

The Implications of Selected School Reform Approaches for School Library Media Services

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This paper explores the implications of selected school reforms for library media services. Each reform is described and its individual implications for library media services identified. From these implications, general themes are noted and conclusions are drawn. Even though many of the reforms selected have stirred controversy, it is not within the scope of this paper to evaluate any of them. Some reference to quality or viability is necessary and inevitable in the course of discussion, but the objective here is only to identify the implications of selected approaches for school library media services where and if they are implemented.

Clusterings of Various Reform Ideas

The reform ideas discussed in this document divide into three rough clusters. Educational reforms are difficult to categorize because many contain elements that span and blur the lines between divisions. Clusters are loose groupings, and the separation between clusters is not sharp. Because the boundaries are not always clear, some readers may question the categorizing that follows, especially near the edges of each group. At the core, though, the central attributes and motivations of the ideas in each cluster are different enough to suggest different—even if overlapping—implications for school libraries and school library media specialists. The first cluster comprises reforms that fundamentally restructure school governance. The second contains a sample of reforms targeting how schools deal with specific groups of students. The third cluster is a scattered collection of reforms that share only the goal of improving student achievement.

Reform Proposals Not Considered Here

This paper focuses on reforms that speak to the governance, curriculum, organization, and instructional practices at the building level. There are many other reforms, both proposed and already in practice, that address broader and connected issues—among them teacher certification, administrator training, merit pay and career-ladder plans, national standards, and methods of financing education. These issues are not examined here, because they hold few immediate direct

implications for school library media services. Doubtless, the topics should be included in plans to improve educational performance and to capitalize upon library and library media specialist potential, but they are not at this moment directly positioned to do so.

The Question of Technology

The infusion of technology into schooling is pervasive, and while it represents a critical component in reform implementation and delivery, it is not in itself a school reform program. Schools and programs may need to be “reformed” in order to capitalize on technology’s educational potential or to ensure that students are prepared to deal with it as an integral part of their lives, but such needs define it as an educational tool and a twenty-first century challenge. From this perspective, technology is not a separate issue. Rather, it is a component of educational quality that must be considered within the context of reforming curriculum and instruction.

Cluster 1: Governance and Choice

The reforms selected for this cluster imply new roles for school library media services as a result of reordering governance systems. Depending on the perspective taken, these types of reform perhaps hold the greatest promise or greatest threat of dismantling traditional approaches to public education. Even partial dismantling can result in potentially significant changes in school purpose, philosophy, and organization. Alterations in school goals, governance, or operation automatically stimulate changes in all areas of the organization, including the role and function of library media services. School-based management, school choice, and home schooling—three examples chosen from points on a continuum progressing from least to most radical—illustrate this point.

School-Based Management

Alternately called site-based management, shared governance, or intradistrict decentralization, school-based management is a governance reform that shifts some or all curriculum, staffing, and budget decisions to personnel located at the school building. Although it provides schools with measures of autonomy, it is far less radical than some other restructuring ideas, such as open choice and voucher plans. The salient characteristic in site-based management is the sharing of the decision-making process among constituents in the school. This typically involves a parent/community advisory council to work with the school staff (David 1989b). Through shifting and sharing of authority and responsibility, school-based management restructures roles and responsibilities not only in the building, but also in the central office (Elmore 1988). The purpose is to fundamentally change authority structures, not just reorganize administrative responsibilities (David 1989a).

There is no single model for successful school-based management. By definition, each school determines its own needs and unique approach to answering those needs. In addition to having merit in its own right, proponents contend that it is a requisite to success in smaller scale school reform movements because it is impossible to create conditions that foster innovation, improvement, and the professional growth of faculty without the flexibility school-based management affords (Goodlad 1984; Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy 1986).

The driving argument in school-based management is that more effective learning environments result when teachers, parents, community members, and students are meaningfully involved in organizational and instructional decision making (Myers and Stonehill 1993). Some research suggests a connection between the institution of school-level decision making and increased student achievement, but variations in the effectiveness of implementation moderate the relationship (Allen and Glickman 1992; Levin 1988; Levine and Lezotte 1990; Rauth 1990).

In operation, the site leadership's discretion in decision making often is not as broad as it appears on paper. Staffing takes up the largest part of any school's budget, and decision making in most areas is still constrained by state law, union contracts, federal regulations, board mandates, and district traditions (David 1989b). In the usual circumstance, the school receives a lump-sum budget for all expenditures. Authority to make changes in how budget, staffing, and curriculum decisions are made, and in other areas of school operation that will affect the culture and climate of the building, usually is obtained through some type of waiver process. Building-level personnel may have the authority to hire appropriate staff, but the ability to evaluate, remediate, transfer, or terminate varies dramatically with local conditions and agreements. While teachers are encouraged to develop curriculum and to create or select instructional materials, their decisions are often constrained by state- or district-mandated goals or curriculum.

Implications of School-Based Management for School Library Media

1. A key premise in any school decentralization is that those closest to students are best able to ascertain their needs. Continual interaction with students provides educators at the school site with information not available at the district level, let alone at the state or national level (Ferris, 1992). The quality of local professional response to the implications of this information is the foundation of successful school-based management. This implies a needed increase in allocations of resources to professional literature and employment of technology to search for the solutions to professional problems and to assist with or enhance professional development programs.

To be effective, site-based leaders must be well informed about the dynamics of their own school and community populations and about advances in effective school organization, curriculum, and instruction. The odds are high that teachers, administrators, and parents will need to look to the library more often and in new ways once they assume authority for planning and implementation and become visibly accountable for the outcomes of their decisions. School personnel have a foundation in this knowledge, but it has a short shelf life, and it is likely that special efforts are needed to educate participating parents. School-based management opens the possibility of a leadership role for library media specialists who are prepared to guide site personnel in accessing and applying relevant information.

Library media specialists can make particularly valuable contributions to the success of site-based managed schools. Other than the building administrators, the library media specialist has the greatest knowledge and understanding of the breadth of subjects and activities pursued in a given building (American Association of School Librarians, 1996). In the ideal setting, they work cooperatively with and understand the needs of the varied school constituencies, view the school with a broad perspective, work with students at all ability and grade levels across all curricular areas, understand technology and its uses in

teaching and learning, and design the library media facility in relationship to the space needs of the total school program.

2. Waivers and exemptions given to school-based managed schools also imply possible changes in library media services. Most school district policies in the United States, most state standards, and most accrediting bodies in some way require that schools have a school library media center and the services of a school media specialist. The enforcement of such standards may be suspended if the site management staff can provide a convincing rationale and plan for delivering such services in another manner. Faculty perceptions of needs and priorities drive decisions on resource allocations in school-based management. Given the lack of understanding most teachers and administrators currently have of libraries, this suggests the need for library media specialists to aggressively clarify their roles and the kinds of contributions they are capable of making (AASL 1996; Barron 1992b; Hamilton 1993; Lynch 1995).
3. Library media specialists also need to clarify their roles and contributions because across-the-board percentage increases in library funding are less likely in school-based managed buildings. As site leadership teams address issues of program priority in the context of limited resources, the greater probability is that library media specialists will have to identify specific resource needs and tie them to particular school or program objectives (Barron 1991).
4. The political realities of school-based management also imply possible changes in library services and status. Teachers untrained in administration, conflict resolution, and the leadership of other adults can succumb to what Jo Michelle Beld Fraatz (1988) calls the “politics of efficiency” when confronted with new and difficult decisions. Many schools take the “easy way out” by giving equity the priority in resource allocations; that is, every teacher receives exactly the same funding for supplementary materials, the same increase or decrease in class sizes across all programs in the school, and equal division of support staff time. Identified priorities are not addressed and no fundamental intervention in instructional delivery is made (Diegmüller 1990b; Levine and Lezotte 1990). These approaches can seriously hurt library funding and resources, and library media specialists need to make the case early that while part of the librarian’s role is teaching, the library is not just another classroom. If the classroom is the backbone of instruction, the library is the curriculum’s connective tissue. To treat it as deserving but one share of the enterprise is to weaken the entire system and reduce the school’s ability to live up to the promise of school-based management.

School Choice

School choice, a more radical change in school governance than site-based management, represents one of the most controversial proposals in educational reform. Instead of a school system governed by elected officials in which curriculum, instruction, and other elements of schooling are managed through a hierarchical structure, choice proposes determination of those elements by individual schools in response to consumer preferences. A decentralized system incorporating market values, and directly responsive to student and parent demands, challenges several standard practices in the American educational tradition—most prominently the idea that a school district can direct where a student is to go to school (Witte and Thorn 1996).

Choice programs break the monopoly of the public education establishment, make schools accountable through competition, and offer parents the opportunity to provide their children with a particular ethical or moral education if they so choose (Hill 1996). In their fullest incarnations, choice programs advocate allowing parents to send children to private schools at state expense, either through the issuance of vouchers or through tax credits for tuition costs. Advocates also contend that choice programs address equity issues. Affluent parents already have wide school choice because they can either afford to move to areas with schools showing higher levels of student achievement or they can send their children to private schools, but parents with fewer financial resources have neither option. The underlying argument is that the introduction of competition into school enrollment results in general school improvement. Because parents would choose only effective schools, all schools would be forced to improve their performance in order to maintain their enrollment, let alone increase it.

While none of the assertions of the qualities of choice programs have gone unchallenged (Driscoll, 1995; Kemerer and King 1995), such arrangements have developed public support and legal foundations in several states (Chubb and Moe 1990; Hill 1996). At present, they exist in several forms. The most common, and probably least controversial, is the magnet school option, in which students are attracted to a school by the emphasis it gives a particular line of study and preparation. Magnet schools are not only centers for specialized study, but they are also vehicles for desegregation. Their success is evident in both academic and social terms, and their growth is continuing (Blank 1990).

Other varieties include open enrollment options, allowing students to choose any school in the district—Boston, Seattle, Minneapolis and St. Paul, and some parts of New York City have accepted the idea—and interdistrict plans, which allow students to attend schools in districts other than the one in which they live. Fourteen states, led by Minnesota, have accepted some version of interdistrict choice since the late 1980s, and twenty more have considered them (Education Week on the Web 2001). Interdistrict choice plans are more complicated because they raise a variety of questions, including equal opportunity concerns if parents are required to transport students themselves or pay any type of tuition costs, complications in the allocation and tracking of state or federal funds, and even activity and athletic eligibility concerns in secondary schools.

The most controversial choice arrangements include various forms of voucher or tax credit plans in order to expand parental choices beyond the public school realm and into the private. Private school choice, or the voucher plan, permits parents to use public funds to send their children to private schools. Under a voucher plan, parents enrolling their children in private schools would get a check from the state, applicable to private school tuition. To date, vouchers have been adopted only in Milwaukee, where low-income children are being allowed to attend certain nonreligious private schools at state expense. Cleveland has been examining a voucher arrangement in which the state would pay up to as much as \$2,250 for each of about 2,000 low-income children who would be allowed to enroll in private and religious schools (Education Week on the Web 1996). Controversy surrounds voucher plans because of the potential threat they pose to the separation of church and state, and the questions they raise about equal participation opportunity for disadvantaged students.

Another form of choice that blurs district lines and bureaucratic structures—and carries representative implications for school library media services—is the charter school. Charter

schools are public schools that operate under a charter or contract negotiated between the school's organizers and a local educational agency, most often a school board or the state board of education (Bierlein and Bateman 1996; Izu 1999; Nelson et al. 2000). Minnesota became the first state to authorize charter schools in 1991, and twenty-five states and the District of Columbia now have charter school laws on the books. Recent estimates set the number of charter schools at more than 200 nationwide, serving about 28,000 students (American Federation of Teachers 1996).

A school's charter outlines its educational plan, the outcomes it expects to achieve, and the measures by which its success will be assessed. Each school is conceptualized, organized, and operated by a group of teachers, parents, community members, or some combination thereof. The charter invests school personnel with the authority to hire and fire employees, award contracts for services, control its own finances, and plan its own program. Charter schools are regarded as public schools because they receive state funding, cannot charge tuition, and may not be selective in admissions. A charter school can remain open so long as it can attract students and does nothing that violates its charter.

Charter schools are usually given waivers from most state regulations and local school board policies, except those to which every organization is subject: safety, health, civil rights, fiscal accountability, etc. They are designed to allow more educational choices for teachers, parents, and students, but they must face two tests of accountability. First, they must be able to attract students, and second, they must be able to demonstrate results to the body with whom they negotiated their original contract (Bierlein and Bateman 1996; Nathan 1996; Nelson et al. 2000).

Implications of Choice Programs for School Library Media

1. Increased student and parental freedom of choice in selecting a school is likely to bring increased attention to library media services. Magnet and charter schools that emphasize college preparatory programs, classical education, technology-focused programs, or other such concentrations will have to demonstrate that they have the resources to support the high-level curricula they promise for the students they enroll.

If voucher or tax credit systems are sustained by the courts and allow interdistrict choice of school or the selection of a private school, and if the proponents of choice are correct and widespread competition for students results, school libraries could become increasingly important—not only as academic supports, but also as marketing assets. Parents are likely to ask sharp questions about instructional approaches, achievement scores, homework policies, and other topics that relate to internal and external library resources.

