenses. You can look up a book from any computer – at school or at home - by clicking on the Library World icon on the media center webpage.

Please thank your library media specialist and media secretary – because they did the automation themselves! Since 2005, they have been adding accurate records for the books into the databases that replace those old-fashioned card catalogs.

Media staff learned the fields for the machine-readable records, and combed through a vast database of titles to find good matches, assigning the subject headings Parsippany students will use to look it up. Those who finished quickly then helped others. Media secretaries contributed beyond the walls of their own libraries, participating in summer “work parties,” applying barcodes to the books. This took patience and perseverance.

Why is this important? Searching the LibraryWorld database on the OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog) teaches students how to select books they need for school and pleasure reading. As they mature, this searching lays the groundwork for research they will do in district-provided electronic encyclopedias, as well as the wider Internet. The Media department is pleased to provide this practice in 21<sup>st</sup>-Century skills.