2. Access to information beyond the school building also is likely to become increasingly important as teachers move beyond a textbook focus and seek to teach students how to learn from a variety of sources. The school library media specialist's skills in linking the school to outside resources, including networked information, will be important as both a marketing advantage and an actual enhancement of instructional practice.
3. An environment of choice holds the potential for enhancing library services and the role of the media specialist in at least three ways:

- School library media specialists should be in a better position to justify budget requests. Depending upon the extent of choice offered to students and parents under a given plan, the student body of a particular school might be made up of youngsters from all across the district, from several parts of the city, or even from differing regions in the state. It is unlikely that all the students in a school will come from families affluent enough to provide them with computer support and Internet access, and—because of the inconsistencies in public library funding and operation—all students will not have equal access to public library services. Therefore, in taking students from a variety of areas and circumstances, a school also will take on responsibility for providing a equitable level of educational resources to them.
- At the same time, library media collections and programs will require budget enhancements to support the school’s development of a particular philosophy or program. Increased allocations, in turn, will prompt increased demands from teachers and administrators for more significant involvement and contribution. This could put into motion an upward spiral of involvement and resource acquisition.
- Administrators will pressure all areas of the curriculum to improve instructional programs and advance the integration of technology into lessons. In the process, it is probable that many schools will move toward adoption of those ideas most popular in the literature at the time. These will probably include interdisciplinary teaming and other forms of collaborative teaching. There is evidence now that school library media specialists are more involved when teachers plan together, especially when they are dealing with multiple aspects of the curriculum (Tallman, 1995). It seems reasonable to anticipate that such media specialist involvement would increase, especially when the results of the efforts could be measured not only in student achievement terms, but also in enrollment figures and the dollars that accompany them.

Library media specialists in schools with minimal resources are at a severe competitive disadvantage. That disadvantage, however, may still result in greater participation with faculty as increased attempts at gathering grant funds are undertaken. Successful involvement in these undertakings could provide additional leadership opportunities for library media specialists in these schools.

- The push will be to make schools more academically successful and effective. There is evidence that teachers in academically successful schools cooperate more with the school media specialist than do teachers in less successful schools (Bell, 1990). This might be a chicken-or-egg question, but it seems likely that schools in a competitive environment will explore and utilize such research—especially if the media specialist makes it available to them—and, consequently, move toward greater involvement of the library media specialist as a research consultant to the faculty and administration regarding topics associated with curriculum, instruction, school organization, and public relations.
4. A final implication links school-based management with choice in a competitive environment. While clearly not true in every case, the probability is that schools in choice

programs need waivers or exemptions in order to build unique programs. Choice has little meaning in the public school arena if schools are required to hold a single line and definition. That would render private schools the only significantly different schools, something public school districts attempting to retain the enrollment they have had could not allow. Consequently, since most schools involved in choice programs will probably seek authority for school-based management, its implications for school library media services should be added to those of choice.

The rejection of bureaucracy and the increase in local decision-making power suggest that libraries will come under closer scrutiny. The historian Edmund Morgan (1956) once observed that inefficiency and freedom are often found together. When library supervision was accomplished from the distance of a central office, there was a higher potential for slippage in monitoring what went into school libraries. In a situation in which decisions are focused in particular themes and decisions are made in the immediate environment, the odds that library media specialists will be called upon to more often justify expenditures are increased. Involvement at the outset of any program planning, which will provide guidance to teachers in the selection of materials and services, will help to preempt the need for later justification.

Home Schooling

Home schooling is the ultimate challenge to the conventions of established educational practice in the United States. It draws criticism because it rejects the fundamental establishment position that education is most effectively carried out in the formal settings of cohesive organizations (Lines 1996). It is not as publicly controversial as choice, however, probably because it potentially affects far fewer children and, possibly, for many, rejection is easier to understand and tolerate than is change. One of the unique aspects of home schooling is that it draws its advocates from the far left and far right, while those holding more moderate philosophies argue over what should be the shape of the center.

Although estimates on the number of school-age children being taught at home vary between 350,000 and one million—or, roughly, slightly less than 1 to 2 % of the total K–12 school population—the numbers are open to question (Staying home from school 1996; Marshall and Valle 1996). No uniform definition exists among the states for identifying home schoolers, and some parents simply do not register their children with any educational governing body.

Legal nationwide, home schooling appears to be on the increase. Thirty-four states regulate it in some way, and twenty-nine require students to take standardized tests or submit to other outside evaluations, but there are no records of a parent's right to home school being denied because of a child's poor academic performance (Staying home from school 1996).

The most recent developments in home schooling have involved partnerships with public school districts. Alaska, California, Iowa, and Washington have developed opportunities for home-schooled students to take part in various school activities and to enroll in selected programs, many of which rely on distance education technology (discussed later in this paper under Cluster 3) (Lines 1996; Dahm 1996). Other states are being presented with legal challenges to the exclusion of home-schooled students from access to certain public school resources and facilities.

Implications of Home Schooling for School Library Media

1. Home schooling implies a variety of challenges for both public and school libraries because the average home is not provisioned with all the materials parents need to educate their children. To be successful, home schoolers need access to libraries, both for their collections and for their access to CD-ROMs and online services, including the Internet.

Depending upon grade level and location, the locus of support for home schoolers can become either the local public library or the school library media center. In some places, the school library will bear the burden because there is no public library close by or the existing public library is weak. In other places, it is the school library media center that is weak and the public library can provide much better service.

It is important for educators to be aware of important differences between public and school libraries. First, public libraries must serve the needs of a wide variety of clients, far wider than any school's population. A public library serves a heterogeneous clientele, and services for children and young adults represent only a portion of its purpose and operation. Second, public library collection development policies are not rooted in a given curriculum. Consequently, a significant portion of its collection is of little or no use to students. Third, and most important, public librarians are not trained as teachers, a point carrying heavy implications (Burks 1996; Perritt 1996; Van Deusen 1996a). The characteristics of library media specialists who operate exemplary programs are clearly tied to the context of a school setting (Christensen 1991).

2. The number of students in home schooling is growing but still small enough not to be a problem in providing for adequate resources to service them. They do represent, however, an additional claim on library media specialists' time. Since home-schooled students are not involved in regular school groups, do not follow the same curriculum, and do not necessarily use the same foundation materials to learn the basics of a given subject, their needs can be more individualized than those of regularly enrolled students.

Cluster 2: Targeted Reforms

This cluster contains a sample of reforms that target how schools deal with specific groups of students. Involving complex process and policy adjustments, restructuring ideas like these defy standard definition and description because they are configured differently in each system in which they are attempted (Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz 1990). These targeted restructuring proposals break into three rough groups:

1. The inclusion movement, which holds potential for fundamentally reshaping special education;
2. Programs centered on elementary age children at risk, including Accelerated Schools, Developmental Schools, Success for All, the HOTS program, Reading Recovery, and the Degrees of Reading Power Comprehension Development program; and
3. Approaches addressing the intellectual and social needs of the secondary student.

Each involves a reconfiguration of staff roles and responsibilities, changes in the development and delivery of curriculum and instruction, and—frequently—changes in authority and decision-making processes. These ideas affect entire systems because they cannot co-exist with the policies currently directing those systems. In that light, they suggest a potential for significant changes in library media services and in the work lives of school library media specialists.

Targeting Special Education Students through Inclusion

The most far-reaching and controversial reform proposal in special education right now is “inclusion.” Commonly defined as the integration of children with disabilities into regular classrooms—in effect, the integration of regular and special education (Yell and Shriver 1996)—inclusion is widely and hotly discussed. The legal base behind inclusion is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which calls for educating special needs students in the “least restrictive environment.” School systems are thus legally required to provide students with disabilities an education appropriate to their unique needs in an environment as close as possible to that of normally developing, age-appropriate peers (Fuchs and Fuchs 1995). There is research evidence that the segregation of uniquely challenged students into separate programs and classrooms may have negative effects on both their social and academic growth, and that such students can perform better in regular classrooms if conditions are right (Baker, Wang, and Walberg 1994/95; McLesky and Waldon 1995).

The critics and opponents of inclusion are many (Zigmond et al. 1995; *The Inclusive School* 1994/95). The most intense criticisms center around the diversion of instructional attention from regular students. While there is research that indicates that the inclusion of disabled youngsters does no harm to the progress of regular students (Staub and Peck 1994/95), the question of what constitutes the disability becomes paramount. Clearly, students with emotional and behavioral disabilities present the greatest challenge to other students, to teachers, and to the notion of inclusion itself (Cheney and Muscott 1996). Some argue that schools as currently structured simply are not equipped to successfully implement full inclusion as it is now envisioned by its proponents. They question the legal implications, for example, of mixing students who are known to be volatile, perhaps violent, with other students. Research has suggested that students with emotional and behavioral disorders do best in an environment in which there is a very low pupil/staff ratio and a body of trained, experienced, and collaborative personnel working in close physical proximity to each other. Most classroom teachers are physically isolated in individual rooms, critics argue, and those without special education backgrounds are not trained to deal with the unique problems of special education youngsters nor prepared to recognize many of their individual learning needs. Furthermore, there is as yet no universal agreement on what training regular education teachers should have to equip them for the challenges of the inclusion classroom. In any case, there certainly do not appear to be resources available to pay for very much training were agreement to be reached (Kauffman, Lloyd, and Riedel 1995).

Implications of Inclusion for School Library Media

1. The integration of students with disabilities and special needs throughout a school’s classrooms produces continual contact with the challenges they pose. This implies an increased need for school library media specialists to gain a knowledge of characteristics of special students and of adaptive technologies.

2. Teachers have expressed a need for increased staff development in order to learn ways to cope with special learning needs and disruptive behavior (Cheney and Muscott 1996; Martin et al. 1995). Less than half of all regular education teachers have had course work in specialized instruction (Cheney and Muscott 1996). This suggests an increased need for access to materials on these subjects and increased opportunities for library media specialists to work not only with staff developers, but also with teachers hungry for answers to immediate problems.
3. Because of differing abilities, inclusion presses for differentiated curricula and differentiated assignments within each curriculum. This implies increased need for differentiated materials available in almost all subject areas.

A Selection of Programs Targeting At-Risk Students

Second to special education in targeted focus are programs and reform proposals concentrating on at-risk students at the elementary level. Like inclusion, if fully implemented, these programs alter the entire operating system of the school building. Supported under Title I of the 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, participating schools with at least 50 % of their populations drawn from low-income families can qualify for schoolwide restructuring to expand the flexibility and quality of the programs they offer (What is a schoolwide program? 1996). Included in the discussion here are only the best known of the current innovations: Accelerated Schools, Developmental Schools, Success for All, the HOTS program, Reading Recovery, and the Degrees of Reading Power Comprehension Development program.

While some are more comprehensive than others, and there are significant differences in the implementation requirements and costs of each, they share two fundamental characteristics: (1) an emphasis on the student's ability to read, and (2) the goal of improving the odds that young at-risk students will be successful in their elementary school experiences and will be better equipped to find success—and, therefore, be more likely to remain in school—through the secondary level.

Accelerated School Model

Specifically designed by Henry Levin to assist at-risk elementary students from poverty backgrounds, the Accelerated School idea shapes the basics of school-based management into three fundamental principles. One, there must be a defined and unified purpose shared by all members of the school community. As guides for the school, these people must develop a vision specific to their school and draw up action plans for bringing it to reality (Levin 1987; Levin 1988; Levin and Hopfenberg, 1991; Hopfenberg, Levin, and Associates 1993). Two, to accomplish this goal, the school community must have the autonomy to make local decisions regarding the school's curriculum, instructional strategies and materials, personnel selection and assignment, and budgeting. In Accelerated Schools, these decisions are made collaboratively with the involvement of parents, students, administrators, teachers, and community members. Parents sign a contract outlining their responsibilities in their students' learning, and they are strongly encouraged to take an active part in the school's operation and governance. Finally, instruction should flow from the strengths of students, staff members, and parents.

Many economically disadvantaged students enter school with fewer skills than their middle-class counterparts. The situation is made worse when curriculum is made less rigorous and the pace of instruction is made slower in the schools that serve them. The advocates of the Accelerated School argue that the lack of a solid elementary school foundation puts these students at additional risk in secondary school settings. The major focus of the Accelerated School is to prevent student failure rather than to remediate it at a later time. The goal is to have students proficient by the sixth grade, so the odds of success in secondary school are enhanced.

The curricula in most Accelerated Schools are rooted in what Robert Reich (1991) termed “symbolic-analytic” work. Active learning is stressed, students are asked to apply what they learn to real-life situations, and problem solving is emphasized. There is a focus on reading and thinking skills (King 1994; Chenoweth 1992). Hopfenberg and Levin believe there are literally hundreds of schools adopting the Accelerated School model across the country (Hopfenberg, Levin, and Associates 1993; Levin and Hopfenberg 1991).

Developmental Schools

Another program designed for disadvantaged elementary students, James Comer’s Developmental School approach, has now expanded to junior and senior high schools (Comer 1980; Comer 1987; Lofland 1995). Much like the Accelerated School, the Developmental School works from the belief that low-income children have underdeveloped skills and do not always know how to behave at school. Comer’s concern was that in their ignorance of the social development patterns of children raised in poverty, teachers would misinterpret these behaviors and academic deficits as indications that the child was unmotivated, had very low ability, or both.

The Developmental School program consists of nine elements. The first three are mechanisms for developing school-based structures: (1) a governance structure shared by administrators, teachers, and parents; (2) a “mental health” team whose function is to see to the emotional, social, and other needs of the students who attend the school and to the “health” of the school’s culture and climate; and (3) a training program for parents that helps them better understand their responsibilities to their children both at home and school.

The second three elements of the Developmental School are operational. The school governance team is responsible for (1) creating a plan with specific goals for student achievement and for the social climate of the school; (2) designing a professional development program to ensure that staff have the skills necessary for accomplishing the goals; and (3) conducting evaluations of student accomplishments and school climate. Climate is of extreme importance in Developmental Schools. Without an appropriate climate, students will not be motivated to learn (Chenoweth 1992).

The final three elements are guidelines for interaction. The first is that the principal and the governance team must work together; neither can dominate the other. Second, problems must be handled with a no-fault attitude; the goal is problem identification and resolution, not blame attachment. The third requires that all decisions in the school be consensus decisions.

Curricula in Developmental Schools vary from school to school but generally emphasize reading and mathematics, concentrate on skills, spend more time on core academic subjects and

less time on electives, and aim at contextualization of material (King 1994). One school, for example, decided to pursue a theme of citizenship, and parents became involved in helping their children read about, research, and debate the issues prominent in the local mayoral race (Baker et al. 1996).

Success for All

Developed by Robert Slavin at Johns Hopkins University, Success for All is a school-based prevention and intervention program to combat the development of learning problems among disadvantaged pre-K through grade five students (1996). It is designed to provide intensive instructional support and family involvement in the classroom. Success for All is based on four beliefs: (1) all children can learn; (2) early success is critical for later success in schools; (3) learning deficits can be prevented through improved curriculum and instruction, individual attention, and support to families; and (4) effective school reform programs must be both comprehensive and intensive (Ross and Smith 1995; Balkcom and Himmelfarb 1993).

The program's goals are to ensure that every child performs at or above grade level in reading by the end of the third grade, to reduce the number of students referred to special education and the number who are retained in grade for a year, and to address family needs in order to enable the family to support the child's education. To accomplish these goals, the program incorporates both phonics and whole language approaches to reading, emphasizes language development and learning-to-learn skills, and provides individual tutoring, varying grouping plans, and a family support team that works to increase parents' involvement with the school and children's activities and provides assistance when health or home problems interfere with learning. Each school has a facilitator who plans programs, trains teachers, assists teachers, helps work out schedules, and oversees periodic assessments. More than 300 schools have adopted the Success for All model.

HOTS

The Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) approach developed by Stanley Pogrow is a creative, technology-based, two-year program designed to improve standardized test scores for Title 1 and learning disabled students by increasing thinking abilities and improving self-confidence. Rather than focusing on basic skills, the program develops a sense of understanding in these students that produces "a transfer that enables the students to learn classroom content more effectively" (Pogrow 1992). The teachers use Socratic questioning techniques and implement a carefully crafted curriculum to improve student thinking skills relative to metacognition, inferences, and information synthesis (U.S. Department of Education 1988). The intent is to replace remedial laboratories with more intellectually challenging experiences.

The program has resulted in increased student abilities to articulate ideas and participate in advanced discussions while enhancing the students' language use and ability to learn in content areas. An optional Junior Great Books program complements the theoretical basis of the program and provides students with reinforcement and extended opportunities to participate in Socratic discussion sessions. Students with adequate higher-order thinking skills usually have improved self-concepts relative to learning and participating in the school environment and can respond to higher overall learning goals throughout the curriculum (U.S. Department of Education 1988).

Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is an early intervention program designed to help six-year-olds learn to read. The program recognizes the link between an inability to read and the probability of school failure.

Based on a reading theory that emphasizes meaning, the program has three main components. The first is a diagnostic survey administered to each child and used to shape the program individually. The second component is a year-long intensive teacher training program in theories and practices of reading instruction and in Reading Recovery's specific procedures. Third is a tutoring session schedule in which a specially trained teacher provides children one-on-one help for thirty minutes daily for a period of up to twenty weeks. The teacher keeps detailed records and uses the observations of one session to help plan the next. Sessions are tailored to the student's learning style and include such activities as reading stories, reading a story that was read one time the previous day, working with sentences and parts of sentences, writing, and reading small paperback books of increasing difficulty chosen from a collection of over 2,000 titles (Allen 1991; Clay 1990).

Currently implemented in schools in more than two-thirds of the states, Reading Recovery's early results are encouraging. The U.S. Department of Education's National Diffusion Network (NDN) has given the program recognition and support for dissemination. Research on the lasting effects of the program, however, is inconclusive, and the program is expensive to institute and sustain.

Degrees of Reading Power Comprehension Development

One of the lesser known programs, but one with similar implications for libraries, Degrees of Reading Power is a program suitable for use in either elementary or secondary schools. Like Reading Recovery, the first component in the program is the administration of the Degrees of Reading Power test originally developed by the College Board. This test assesses how well a student comprehends prose encountered both inside and outside of school. Armed with this information, faculty are able to implement the second component of the program, which is to align instructional materials with the student's comprehension ability. Over time, materials slightly beyond current comprehension levels are introduced to help students extend their abilities. The work is rooted in social studies, science, and other specific disciplines, but the intention is to enhance comprehension in all areas of the curriculum. The third component is assistance to faculty in introducing comprehension development learning strategies into their courses. Still in early stages of implementation, schools in several locations have reported encouraging results (Levine and Levine 1996).

Implications of Programs Targeting At-Risk Elementary Students for School Library Media

1. Reforms that aim to change curriculum and instruction necessitate the employment of a much greater variety of teaching techniques and materials than have been used in the past. The library collection is a key to finding such materials at a reasonable cost, and the library media specialist is a resource for educators in planning individualized assignments.

2. All the programs in this cluster are targeted toward reading proficiency. The role of the library and library media specialist in promoting literacy is both traditional and profound, but it should be enhanced further in this environment. The exact extent depends upon the program in question and the degree to which it is implemented. The Accelerated Schools and the Development Schools usually involve or require use of materials not traditionally available in schools, which can signal a need for broadening the library collection. Success for All and HOTS, on the other hand, usually have classrooms supplied with extensive specific materials. The required purchase of these materials might pose competition for library funds.
3. The purposes of these programs include not only helping students become proficient in reading, but also developing their motivation to remain lifelong learners through reading. Research shows that students gain as much or more from freely chosen and voluntarily read works as they do from readings in assigned subject areas (Krashen 1993; Krashen 1996), which suggests the need for a range of library materials not necessarily tied to any particular curriculum and hours of operation that allow students to come to the library whenever they can to seek materials of personal interest.

The public library and the school library media center can share the responsibility and the opportunity for making personal enjoyment and study materials available to students. There are three measures in the quality of reading support: the number of books, the interest level of those books to students, and the availability of those books (Krashen 1996; Lance, Welborn, and Hamilton-Pennell 1993). A knowledgeable and skilled library media specialist working with the teachers and coordinating with local public libraries can have a great impact on these measures. Research in the 1980s demonstrated that when collections are increased and libraries are open more hours, circulation increases (Houle and Montmarquette 1984). Research also has identified easy availability of abundant, appropriate instructional materials as an element in unusually effective schools (Levine and Lezotte 1990). From a school library media center perspective, “availability” has two meanings: (1) physically available, and—just as important—(2) accessible, defined as someone available to show the students or teachers how to identify and access those materials.

4. The Comer and Levin programs, along with some middle school and high school reform proposals, recommend putting a group of students together with a group of teachers for several years. If implemented, teachers then are not only part of interdisciplinary teaching teams, but, either formally or informally, also become providers of socialization and support services. Over the course of time, and the growth of student abilities, students are likely to engage in more and more independent work. Teachers have to expand their knowledge sets and repertoire of teaching skills as they take students through a greater range of subjects and diversity of experiences, rather than repeating the same from semester to semester or year to year. In this instance, both students and teachers are likely to look for expanded support and opportunities from library services.
5. Because these programs seek student engagement in higher-order thinking processes, they include a large measure of independent work. As students are called upon to conceptualize and then execute projects of varying description, the library becomes vital in providing them with access to a wide range of information and the library media specialist crucial in helping them learn how to evaluate, interpret, organize, and present

the information they access.

The development of more sophisticated, demanding, and individualized programs at the secondary level (see the next section of this paper) increases the importance of the library and library media specialist at the elementary level. Basic learning behaviors are set at an early age. Students who have not developed the skills to access and use information in elementary settings will be behind when they reach the integrated and self-directed atmospheres of the middle school or the environments of high schools such as those described in Sizer's Essential Schools Project or the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) Breaking Ranks High School Model (Sizer 1984; Sizer 1992; National Association of Secondary School Principals 1996).

6. Many at-risk students also are latchkey children. Such children have for years used public libraries as late afternoon bases until such time as an adult reaches home. Where these students pose special problems for the public library media specialist, they represent a variation on continuing challenges for the more appropriately trained school library media specialist (Barron 1992a). The implications of the school library media center's role in the lives of at-risk children suggest the value of having the school library media center open evenings, weekends, and summers.

A Selection of Reforms Targeting Secondary School Students

Three consistent themes run through the leading secondary school reform proposals and restructuring efforts. First is the notion of curricular integration. Second is an emphasis on students taking increased responsibility for their own learning and social behavior. Third is a call for tighter linkages between schools and the communities in which they sit. The three reforms discussed here—the middle school concept, the Coalition of Essential Schools, and the school-to-work movement—collectively illustrate the themes and represent variations on them.

Proponents of the reforms argue that attempts at preparing students for life in the larger world outside of school, both before and after high school graduation, are too often rendered unrealistic and ineffective through the fragmentation of learning that marks traditional secondary schools. Academic discipline departmentalization, homogeneous grouping practices, the separation of scholarly required courses from humanizing elective classes, and the lack of connection—let alone continuity—between what a student learns in any of the six or seven classes he or she takes in a day impair the students' ability to understand, confront, and be successful in the real world—as both adolescents and adults.

While these reforms are discussed here as if they existed independent of other educational trends and reform proposals, they clearly do not exist in a vacuum, and that fact has implications for the future of school library media specialists. Despite the ways in which elementary, middle, and high schools differ, together they constitute the K–12 continuum and the fundamental framework of almost every student's educational experience. As such, the three are inextricably linked. A change in one most often produces a pressure—if not an irresistible force—for change in one or both of the other levels.

The development of more sophisticated, demanding, and individualized programs at the elementary level increases the importance of the library and library media specialist at the secondary level. Students who have developed research skills in elementary settings will expect continued access to print—rich collections and electronic connection to additional resources when they reach the integrated and self-directed atmospheres of the new model secondary schools. In districts where graduating elementary students move into traditional bureaucratically structured junior high schools, or graduates of progressive middle schools move into traditionally run senior high schools, there is likely to be increased demand for library resources as services. These students will bring to their new schools their connection to reading, the interdisciplinary perspectives and cooperative learning skills they have developed at the previous level, and their existing ability to access additional information electronically.

These attitudes and skills are essential if the secondary school reforms are to be successful. Where students have acquired these qualities in the years before entering the secondary school in question, both the students and the reform approach have a better chance of succeeding. Where these attitudes must be newly learned—and the more teacher-dependent, disjointed knowledge acquisition, and less technologically sophisticated learning habits and patterns must be set aside or overcome—there is increased cost to student and school. In either case, there are implications for library services and school library media specialists.

Middle Schools: Targeting the Young Adolescent

Developed in the 1960s as both a new form of organization and a new approach to educating the young adolescent, the middle school concept challenges traditional practices of centralized decision making, teacher isolation and limited expertise, and grouping practices. The middle school is designed to be a bridge between younger childhood and later adolescence, a transition between the elementary environment and the high school. A 1989 study by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development—*Turning Points: Preparing Youth for the 21st Century*—outlined an initial consensus of what researchers and practitioners saw as the critical elements of an effective middle school: The guiding premise was that youngsters from ages 11 or 12 to 14 are not just junior versions of high school students. They have social, psychological, physiological, and intellectual experiences and needs that make them unique from both elementary and high school students. Building on the Carnegie Council foundation, other studies of adolescent educational and social needs have broadened and deepened understanding of the young adolescent and fueled the evolution of typical middle school programs. These schools look and feel different from junior highs, commonly featuring interdisciplinary teaming, advisor/advisee programs, parental involvement programs, and a range of student activities (Alexander and McEwin 1989; Carnegie Council 1989; Cawelti 1988; Clark and Clark 1994). An overview reveals the significant differences between the traditional junior high school and the middle school (see table 1).

Table 1. Junior High/Middle School Differences

Junior High/Middle School Differences

Traditional Junior High School

The Middle School Model

Content-driven instruction	Affective and content-driven instruction
Teacher-centered classrooms	Client-centered classrooms
Departmentalized organization	Interdisciplinary team organization
Differentiated curricula / tracked	Untracked with a core curriculum for all learners
Required and elective courses	Basics and exploratory courses
Most often grades 7–9	Most often grades 6–8
Preparation for high school	Transition school; small community for learning
Top-down management	Shared decision making among teachers and administrators
Teachers trained in academic disciplines	Teachers with specialized training in working with young adolescents; advisor programs
Stand-alone institution	Connected to the community

While rapidly expanding, the middle school concept has not yet forced out the practices associated with the older notion of the junior high school. Studies have continued to show that interdisciplinary teaching is far from universal and is not necessarily exploited to maximum benefit where it does exist (Clark and Clark 1990; Lounsbury and Clark 1990). The core curriculum often is constrained by state mandates (Cawelti 1988). Middle schools are on the rise, but full implementation of the concept is not yet the dominant feature of middle-level education.

Coalition of Essential Schools Targeting High School Students

Theodore Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools is a high school reorganization and renewal plan with a heavy emphasis on local building control (Sizer 1984; Sizer 1992). Coalition schools subscribe to the philosophy and nine operating principles that translate the Coalition concept into a school program. An entire school may be committed to the Coalition, or the structure may be created in a school-within-a-school arrangement; but where the school-within-a-school approach is applied, adherence to the principles marks its structure and operation as different from that of the surrounding institution.

The Coalition of Essential Schools philosophy embraces four beliefs: (1) a school should represent its community and the convictions of its staff; (2) there is no one best form for a school—schools of different size, shape, and structure can commit to a common set of guiding principles and each still look very different in practice; (3) all citizens in a democracy must be able to thoughtfully function in society and in the work force; and (4) teachers should be intellectual coaches, as defined by Mortimer Adler (1982) in his *Paideia Proposal*.

Sizer's (1992, 207–209) nine operational guidelines are as follows:

1. The central purpose of schooling is intellectual.
2. The school should have simple interdisciplinary goals. Each student should master certain areas of knowledge and a set of essential skills. While some of these skills clearly will reflect traditional academic disciplines, student mastery is more important than teacher coverage.
3. The school's goals should apply to every student, but the ways in which these goals are approached and achieved should vary with the students in question.
4. Teaching and learning should be as personalized as possible. No teacher should have responsibility for more than eighty students at a time so learning opportunities can be built upon student backgrounds, knowledge, and interests.
5. The governing metaphor in schooling is the student as worker. Teachers should guide students in the construction of new knowledge and the building of cognitive skills.
6. High school is not remedial; students should be competent in language and mathematics at the time of entry. If they are not, they should be given intensive remedial work before taking on the responsibility of secondary school study. Graduation is contingent upon a demonstration of mastery in which the student exhibits his or her grasp of the requisite knowledge and skills. Because mastery is the criterion, age grouping is not the driving organizational force in the school, and credits do not have the meaning they have now.
7. The tone of the school is one of unanxious expectation, trust, and decency. Parents should be treated as collaborators with teachers and administrators in facilitating their students' progress, and appropriate incentives should be employed for both teachers and students.
8. Educators should first perceive themselves as generalists and then as specialists; they should expect their jobs to be multidimensional: teacher-counselor-manager.
9. Collaborative and collegial activities are vital to professional development and quality instruction. Salaries should be competitive for staff, but the overall cost of the Essential Schools approach should not top out higher than 10 % above current per-pupil costs.

School-to-Work Transition Targeting High School Students

Recent emphasis by the business sector on preparing the future work force for a globally competitive marketplace has resulted in a new focus on career education in school reform efforts. Sometimes referred to as a “school-to-work” initiative, emphasis is placed on the student as a

future worker. This has encouraged schools to consider both the skills and the personality attributes that eventually will be needed to establish students in a productive work environment. This includes team building, cooperative skills, and the higher order thinking skills that are associated with the work of our increasingly technological society (Uchida, Cetron, and McKenzie 1996).

Some of the impetus for this reform comes from business pressures resulting from economic globalization. Local corporate concerns and unemployed youth have encouraged urban educators to alter perspectives on education's relevance to the business world, and in 1991 the Department of Labor published the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Report. The SCANS Report identified five areas of competency—technology, resource use, systems understanding, interpersonal skills, and information use—as fundamental for high school graduates.

School-to-work is not a new version of vocational education aimed at a specific segment of the school population. There is a growing perception that all students can benefit from a curriculum with a focus on future careers. The program has two distinct, but related, goals: improved educational achievement and advancement, and improved employment and career prospects (Goldberger and Kazis 1996). The school-to-work movement calls for the integration of career education with academics and the provision of activity-based instruction and lessons incorporating higher-order thinking. Successfully delivered, this curriculum and teaching practice reform benefits both college-bound students and those with vocational aspirations (Ramsey 1995).

Significant support for the concept is based in the federal School-to-Work Opportunities Act, signed by President Clinton in May 1994. Every school-to-work program contains three core elements: school-based learning (classroom instruction based on high academic and occupational skill standards), work-based learning (work experience, structured training, and mentoring), and connecting activities (courses that integrate classroom and on-the-job instruction, match students with employers, train mentors, and develop links between schooling and work environments).

Some of the forms school-to-work programs have taken include the following:

1. Tech prep programs, which develop a high school course of study utilizing real-life situations to teach career skills, emphasizing math, science, and communication studies in applied settings. Most tech prep programs connect the last two years of high school with two years of postsecondary education, but this is not necessarily a requirement. Academic experience often is coupled with opportunities for work experience, although students receive most of their training in the classroom.
2. Youth apprenticeship programs, which emphasize employer-provided training. During their work experience, participants are paid for their work and monitored by a skilled professional at the job site.
3. Career academies, which often use a school-within-a-school model and focus on a specific career field, such as health or finance. These appear particularly helpful to students who sometimes have trouble functioning in a traditionally structured high school (Banks 1994). "Academies offer curricula that integrate career topics with applied,

hands-on activities and rigorous academic courses supplemented with training and sometimes course work at the workplace” (U.S. Department of Education 1995).

Like most other reforms, school-to-work programs are not without their critics. Some view work-based learning as a subtle form of tracking. They are concerned that the program narrows students’ choices, depriving them of their chances to take college preparatory courses, fine arts courses, or any other courses that do not relate to their chosen vocational area (Kantor 1993). Other research has suggested that many teachers may be more concerned with how school-to-work curricula will affect their own programs and standing (Alexander et al. 2000; Hunter and Depew 1995; Inger 1993; Redmann 1993; Selvin 1990).

Implications of Reforms Targeting Secondary School Students for School Library Media

1. These reforms, much like the programs targeting at-risk students, call for teachers to increase individualization of instruction and to employ a greater variety of teaching methods (many more of them of a facilitative nature than has been usual in secondary schools), engage students in higher-level thinking processes, and guide students in the development of exhibitions and portfolios reflective of their skills and knowledge. Interdisciplinary team teaching offers teachers an increased measure of autonomy over curriculum and instruction and addresses the goal of a core academic curriculum for every student. Emphasizing collaboration, teachers can plan integrated units, jointly deal with the academic or social problems of individual students in their charge, and provide professional and personal support to one another. Interdisciplinary teaching can address the need to make subjects relevant, to reintegrate learning, and to connect learning to the outside world of the adolescent. Teaming offers flexibility in the use of learning time, allows for students to work in a variety of groups, and allows for teachers to provide more individual attention. The library collection is key to finding and providing both students and teachers with the materials they require to accomplish these tasks. For teachers learning how to function in the new environment, the library media specialist is a resource for designing appropriate lessons and assignments.
2. Engagement in higher-order thinking processes and the development of portfolios and mastery exhibitions must include a large measure of independent work. As students are called upon to conceptualize and then execute projects of varying description, the library will become vital in providing them with access to a wide range of information and the library media specialist vital in helping them learn how to evaluate, interpret, organize, and present the information they access.
3. The success of these secondary restructuring efforts is dependent upon the reading proficiency of the students enrolled in the schools that adopt them. Among the purposes of the interdisciplinary secondary school programs is the creation of lifelong learners, to which reading is a key. The role of the library and library media specialist in promoting literacy remains vital, and is made even more important in light of the increased likelihood of a student dropping out of school if he or she does not have sufficient reading skills and the extended information acquisition and management skills to find, access, interpret, organize, and present information meaningfully.
4. Curriculum integration in school-to-work systems poses new and unique challenges. Competencies named in the SCANS Report include the ability to acquire and use

information. The library is related to each skill listed under that competency (evaluation, organization, interpretation, communication of information, use of computers to process information) (Hamilton 1993).

5. Developers of curriculum find varieties of approaches, ranging from very simple to extremely complex, heavy with project-based learning and thematic interdisciplinary units (Grubb 1995; Jobs for the Future 1994; Resource Bulletin 1996). The development of these curricula require participation by new groups of personnel. Since one of the tenets of most tech prep and other school-to-work programs is the integration of academics with career and vocational courses, the mix of teachers on curriculum committees is different from much of what it has been in the past. Further complicating the picture is the presence of one or more employers, union representatives, or other individuals from the community. The information these groups seek is gathered from multiple domains and then integrated and synthesized. This offers the library media specialist a pivotal role in curriculum development, but it also increases the need for special materials.

There is another implication of the direct involvement of business in schooling; that is, the question of the limits of appropriate involvement. This is a schoolwide question, but one with a specific librarians' dimension, especially for library media specialists in less-than-affluent schools. Given the tight economic picture of the foreseeable future, the likelihood increases that library media specialists will be approaching businesses for funding, equipment, or materials in order to maintain their collection and service levels. There are conflict of interest considerations to be dealt with, and librarians will need to develop policies and procedures for dealing with them (Craver 1994).

6. No school will move to the middle school concept, the Essential Schools model, or the school-to-work approach without suffering a period of conflict and upset. Change invariably causes friction (Evans 1996; Folger, Poole, and Stutman 1997; Fullan and Stiegelbauer 1991). In any organization, when philosophies and operating procedures change, there is a redistribution of resources, power, prestige, and status. Particular skills, a given expertise, and possession of certain kinds of material resources all increase or decrease in value. Where they decrease, and with their diminution comes a decrease in the status and influence of their possessor, there is sure to be resistance. Where the value of these things increase, there will be increased competition to acquire them. Conflict flows from both situations. Those who want the change will be in conflict with those who do not. Those who do want the change will be in conflict over exactly what shape it will take; over who will benefit from it in terms of opportunity, position, and resource control; and over who will receive the credit for its successful implementation. The implementation of reforms always causes friction and increased organizational politicking among faculty members.

One of the essential elements in effective conflict resolution is an adequacy of accurate information. There will be great opportunity in such situations for library media specialists who have the resources, skill, and inclination to deliver this information to the competing constituencies. In these cases, the role-and perhaps the future-of the school library media center and library media specialist depends upon the librarian's ability to access needed information and be perceived as someone who has a contribution to make to informed decision making.

Cluster 3: A Scattered Collection of Reforms Sharing the Goal of Improving Student Achievement

This cluster of ideas for school reform is more mixed in nature than the previous two. In fact, it is almost kaleidoscopic—an eclectic selection of approaches, most of which are well known and have been implemented to some degree in hundreds of schools, but that do not necessarily have a great deal in common.

In some respects, the ideas and approaches described here actually are more improvement ideas than reform measures. They are what organizational researchers refer to as “first-order changes,” changes representing ways to do better what is already done within existing systems—as opposed to “second-order changes,” which fundamentally alter an organization’s goals and operation (Cuban 1989; Evans 1996). Nonetheless, they often are regarded as reforms because of the element of change they entail. Representative examples include a selection of curriculum reform ideas, distance learning, block scheduling, non-graded classrooms, and “authentic” assessment approaches.

Curriculum Reform Ideas

At the heart of schooling, curriculum, both in a general sense and in relation to specific disciplines, is inextricably bound up with library media services. This collection of examples illustrates current notions of reforms in curriculum in general—multiple intelligences theory, mastery learning, and outcome-based education—and in specific disciplines—mathematics, science, social science, language arts, and multicultural studies.

Multiple Intelligences

One approach to curriculum revision is to frame it within a theory of intelligences. Articulated by Gardner (1993), multiple intelligences theory is based on recognition of individual differences that affect the way people learn and process information. Multiple intelligences theory emphasizes the appreciation of these differences in order to present school knowledge in a variety of formats that address all forms of intelligence in a more personalized approach to education. The theory hypothesizes that people “are capable of developing at least seven different “intelligences”:

- Linguistic-sensitivity to language, meanings, and the relationships among words.
- Logical-mathematical intelligence constitutes abstract thought, precision, counting, organization, logical structure.
- Musical-the sensitivity to pitch, rhythm, timbre, the emotional power and complex organization of music.
- Spatial-keen observation, visual thinking, mental images, metaphor, a sense of the whole.
- Bodily/kinesthetic-control of one’s body and of objects, timing, trained responses that function like reflexes.
- Interpersonal-sensitivity to others, ability to read the intentions and desires of others and potentially to influence them.
- Intrapersonal-self-knowledge, sensitivity to one’s own values, purpose, feelings, a developed sense of self” (Uchida, Cetron, and McKenzie 1996).

Gardner (1995, 208) summarizes the strengths and implications of the multiple intelligences approach by characterizing implementing schools as those that take individual differences seriously, share knowledge about differences with children and parents, enable children to gradually assume responsibility for their own learning, and present materials worth knowing “in ways that afford each child the maximum opportunity to master those materials and show others (and themselves) what they have learned and understood.”

Mastery Learning and Outcome-Based Instruction

These approaches emphasize the mastery of specific learning skills, in whole or small group instruction, with variable times afforded for students to demonstrate mastery. The focus is on allowing adequate time for students to master sequential objectives followed by assessment of mastery for each objective. This reverses the more traditional approach of providing a fixed time for all students to learn objectives and progressing to other objectives before some students can provide individual demonstrations of mastery (Levine and Levine 1996).

Mastery Learning. The mastery learning approach has grown out of work by Benjamin Bloom (1976) in which he argues that 95 % of students can learn what schools have to teach if the methods used to teach them are appropriate and they are given the time they need to master the work.

The most significant gains in achievement from implementation of mastery learning occur when mastery learning is combined with four other elements: (1) sufficient student background knowledge of the subject, (2) appropriate feedback to students, (3) an active learning environment, and (4) cooperation from parents to provide an enhanced home environment for learning. To maximize the teacher delivery of instruction in mastery learning, attention needs to be paid to maintaining small class sizes, significant planning time and staff development efforts, and provisions for corrective instruction with students who have more problems mastering objectives.

Outcome-Based Education. Outcome-based education is the successor to mastery learning. Its major principles are (1) clear identification of what a student is to learn, (2) measurement of progress is based on demonstrated achievement, (3) accommodation of each learner’s needs through multiple instructional strategies and techniques, (4) provision of sufficient time and assistance for each student to realize his or her own potential, and (5) curriculum construction that consists of identifying the desired behavior at the outset and then designing activities that will lead the student to competency in that behavior (Baron and Boschee 1996; Brandt 1992/93). The approach rejects traditional measures of education, such as course credits and time spent in class in favor of demonstrations, exhibitions, and other performance measures.

As originally adopted in state and school district curricula across the nation, outcome-based education contained a substantial proportion of objectives relating to values, attitudes, opinions, and relationships. This occurred at a time, however, when the country is increasingly concerned with basic skills. After a firestorm reaction in the last few years, outcome-based education has moved to the background in educational reform discussions, at least in name. Many of the concepts remain in educational conversation, however, and have been incorporated to varying degrees in one kind of reform program or another.

Curricular Reforms in Specific Disciplines: Mathematics, Science, Language Arts, and Social Science

Reforms in most specific disciplines have not really been advanced as curricula. Each issuing body has promoted them as standards only and stated that adherence to them is voluntary. In practice, however, standards outline a framework, and the explanatory text that accompanies the statement of each standard—especially in those frameworks that offer “content standards” as well as performance standards—indicates something stronger than just a suggestion. These reform proposals both have been praised and criticized because they do not necessarily tell teachers exactly what to do and when. If implemented, however, they individually and collectively carry implications for library media services and the instructional role of the library media specialist.

Mathematics Curriculum Reform. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Commission on Standards for School Mathematics issued the Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics in 1989. The Council set five goals for students:

1. Value mathematics—have experiences that illuminate the historical, cultural, and scientific evolution of math; understand and appreciate the role and impact of mathematics in society and in the disciplines it serves;
2. Reason mathematically—skill in making conjectures, gathering evidence, and building arguments to support theory and engaging in sound reasoning is as important as finding correct answers;
3. Communicate mathematically—to express mathematical ideas in appropriate terms and symbols; solve problems that involve students in reading, writing, and talking the language of math;
4. Be confident of their mathematical abilities; and
5. Become mathematical problem solvers—apply the power and utility of mathematics to real-world challenges, something essential to productive citizenship.

In practice, these standards call for a hands-on approach to math instruction that involves using a context that is of interest to the student, presenting math concepts through concrete active assignments, representing mathematical relationships in multiple ways, and encouraging students to make and reflect upon the connections of mathematics to real life (Brutlag and Maples 1992). A feature in this approach to math is the increased linkage to reading and writing. Advocates promote reading far beyond the explanations given in typical math textbooks, arguing that students also should read issues in history and philosophy, accounts of strategies used in the solutions of mathematical problems in history, biographies, and anecdotes that provide insights into the sources of mathematical discoveries (Siegel and Borasia 1992). Another key in meeting these standards involves the use of technology. Realistic mathematical instruction today involves applications of various kinds of software and the use of an assortment of calculators (Connell 2000; National Council of Teachers of Mathematics 2001; Walker and Azumi 1985).

Science Curriculum Reform. The National Science Education Standards (NSES) aim at producing a scientifically literate society (National Research Council 1996). The standards argue that while science must be hands-on for real learning, that alone is not enough. Quality science instruction must include minds-on experiences as well. Hands-on/minds-on science represents a constructivist approach to teaching and learning. In hands-on science, students perform scientific activities as they construct meaning and acquire understanding. In minds-on science, students

focus on core concepts, developing thinking processes and questioning skills. In total, science is to be authentic; that is, students are presented with problem-solving activities tied to real-life questions and issues. The format is predominantly collaborative, there is significant engagement with informed sources, and students interpret with an eye to broader generalization of what they have learned.

The NSES include standards for teaching, for the development of science teachers, for assessment in science education, for science content, for science education programs, and for science education systems. The statements explaining the standards are complex and contain too many specifics to be summarized here. It is important, however, and sufficient for our discussion of library media implications, to note that the goals for school science underlying the standards include educating students who are able to

1. Experience the richness and excitement of understanding the natural world,
2. Use appropriate scientific processes and principles in making personal decisions,
3. Engage intelligently in public discourse about scientific and technological issues and concerns, and
4. Increase their economic productivity.

Although calling for the extensive use of technology in the accomplishment of these goals, the standards make a clear distinction between science and technology: the goal of science is to understand the natural world; the goal of technology is to meet human needs and to make modifications in the world. In these goals, and in the distinction between science and technology, rest the implications for library media services.

Language Arts Frameworks. The National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association released voluntary standards for learning English language arts in March 1996. The set of a dozen standards directly speaks to the significant involvement of library media services when it calls for students to read a range of print and nonprint texts, read literature from many periods and genres, apply a range of text interpretation and evaluation strategies, employ a range of strategies in spoken and written and visual language, conduct research on issues in problem-solving modes, use a variety of technological and informational resources, develop respect for diversity, and use language in a multiplicity of other ways for personal competence and enjoyment (International Reading Association 1996; National Council of Teachers of English 1996).

Social Science Frameworks. The Social Studies Framework advanced by the National Council for the Social Studies incorporates 10 themes: (1) culture; (2) time, continuity, and change; (3) people, places, and environments; (4) individual development and identity; (5) individuals, groups, and institutions; (6) power, authority, and governance; (7) production, distribution, and consumption; (8) science, technology, and society; (9) global connections; and (10) civic ideals and practices (National Council for the Social Studies 1994). The standards are designed specifically to be interrelated and are intended to draw from all the social science disciplines. The writers expect that student engagement with the social studies will be based in a framework of multiple resources, information-gathering strategies, interpretative and evaluative strategies, and persuasive presentations of well thought out positions.

Operationalization of the standards—which the National Council for the Social Studies (1993), like the other discipline framework authors, declines to call a curriculum—involves five undergirding principles for making social studies teaching and learning powerful:

1. Meaningful—concentrates on fewer but more important topics; meaningful learning activities.
2. Integrative—integrates knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, and attitudes; integrates effective use of technology. The application of technology is assumed. The Web has been described as a “curriculum warehouse for social studies teaching” (Boldt, Gustafson, and Johnson 1995).
3. Value-based—addresses the ethical dimension of topics and controversial issues; considers social policy decisions; engage in critical thinking; is sensitive to cultural similarities and differences.
4. Challenging—engages students in a thoughtful approach to inquiry.
5. Active—uses constructivist teaching and learning; features the teacher as guide; employs real-life applications using the skills and content of the field.

Each of these suggests an important role for library media and media specialists.

Multicultural Studies. America is transforming from a nation with minorities into a nation of minorities (Gainey 1993). Any curriculum that would be reflective of American society, and any that would incorporate real-life contexts into studies—such as is called for by the math, science, language arts, and social studies standards above—must deal with this reality. Multiculturalism is a systematic attempt by educators to recognize the range and values of diversity. Heavily centered in, but not exclusive to, the social sciences, multicultural education usually addresses issues of race, gender, ethnicity, class, age, national origin, sexual orientation, and religion (Skeele and Schall 1994). Multicultural education compares varieties of cultural practices and perceptions to those of Western society, recognizing and appreciating their individual value and collective diversity. A key purpose is the reduction of bias and the promotion of equity.

Multicultural curriculum can range from simplistic to exceedingly complex; from simple awareness to the nature of relationships, social interactions, justice, and national bonding. The materials employed in multicultural teaching can be a sensitive issue in schools and their communities.

Implications of Curricular Reforms for School Library Media

1. New frameworks in mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts all call for connections with the real world and the application of specific concepts in the context of the student’s experience and future goals. This will pull students into the library more and raise the odds of collaboration with teachers to plan curricula and lessons.
2. The specific discipline curriculum reforms address technology in three ways: (a) in calling for students to use a wide range of information sources and technologies in their work; (b) as tools for learning specific subjects through activities ranging from something as simple as using software for drill and practice, to experiencing problem-solving activities, to analyzing data, to opportunities for creative expression; and (c) as subject matter for investigation, particularly in its impact on their individual and social lives. All

of these have links to library resources and the librarian's expertise.

This is a delicate area for school library media specialists. Technology advances so quickly that training is very soon outdated, not only for the library media specialist, but also for faculty members, too. It is a real possibility that commitment to staying current in technology will cannibalize much of what library media specialists do now.

Yet there is also no visible escape from the problem. Two forces even suggest its further growth. First, as the quantity and quality of technology suitable for instruction increases, it is likely that teachers will make it a higher priority in their thinking and practice, creating a heavier demand for materials and training. Second, as current teachers retire, newly graduated teachers familiar with technology and its advantages in the classroom will take their place, bringing their demand for support with them. Without significantly increased staffing in school libraries or the creation in each school of a separate technology coordinator's position—both of which put libraries in competition with other parts of the school for scarce resources—the school library media specialist is likely to be overwhelmed with demands for assistance.

The development of technologically rich environments also raises issues of equity. Research suggests that computers are put to significantly different uses in different types of schools. Schools with lower socioeconomic populations use computers relatively more for drill and practice and other lower level skills, while higher SES schools use them more to foster creativity and support the development of problem-solving skills (Becker 1986; Levine and Levine 1996). Additionally, as students increase their work on computers at school, the tendency—maybe the need—to work on a home computer increases. This puts students whose families cannot afford a computer at a serious disadvantage. Attempts to rectify this imbalance by providing additional support and opportunity for these students could have an important impact on library holdings, equipment expenditures, and the extension of hours of operation in the evenings and on weekends.

Lastly, the growth of technology in schools will severely tax whatever discretionary budget school library media specialists might have. The range of choices in equipment and software, information subscription, and other electronic services grows exponentially each year. Librarians need to develop subscription and selection standards to maximize cost-benefit ratios and to provide the broadest satisfaction to their diverse clientele (Craver 1994). Librarians could face Hobsian choices as they try to channel resources to the support of specific priority programs while trying to maintain standards of equity.

3. Multiple intelligences, mastery learning, outcome-based education, and the various discipline reforms emphasizing constructivist teaching and learning lend themselves to a wide range of instructional methods and techniques (Barron 1996). Library media specialists need inservice training to be brought up to speed on such learning theories as multiple intelligences and teaching theories as constructivism. *Information Power* (American Library Association and Association for Educational Communications and Technology 1988) calls for library media specialists to assume roles as curriculum consultants. That is not possible if they do not remain informed of developments in the field.

4. Because successful implementation of mastery learning, outcome-based education, and elements of the specific discipline curricula involve a great deal of planning and significant staff development efforts, the potential for library media specialist involvement is high.

Some approaches, such as mastery learning and outcome-based education, assume that not all students are in the same place at the same time in their progress toward mastery of subject matter or the development of given skills. This stretches out the range of materials needed and calls for the design of multiple approaches to the same subject in order to cover a variety of learning styles. Whether helping teachers in the design of such lessons or helping students in their execution, the potential for increased library involvement and the need for access to a broader range of materials is evident.

5. Addressing multicultural issues implies additional responsibilities for school library media specialists in their roles as consultants, instructors, and material selectors. Individual diversity and culturally influenced learning styles require three responses in the library. First, funds are to secure materials representing a range of viewpoints and experiences. Second, the library media specialist must evaluate the quality of those materials, rejecting those that are inaccurate, superficial, or demeaning. Librarians must be knowledgeable regarding publishers that produce and specialize in such resources. Third, advanced preparation may be needed to handle challenges to certain materials. The sensitive nature of certain subjects raises the odds of objection, particularly in media because of the inherent power to evoke emotional responses (Spain 1989). Properly handled, library collections, services, and programs can be tools for lowering ethnic, racial, gender, and lifestyle tensions (Craver 1994).

These three areas of action imply that additional resources are needed for the library, that library media specialists need to be involved with teachers in developing curriculum and selecting materials for implementing that curriculum, and that mechanisms are in place for in-service updating of library media specialists' knowledge of issues and related materials.

In some areas in which there is a particularly high concentration of a given group, there may be pressures to give particular attention to that group. As Craver (1994) observes, ethnocentric [and racial, gender, or lifestyle] battles are sometimes fought under the guise of multiculturalism. In those instances, it will be difficult to secure adequate finances to meet the demands of one group, let alone to make sure materials collections remain balanced. Librarians will face very hard choices and difficult reactions in such situations.

Multiculturalism also includes dealing with immigrants and others for whom English is a second language. One of the responsibilities of any library media specialist is the promotion of literacy. Growing minority and immigrant populations pose a significant challenge to school library media specialists, who must find ways of linking students from widely varying backgrounds to information sources and devise ways to draw these students into regular library use (Dame 1995). One way is to initially promote reading in the student's native language. This requires having a collection of or access to materials in other languages. If California is an example, achieving this is a challenge for many, if not most, school library media specialists (Pucci 1994).

6. In the field of language arts, curricular reforms call for whole language approaches, literature-based instruction, and curricula that include voluntary reading and materials that match student needs and desires and increase reading (Barlup 1991). Such approaches draw students to the library and increase the involvement of the library media specialist with students and with the teachers who have these students. These have implications for both student and professional collection development.

Distance Education

Keegan (1986) defines distance education as having five basic characteristics:

1. There is a quasi-permanent physical separation of teacher and learner.
2. Work is done under the influence of an educational organization.
3. The process involves the use of technical media.
4. There is two-way communication between teacher and learner.
5. There is quasi-permanent absence of group learning.

The potential benefits of distance education seem very rich (Hufty 1996; Schrum 1992). Students in secondary schools may be able to take courses previously unavailable because of cost or time considerations. Students without access to laboratories can interact with materials that simulate laboratory situations. Even students who have labs available might be able to engage in more experiences than the onsite lab could provide. Students can have increased access to quality teachers. Students with unique learning styles may find better matches through electronic connections, and students who are unable or unwilling to function in a regular school setting will have options for completing individualized programs in alternative settings. Highly capable and motivated students may be able to accelerate their learning. And distance education technology holds promise for broadening options and opportunities for staff development and advanced study for teachers, administrators, and support staff as well.

Implications of Distance Education Programs for School Library Media

Distance education challenges the idea that going to school necessarily means going to a specific building to interact with an instructor in the same room. Television, interactive computer programs, telephones, fax machines, and other technologies offer new ways for students to attend school and new opportunities and challenges for school library media services.

1. Cooperation and networking are essential to distance education program development, and this implies a broadening of the library media function in participating schools. Depending upon the courses taught and the challenges of coordinating the necessary elements for each, library media specialists may work not only with educators, but also with government officials, technical experts, university librarians, and a variety of vendors (Schamber 1990).
2. Librarians are often called upon to serve as instructional consultants, matching resources to course objectives and teaching information access and use skills so students are competent to do the followup work necessary between the electronically delivered sessions. This requires the library media specialist to identify resources and their locations as courses are planned, provide copies of materials, acquire additional

electronic equipment, and develop flexible lending plans for students and faculty, as well as participate in the actual course design. This implies a continuing inservice program for involved school library media specialists (Schamber 1990).

3. Distance education is technology intensive, and the school media specialist often is responsible for selecting and maintaining the hardware and software, as well as advising on its uses. This duty represents a significant time demand and has the potential to interfere with the specialist's ability to commit sufficient time in meeting the needs of teachers and students for other programs.

Block Scheduling

Block scheduling is an organizational approach in high schools that usually reduces the number of classes a student takes in a given day from a typical seven or eight to four. Studying in classes that may last from seventy-five to 100 minutes a day, students complete two semesters' work in a subject in one semester, then take four more classes the succeeding semester. A student, for example, might complete the year's course in American history in eighteen weeks.

Advocates contend that block scheduling assists both students and teachers in addressing some of the basic challenges of high school instruction. For students, fewer classes at any given time enable them to concentrate their efforts and to prepare more thoroughly for each class than they could if they were taking seven or eight. Over the run of their high school careers, students usually can take more classes than they could in the traditional pattern. Students are able to receive greater individual attention because teachers are dealing with fewer students each day and they have a longer period of time with each student each day.

Teachers in block scheduling typically teach in three of the four blocks and use the fourth for planning or conferences. Because up to one-quarter of the staff is not committed to class at any given time, there is increased opportunity for teacher collaboration. The technique also encourages changes in teaching strategies, ideally causing teachers to rely less on lecture and more on problem-solving activities, cooperative learning, and individual research and application projects. The extended period of time allows for greater measures of lab work and the integration of available technology and field trips into instruction.

Evaluative research on block scheduling is in its infancy, but early reports are encouraging. The system seems to have positive effects on student attendance and behavior as well as on academic achievement (Carroll 1994; Cobb, Abate, and Baker 1999; Khazzaka 1997/98; McCoy and Taylor 2000; North Carolina Public Schools 1999; Payne and Jordan 1996; Queen, Algozzine, and Eaddy 1996).

Implications of Block Scheduling for School Library Media

Block scheduling requires more variety in lesson presentation. Teachers create more individualized assignments, student team learning activities, and research projects, all of which suggest the need for increased library resources and access. Because teachers going into block scheduling usually have no more experience with it than do their students, they are put in the position of having to "row the boat and build it at the same time." They are likely to turn to library media specialists for more assistance in curriculum development and lesson planning.

Fortunately, one of the positive features of block scheduling is the increased time teachers have for instructional planning. Block scheduling offers the possibility of rich opportunities for media specialists to build stronger collegial relationships with teachers and to become more visible partners in instruction.

Non-Graded Schools

Most curriculum is delivered to age-graded groups of youngsters. A reform that has cycled in and out of education for nearly half a century in urban areas and has always been a feature of small rural schools is the idea of age-mixed classes. The fundamental premise is that when grade levels are eliminated, instruction is more individualized and students learn at their own pace. Non-graded schools most often are found in elementary settings, although the concept is applicable to older students as well.

In non-graded schools, there are no expectations of full-day, year-long groupings associated with specific age group cohorts. The goal of non-gradedness is to improve the match between student readiness and course of study, while increasing the level of individual instruction available. Typically, a team of teachers works with a team of students in shifting group configurations. The work is often project based, with multi-age, heterogeneous groups engaged in problem-solving activities grounded in interdisciplinary units. Issues of promotion and retention are eliminated, and students may progress at their own rates. Progress is usually reported in terms of completed tasks and levels of mastery (Pavan 1992). There are indications that student achievement is higher than in traditional graded settings, but research has been sparse since the early 1970s (Rich 1992).

Non-graded schools are demanding environments for teachers. The quality of the experience for the children turns on the quality of the curriculum and instruction utilized within the non-graded structural framework (Slavin 1992). It is an approach that requires the development and delivery of myriad experiences for each child.

Implications of Non-Graded Schools for School Library Media

Non-graded schooling holds many of the same implications for school library media specialists as the Accelerated Schools, Comer's Developmental Schools, mastery learning, and outcome-based education: increased need for varieties of materials and a wider range of teaching approaches.

“Authentic” Assessment Approaches

Assessment of student achievement has traditionally been through standardized quantitative measures, which generally are indirect and static. Assessment reformers argue that more realistic—or “authentic”—evaluation of student achievement and capability is to be found in displays, exhibitions, portfolios, and other qualitative approaches.

The basis of alternative assessment is the direct, comprehensive measure of achievement through student products such as essays, exhibits, and evidence of student-generated problems and solutions. As an organic part of the classroom experience, these assessments become part of the day-to-day evaluation of individual progress and provide opportunities for course corrections

that lead to polished final products—a process closely tied to reality in the world of work-related skills employed by adults (McClelland, Marsh, and Podemski 1993).

Research shows that students at virtually all levels see assessment as something that is done to them by someone else (Sweet 1993). In alternative approaches to assessment, such as student work portfolios and the mastery demonstrations in Sizer's Essential Schools high school plan, students and teachers work together to design and validate alternative assessment instruments. The instructional process then should support the goals of the student projects. This ensures that teachers are in touch with the instructional needs of each student and provides opportunities for students to exhibit higher-order thinking skills in the active construction of knowledge. The transition to alternative assessment is easier for teachers who routinely depend on alternatives to tests in determining student progress, as in the arts. By focusing on the process for designing, researching, and finalizing student projects, these instructors have experienced the elements of alternative assessment theory (McClelland, Marsh, and Podemski 1993).

While drawing attention and support in many quarters, major drawbacks to alternative assessments include the time they require and the fact that they are not aligned with the criteria universities use for admission and scholarship decisions. There is evidence that universities are considering ways to bridge the gap between reforms in K–12 schooling and their own operations, and universities in Oregon, California, Colorado, Georgia, and Wisconsin have launched pilot initiatives (Colleges Move to Match 1996).

Time in school, however, seems a more difficult problem to solve. As Shulman has observed (1989), time tyrannizes teaching. In the case of alternative assessments, portfolios and demonstrations place additional demands on teachers and on school resources. Alternative assessment cannot be implemented effectively unless teachers have time to develop a thorough understanding of their subject areas, and time to plan, confer, develop strategies and materials, meet with small groups and individual students, and review and comment upon student work (Sweet 1993).

Implications of Alternative Assessment Systems for School Library Media

Alternative assessments offer considerable opportunity for library media specialists to become more involved in instruction. One of the themes running through almost all of the reforms described above is the intent that students will become skilled in locating, accessing, interpreting, organizing, and presenting information. Given that, and the fact that demonstrations, exhibitions, and portfolios require greater amounts of time to evaluate than do traditional exams, library media specialists are logical participants in evaluations of such performance assessments. Involvement in evaluation should logically lead back to involvement in original planning and in facets of instruction (Stripling 1993).

This is a mixed blessing. While it opens the door to greater collaboration with teachers in instructional design and execution, it also increases librarians' responsibilities and time commitments. These additional responsibilities have further implications for library funding and staffing.

Summary Themes and Implications for School Library Media Services

A sample of reforms at the building level cannot provide a comprehensive picture of the reform movement in schools, but it can offer a glimpse of major themes running through it. This sample reveals five different, but interrelated, themes with implications for school library media services.

1. An Increase in Choices. The vast majority of these reforms push for some broader range of choices for students, parents, and teachers. Choice and home schooling offer parents the opportunity to decide which schools their children will attend, or even whether they will attend any established school. School-based management offers teachers and parents opportunity to make more choices involving what they want their schools to be like. Reforms in curriculum and instruction take the shape of providing students with more choices in what subjects to study and how to study them. In short, charting a direction toward increased flexibility in meeting the educational needs of various kinds of students is a basic tenet of current school reforms.

Variety and flexibility in schooling require variety and flexibility in library media services, which create a need for expansion of the types of materials making up library collections and expansion of opportunities to access additional information from remote sources, including other libraries. Schools in competitive environments develop particular individual foci in order to attract a certain student clientele. In magnet schools, charter schools, private schools, or schools in which decisions resulting from school-based management are to pursue a specific concentrated course of study, the resources relating to that discipline will need to be significantly deepened. This concentration in collection building may reduce the librarian's discretion in the overall selection of materials for the school's library media center. Nonetheless, however, the challenge of developing well-rounded students remains. Librarians need to increase electronic access to materials vital to other elements of the school's curriculum that are not resident in the school's media center.

2. Dissatisfaction with School Bureaucracy. Another thread running through the fabric of these approaches is a general dissatisfaction with the bureaucratization of schools. Many of these reforms address the limitations of bureaucratically operated schools, which are perceived as neither structured to meet the needs of their clients, nor flexible enough to adapt (Clark and Meloy 1989; Frymier 1987). School-based management, a broader range of teacher activity, and increased parental involvement all speak to more localized decision making, which will require access to more information than most adults outside the administration have required in the past.

Several of these reform approaches embed academics in a sense of community. The early reading intervention programs, the middle school concept, the Essential Schools, school-to-work programs, and several curricular reforms and alternative assessment structures are marked by high expectations, commitment to learning, a civility for peers, and a pattern of continuous improvement. There is a sense of caring and an attempt to personalize education through teams, bondings with teachers, alliances with parents, and links with organizations and agencies beyond the school for both academic and social purposes. In addition to increased demands on library resources, these suggest an expanded role for school library media specialists in working with a greater number and variety of teachers, parents, and representatives of community agencies and groups. Further, it suggests the possibility of more interaction with students that involves personal advising and support. Knowing how to help children and young adults deal with the

problems of family, friends, school, and social activities is an area in which school library media specialists need additional training (Hartzell n.d.).

3. The Need for a Systemic Approach. A third theme in several of these reforms is that school improvement requires a comprehensive and integrated approach. For advocates of those programs, piecemeal approaches simply will not work. As Terry Astuto and her associates have questioned (1994), what is the point of implementing a site-based management system if the school is required to maintain an eight-period day?

Accelerated Schools, Developmental Schools, the middle school concept, the Essential Schools movement, school-to-work, and other examples illustrate that no schoolwide programs are exactly alike. They do, however, share four characteristics to a greater or lesser extent: rigorous standards aimed at upgrading the instructional program; flexible curriculum; comprehensive planning; and results-orientation (Pechman and Fiester 1994). This holistic orientation reflects many of the ideas advocated as a result of the school improvement research of the middle 1980s (Clark, Lotto, and Astuto 1984), and each speaks directly to increased demands on the library and library media specialist.

4. Increasing the Professionalism of Teachers. With the exception of home schooling, most of these reforms in some way call for broadening teacher involvement and professionalism. School-based management speaks directly to teacher roles and responsibilities. Charter school development most often involves teacher participation and the creation of significant roles for themselves. School choice does not directly address this issue, though it does hold implications for changes in the roles of principals and central office personnel who must be concerned with attracting and holding students. The associations that developed and promote specific discipline reforms point out that their standards documents rely upon teacher judgment and commitment as vital elements in implementation. Unlike previous reform movements, “this call for excellence casts teachers as professional decision makers and not as technicians” (Freeman et al. 1988) and brings with it all the implications of increased teacher autonomy and authority.

Increased teacher autonomy and authority, coupled with the shift of instructional paradigms toward more individualization, independent learning, and increased student responsibility for their own learning, and tied to new notions of qualitative assessment, signals the possibility of significant instructional change in the near future. This example implies a greater variety of teaching methods in use and an accompanying need for a greater variety of materials to support those methods. This also speaks to the need for deepened collections and broadened access.

In schools in which there is a particular curricular focus, an additional force may drive the need for expanded materials. As students extend their studies of particular subjects beyond what has been done in the past, they will be grappling with more sophisticated information and application processes than they have previously. This suggests that they will be involved in new and different activities, which may require new and different materials.

Lastly, increased planning with teachers—any planning with teachers—is a complex process, requiring both knowledge and time. This suggests that library media specialists need both preservice and inservice training in how teachers plan (Van Deusen 1996b; Wolcott 1994). While most school library media specialists are credentialed teachers themselves, the focus here really is not on lesson planning; it is on working with another adult in lesson planning—and not

just any other adult, but *the* adult who is primarily and ultimately responsible for the creation and implementation of the lesson.

Training in how to plan lessons for students is not the same as training in how to develop lessons in collaboration with teachers, and specific circumstances can make the task even more complicated. Whether the school in question is an elementary or a secondary school, specialists are called upon to work with teachers across all the grade levels and all the subject matter areas in that building. This is a major challenge in itself, but it is made more difficult at the secondary level, especially in high schools, by the specificity and increasing sophistication of subjects taught. The techniques of lesson planning for one subject are not universal to the teaching of other secondary level subjects. The situation can be even more difficult for those specialists who work in K–12 environments. Teacher training appropriately targets a given age group of students in a particular setting. An aspiring media specialist earning a teaching credential at either the elementary or secondary level may be taught the planning techniques appropriate to that level, but is unlikely to be taught the subtleties of planning at the other level.

Inservice training in how teachers plan is equally important for at least three reasons. First, there is no recognized universal practice in instructional planning. Even within the same university certification programs, different professors teach different methods for planning individual lessons and the flow of a semester's or year's study. The methods a given media specialist learned are not necessarily the same methods taught at other universities to the teachers with whom the specialist will work. The second reason for inservice training rests in the fact that while media specialists may have been prepared initially as teachers, teachers and media specialists do not have identical jobs. Unless the media specialist is in the classroom, the methods of lesson planning he or she learned will grow stale with time. Third, inservice training is needed because of the advent of technology and the shifting emphasis of recent reforms. As technology changes the face of instruction, and closer ties with agencies and organizations outside the schools—such as those associated with distance learning or the school-to-work movement—affect the shape of teaching, the nature of planning changes along with the nature of instruction. Lastly, inservice training is needed because the techniques individual teachers use vary significantly with their age and experience. A recently trained media specialist received an education in lesson and course planning different from that received by teachers who earned their credentials ten, twenty, or thirty years prior—just as a media specialist who earned a teaching credential twenty years ago was taught planning differently than were the younger members of a school's faculty.

The complexity of collaborative instructional planning also implies that library media specialists must find ways to free up time to work with teachers (Pickard 1994). This is not, of course, a one-way street. Teachers also must find time to work with the media specialist. Media specialists, however, cannot solve the teachers' side of the equation. That is an administrative function. Effective planning takes time, and media specialists have an advantage over teachers by being able to control the allocation of the time available to them. One factor in time production that implies librarians should look to their own uses of technology is found in recent research: library media specialists who have automated their libraries spend more time working with teachers in development projects (Miller and Shontz 1996).

5. Empowering the Student. Joseph Murphy (1990) and others have made an interesting observation: The first wave of school reform aimed at empowering the state; the second, at

empowering teachers; the third, at empowering students. This empowerment is not limited to their roles as school learners, but includes their roles in society as well. A dominant theme in these reforms involves students' taking responsibility for their own learning in and after school and in preparation for their life's work. There is a clear determination to change the role of students from passive recipients to active participants, perhaps even leaders, in the pursuit of their own education. The goals are multidimensional, including academic and social skills, and apply to all ages of students, from beginners in the Developmental or Accelerated Schools to graduating high school seniors in Essential Schools or the school-to-work program.

Student empowerment brings together a trio of subthemes: curriculum integration, connections beyond the classroom, and technology—and each has implications for school library media center services.

Integrated Curriculum

The attempts to personalize and contextualize within an academic framework lead to the integration of curriculum. It has been the nature of schooling, especially secondary schooling, to disaggregate the stuff of life and render it into separate disciplines, creating artificial divisions and engendering goal displacement (Boyer 1983; Goodlad 1984; Resnick 1989; Sizer 1984). Many reforms look to reintegrate the curriculum and to connect it to the students' current and future worlds. Sometimes this integration is at a reasonably limited level, as in some of the social studies reforms in which students draw on several of the disciplines within the social sciences to attack a problem. Other times, the integration is broader, as in the middle school emphasis on interdisciplinary instruction. In yet other instances, as in the school-to-work program or some of the elementary school reading interventions for at-risk students, the integration structures the entire program. This implies a greater role for school library media specialists in helping students find connections in materials.

Connections to Students' Current and Future Worlds

Whether it is the inclusion of students of every kind, the contextualization of curriculum and instructional materials, the interdisciplinary studies of the middle or high school, the targeted preparation of school-to-work programs, or alternatives in assessment, these reforms all call for the conscious forging of links between in-school and real-world experiences. This implies that school library media materials will need to be continually updated as conditions change. A particularly striking example is seen in the school-to-work arena, in which advancing technology and rapidly evolving economic trends cause change to be dynamic. School library media specialists will be challenged to respond to the need for current materials (Craver 1995). Career information has a short shelf life, and rapidly changing conditions will drive students and teachers more and more toward electronically available, immediately relevant materials. At another level, libraries need to become high-tech environments to support the kinds of learning experiences employers will require and teachers will be assigning. To draw full benefit from this equipment and attendant materials, school library media specialists need to help teachers design course-related assignments that require students to retrieve, organize, interpret, and persuasively present information.

Students working on interdisciplinary projects seek information from multiple domains. Teachers whose training has been in a single subject and who have not become proficient in

accessing many of the new electronic resources may become progressively less able to assist their students as the young people's interests and inquiries lead them into areas removed from the teacher's credentialed expertise. The librarians' knowledge of materials across the curriculum and their ability to provide access to those materials to students play important roles in raising the odds of student success.

Technology

Technology exists in three dimensions in schools, and all three have an impact on library media services: (1) using technology to teach—everything from researching content and lesson ideas on the Internet, to classroom presentations, to specific software applications for targeted purposes, to distance education; (2) using technology for learning—everything from information retrieval to the varieties of computer-assisted learning; and (3) recognizing technology as a subject matter discipline in its own right—from computer science on the one hand to social studies investigations of the impact of technology on our lives on the other. A good example of the blending of these three is found in magnet schools that concentrate on computer applications. Ideally, teachers in those schools employ technology in the presentation of their lessons; students use technology from the first stages of information searching to the final stages of project presentation; and the curriculum addresses not only the mechanics of technology, but also its scientific, economic, social, and political impact.

Of course, the quality of the results from these three approaches to technology depends upon at least two things: (1) the knowledge level and commitment of teachers, and (2) the availability of the technology. Both have implications for library media.

Teachers

Data gathered in the last few years show that nearly a quarter of secondary teachers—almost a third in mathematics—have not completed even a bachelor's degree minor in their main teaching field (McMillen, Bobbitt, and Lynch 1994). In the highest minority enrollment schools, math and science students have less than a 50% chance of being placed with teachers who hold degrees and credentials in the subjects they are teaching (Oakes, 1990). Without a firm grounding in the subjects they teach, it is unlikely these teachers are highly aware of the best technology in their areas, and it is questionable if they will employ it effectively if they receive it. Cuban's work (1993) indicates that most teachers new to technology use it not to do anything differently, but to do more efficiently what they already had been doing. Depending upon the culture of the schools in which these people work, the quantity and quality of resources at their disposal, and the level of acceptance the library media specialist receives as a partner in curriculum and instruction, the role of library services could be critical in helping these instructors overcome preparation deficiencies.

Availability

The availability of technology also implies challenges for school libraries. As the presence of computers grows in schools, more attention is being turned to the creation of technologically rich environments. A growing number of research studies (Software Publishers Association 1992) and programs, such as the Anchored Instruction approach developed by the Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt University (1990) and the Computer Supported Intentional

Learning Environment coming out of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (U.S. Department of Education 1996), are demonstrating that computer-assisted instruction can result in student achievement gains. One of the key results these research pieces and projects show, however, is that advances in achievement come when students have continual access to technology, not when there is only one computer in the room or through widely spaced episodic sessions in a computer lab or library.

Insufficient access to computers can cause bottlenecks in learning. Cooperative learning can break down when there are not enough computers for all students. As one researcher puts it, all software programs allow alternating control of the keyboard or mouse, but that is little more than cosmetic collaboration (Lookatch 1996). Similarly, six students needing to find something in a CD-ROM version of an encyclopedia can only use it one at a time, even if their topics are widely separated alphabetically. These situations suggest considerable thought is needed in deciding whether to buy print or nonprint versions of widely and frequently utilized materials.

Given that few school districts have the money to completely outfit every classroom with a sufficient number of computers, questions of equal access arise and pressure for access to library computers can increase without necessarily benefiting students in the long run. There is also research—albeit very limited—that indicates that students who have been making advances in technologically rich environments in elementary schools may lose their advantage when they reach upper levels in which computers are inconsistently integrated into instruction (David 1991; Ross, Smith, and Morrison 1991). The library and library media specialist may be challenged in helping these students and their teachers, but a larger challenge rests in helping districts and school building leadership understand the dynamics and impact of technology as they make decisions regarding purchases and deployment.

Conclusion: Implications and Realities

“Before I draw nearer to that stone to which you point,” said Scrooge, “answer me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that Will be, or are they shadows of things that May be, only?” (Dickens 1983, 107)

The Challenge Undergirding the Implications of Reform: Restructuring How Library Media Centers and Library Media Specialists Are Perceived

Many current school improvement proposals imply a need for more effective integration of library media services into curriculum and instruction, and even into administrative functions. Meeting this need will require increased support for media center resources and operation. With that increased support comes the likelihood of more positive media specialist involvement in educational decision making. But nothing is certain. While the future seems rich with possibility, not all school trends, innovations, and restructuring ideas are ultimately “library friendly.” The difference between implication and reality in any given situation may well depend upon the reactions and initiatives with which school library media specialists respond to the opportunities and challenges confronting them.

While the surface challenges to library media specialists’ desire to assume a full educational role are readily apparent, the deepest challenge comes from continuing conceptions of school and schooling—conceptions that persist even in the face of visible efforts at change. School

reformers are clearly trying to think of schools in new ways, but it appears many are still thinking of libraries as they always have: in ways that perceive of library media services as staff rather than line, as support rather than central player.

Examples abound. Reformers show a frequent tendency to ignore libraries and librarians in their plans to restructure and reconfigure education. Any review of the major reform documents since 1983's *A Nation at Risk* reveals the absence of libraries in restructurist thinking. Most recently, the National Association of Secondary School Principals provided an excellent example of reformist thought processes. *Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution*, the Association's 1996 report on what high schools should look like as the new century opens, was put together by a blue ribbon panel of educators drawn from public schooling and higher education. It is nearly silent in regard to media centers and media specialists—according them no specified role in its advocacy of individualized instruction, technology, new teaching practices, heavy staff development, and curriculum integration. Other examples of inattention and undervaluing are not hard to find. The library media centers in many schools are operated by people never trained in the field. Library budgets are notoriously early casualties in times of financial stress. In many elementary schools, the need for teachers' planning time is addressed by requiring the librarian to baby-sit for students for some part of the day. The school board in one Midwestern city recently gave serious consideration to a proposal to do away with high school libraries, buying into the notion that a bank of computers and a stack of CD-ROMs would serve as well.

All this suggests one more implication of school reform and restructuring for school library media services: a need to restructure the perceptions many educators and citizens hold of what a library is, what a library media specialist does, and what it all means to the quality of education. The most serious implication of the misconceptions others hold of what library media services are all about is that the full potential of libraries and the media specialists who operate them might never be integrated into educational planning. Albert Einstein is reputed to have observed that you can't solve a problem using the same thinking that gave rise to it. To reconceptualize schooling without an integrated reconceptualization of library media services is to build a fundamental flaw into the new structure. It is overwhelmingly unlikely that teachers, administrators, board members, and others would consciously deny libraries a central place in education or library media specialists a pivotal role in instructional improvement.

It is simply that they have never been taught to think of media centers and media specialists in those terms. Many teachers, administrators, board members, and academics possess only limited understanding of the school library media center and its functions. Their ignorance is everyone's loss. Library media specialists are constrained in what they are able to do; as a result, teachers and administrators are denied interactions that can make them more effective, and students ultimately receive less than they might.

This ignorance is a result of the interaction of at least three elements: first, their own training and experience; second, the nature of the media specialist's work; and third, the cultural environment of most schools. It is these elements that must be altered if the realization of the positive implications of school reform are to be maximized.

Teacher and Administrator Training

The average age of teachers in the United States is approaching the mid-40s; the typical administrator is nearly 50 (DiegmueLLer 1990a; Evans 1996; Farber 1991; Feistritz 1996). Because of the limited role the libraries and librarians of their student years probably played in their lives, and because their professional training did not address the role and potential of the library, many K–12 educators simply were never taught to think of library media services as integral to their success. Once through their training, these teachers or administrators got caught up in the imperatives of their own environments. It became very difficult for them to expand the conceptual horizons established in their pasts. The demanding level of teacher activity and the unrelenting isolation of most classrooms is well documented (Jackson 1968; Lortie 1975; McLaughlin, Talbert, and Bascia 1990; Sizer 1984; Smith and Geoffrey 1968), and there is no doubt that the pace and volume of administrative work are consuming (Boyan 1988; Hartzell, Williams, and Nelson 1995; Morris et al. 1984; Parkay and Hall 1992). Unless the library is forcibly brought to their attention, it is likely to go unnoticed and undervalued.

Even today, very few teacher or administrator training programs contain any systematic investigation into the potential and role of the library in curriculum, instruction, staff development, or administrative support (Getz 1992; Hodges 1981; Wilson and Blake 1993; Hamilton 1983; Wilson and MacNeil 1998). An encouraging exception to this situation is found in Wisconsin, while a new administrative rule, PI 4.09(12), requires that teaching license candidates receive instruction about school library media programs and become adept in the use of a variety of resources and technologies in their teaching. Teacher training still largely regards the instructor as an independent operator, individually responsible for what happens in the classroom, rather than as a team member. Many, perhaps most, are ignorant of the library's full possibility range. Consequently, their conception of library services goes little beyond the expectation that the library media specialist can find or help them find the information they want when they want it. To them, the library is an institution that responds to needs they define, not an instrument for defining their own needs, or those of their students or school. Certainly there are those who have learned the value of media centers and media specialists, but the research shows that real teacher/library media specialist partnerships exist only for a minority (Bell and Totten 1992; Campbell 1991; Haycock 1995; Getz 1992). Teachers tend to view media specialists more as support resources than as colleagues (Pfister 1980).

The School Library Media Specialist's Job

A second reason many educators have less appreciation for library media services than they might rests in the nature of the job. As Roseabeth Kanter (1977) has observed, power flows to people whose work is visible in organizations. A media specialist's work empowers others. It can be absorbed into the totality of another person's performance and lost from view. Parents of students, and students themselves, most frequently think of student learning in terms of the teachers.

This is one of the most powerful forces clouding administrators' vision of library media services. A principal can recognize a successful teacher, but it is very difficult to separate out the extent to which a teacher is successful because students have access to a rich library collection or the curricular and instructional support the library media specialist provides. Administrators' inability to see these contributions sometimes causes them to consider curriculum and instruction

separate from library media services, or not to think of the library at all in evaluating the level of teaching and learning in their schools.

Because libraries and library media specialists are not thought of as integrated components of quality teaching and learning experiences, they are not visibly identified with the central core of school activities, nor are they thought of as integral to school success. Consequently, they receive less recognition, their influence is often less than it ought to be, and they are much more vulnerable to being ignored. The irony in this—and the tragedy—is that in rightly doing everything possible to protect the classroom in tight financial times, administrators may cut library services and, in doing so, cut away one of the essentials of classroom quality.

The Cultural Environment of Most Schools

A third reason many educators lack an understanding of the full potential of library media services and media specialists rests in the culture of most schools. The typical school culture works against meaningful interaction between media specialists and teachers and discourages media specialists from taking leadership positions.

Teachers are victims in the school setting, just as library media specialists are. The absence of outstanding teacher leadership is not a function of the people who make up the profession. Education is filled with bright, well-educated, committed, and persuasive professionals. The emergence of significant teacher leadership is blocked by two things: the nature of teacher training, and the organizational structure of schools.

In addition to the failure to address the potential of the library in instruction and the media specialist in curriculum development, most teacher preparation programs neglect leadership training. Focused on children and their needs, teacher training does not include many of the components of adult leadership. Rare is the program that addresses communication with adults, adult motivation theory, adult conflict resolution, or organizational management issues. Nor are these studies frequently undertaken as a part of inservice programs. It also should be noted that this is the fundamental pattern of preparation for most people who will become school library media specialists.

The real culprit, though, is the organizational structure of most schools, which isolates and limits teachers and media specialists alike. The primary organizational unit in schools is the classroom, an isolated place staffed with one adult and a given number of students. Although the conditions of isolation and departmental organization are being challenged in middle schools across the country, the bulk of junior high schools and certainly the overwhelming majority of high schools suffer from this organizational structure (Davis 1987; Lieberman 1985; Boyer 1983; Shulman 1989; Wittrock 1986). Teachers spend their day with students and have much less adult interaction than do people in most other lines of work. As a result, they usually have relatively little experience in collaborating with and leading other adults, simply because the time and opportunity for the requisite engagement with other adults is severely reduced, if not eliminated. Although their work day pattern is different, library media specialists are similarly isolated. There is usually only one librarian in a school, and the isolation is intensified by school schedules and the patterns of library operation. Teachers most often have lunch and other breaks in their days at the same times as the students. Since students and employees often use these times to go to the library for what they need, many media specialists are required to be at their

duty stations to serve them. Consequently, they are almost systematically kept from opportunities to build visibility, relationships, and influence with teachers and administrators.

Over the century and more in which the current organizational structure of schools has prevailed, a culture has evolved in which the only really consistent leadership has been vested administrators. There have been, and continue to be, efforts to increase opportunities for real teacher leadership. Some are very encouraging. In the main, however, they are stymied by tradition and structure. In most instances, teachers only infrequently think of themselves as leaders, and even less often think of each other as leaders in any formal sense.

Teaching has a culture of egalitarianism (Troen and Boles 1993). First, with very few exceptions, there are no formal ranks among teachers. Promotion is possible only by leaving teaching. In most schools, a 65-year-old teacher with forty years experience performs the same duties as a 25-year-old first-year teacher fresh from the university. Second, salary schedules are built on a blend of educational attainments and years of experience. They do not differentiate on the basis of grade or subject taught, students taught, or the quality of performance (Burden 1985; Jacobson 1988; Murnane 1987). Third, classroom isolation provides teachers with a great deal of autonomy in the completion of their work; they decide the nature and the flow of events in their classrooms (Jackson 1968). The thought of having to negotiate and share this control can threaten their autonomy, and many resist. Given this environment, teachers are not particularly open to suggestion, let alone direction, from their peers.

As a result, in most schools, the ideal colleague is the person willing to offer help but not to question or give direction. Unlike in medicine, law, architecture, or other professions in which it is routine to seek second opinions, employ specialists, or work in a team, to admit a need for help on a problem in teaching is to admit a personal weakness or deficiency (Stern 1986; Lortie 1975; McPherson 1972; Sarason 1982; Silver 1973). In response to this norm, a culture has developed that strongly discourages teachers from criticizing each other and from telling or showing each other how to do things better. As one researcher has pointed out, the only really acceptable way a teacher has to tell another teacher to do something differently is to pass along the nonthreatening information that alternative methods exist and are being used in other schools (Newberry 1977).

To actively promote collaboration and to emerge as a leader is to challenge these patterns of behavior. Any open and continuous recognition of faculty members as leaders introduces into a school the notion of status differences based on knowledge, skill, and initiative. The status differences are not formalized by any change in the organizational chart, but they are real just the same. Status differentiations can be unwelcome in a culture structured to suppress them (Troen and Boles 1993). The involved school library media specialist by definition violates the egalitarian norms. Interaction from a perspective of information specialist, teacher, and curriculum consultant rather than interaction from a support services perspective requires that the specialist be accepted as an equal in partnerships, collaborative programs, and instructional consultation. There are faculty members who will perceive a non-teacher's entry into curriculum and instruction discussions and planning sessions as usurpation. Some will regard such activities as academic incursions and may interpret them as encroachments on their autonomy by an arrogant peer.

The Challenge

Taken together, these forces pose a formidable and urgent challenge to library media specialists in effectively and positively responding to school change. The task is formidable, first, because the sources of its problematic nature are rooted in domains not really under the control of school library media specialists—university training, school structure, and tradition. Cultural change is the most difficult kind of change (Evans 1996; Kotter 1997), requiring teachers and administrators to significantly alter their perceptions of media specialists and their roles in schooling. The irony of efforts to change educators' perceptions of school library media services is that the people who benefit from the specialist's knowledge and skills also are the resisters of it. As Philip Turner (1993) observes, they are simultaneously the challenge, the frustration, and the reward.

The task is formidable, secondly, because it will take time for these new perceptions to take root in the education community. Library media specialists, individually and collectively, need to seek leadership positions and to carve out positive and visible places for themselves in the reform effort. But, as Sarason (1991) has pointed out, if a new paradigm of teacher preparation were to be instituted today, it would be decades before its full impact could be felt. It would take that long for teachers trained in a framework of partnership with library media specialists to complete their studies, enter the work force, reach critical mass proportions, and accrue the seniority that would allow them to occupy positions of influence and authority as teachers and to earn their credentials and rise in administrative ranks.

Nonetheless, the successful completion of the task is critical to the future of library media services---by extension---to the long-term quality of schooling. Although convincing professional colleagues to accept new roles for library media services and specialists may be a formidable task, it is one which media specialists already have taken the first conceptual steps toward a new image, having a working professional support system in place, and are capable and committed people.

From a conceptual point of view, the library media field already is prepared to deal with the effects of school reordering. *Information Power*, the most recent statement of the field's professional guidelines (American Library Association and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology 1988), provides a model of library media services and specialist behavior that readies the ground for the most positive engagement of school changes. *Information Power* carries a clear message to media specialists that their role in quality schooling is both broad and complex---first by defining a vision of library media services to appropriate to almost all school settings, and then by addressing the media specialist behavior required to realize it:

The mission of the library media program is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. This mission is accomplished:

- by providing intellectual and physical access to materials in all formats
- by providing instruction to foster competence and stimulate interest in reading, viewing, and using information and ideas
- by working with other educators to design learning strategies to meet the needs of individual students (p. 1).

To implement this vision of library media services, A fundamental responsibility of the library media specialist is to provide the leadership and expertise necessary to ensure that the library media program is an integral part of the instructional program of the school. To carry out the mission of the program, the library media specialist performs the following separate but overlapping roles to link the information resources and services of the library media program to the information needs of the school's students and staff:

- information specialist
- teacher
- instructional consultant

Through these roles, library media specialists provide:

- access to information and ideas by assisting students and staff in identifying information resources and in interpreting and communicating intellectual content
- formal and informal instruction in information skills, the production of materials, and the use of information and instructional technologies
- recommendations for instructional planning to individual teachers as well as assistance to schoolwide planning of curricular and instructional activities (p. 26).

The *Information Power* model of school library media services is a major departure from the traditional view of the school librarian as a person who checks out books, looks up sources, and reads to children. The role of teacher embraces not just media specialist interactions with students, but a staff developer relationship with faculty colleagues. The role of instructional consultant embraces a dimension of school leadership not found in librarians of the past. It is the dimension of leadership that is critical in whether media services and specialists will be better served—and thereby students will be better served—by school changes.

A second component in library media specialists' ability to accomplish the task of redefining themselves in the new environment rests in the existing professional organization structure. State and national associations have important roles to play in helping local district directors of library services and building-level media specialists find opportunities to fill the roles outlined in *Information Power*. Targeted organizational assistance improves the odds that media specialists will be able to engage the possibilities of reform and restructuring from a leadership position. The power of these organizations for solidifying library media's role in school change is anchored in their ability to

- Continue and expand the dialogue that drives the evolution of the goals, roles, and objectives of library media services through works that provide a conceptual framework, common language, and operational guide to the field.
- Serve as a collective voice for those in the field.
- Develop cooperative programs, grant proposals, policy statements, joint resolutions, pilot projects, model schools, and other collaborative endeavors with other professional education groups such as the National Education Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the American Association of School Administrators, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Staff

Development Council, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

- Multiply the effect of their lobbying by forging links with the organizations listed above and others like them. They and their state affiliates wield considerable power with teachers, administrators, accrediting agencies, and legislatures. Their support and endorsement of high library standards and significant media specialist involvement in the life of the school through the influence they have on legislation and on accreditation standards will go a long way toward promotion of significant involvement of media specialists in reform decisions.
- Influence the development of attitudes among incoming teachers and administrators, helping to make them more receptive to the concept of partnership with the specialist. By developing close ties with the organizations listed above, the library media specialist organizations can influence the shaping of university teacher and administrator preparation programs. Their support in building positive perceptions of libraries and librarians into credential programs could be invaluable over the long haul.
- Carry articles in their publications and schedule presentations at their conferences on how to build influence and alliances, how to develop networks with other librarians for mutual assistance and growth, and how to prevent and respond to threats of cuts or discontinuance.
- Develop and make available portable slide, video, or multimedia programs for use when addressing school boards, legislative groups, administrative teams, parent associations, or other important groups that could influence decision makers. The School Library Media Section of the New York Library Association has developed an effective prototype.

Finally, school library media specialists are in an excellent position to help themselves. First, they daily have within their immediate reach the resources needed to inform themselves for effective participation in reform and restructuring decision making. The information quickly available to them regarding the possibilities and implications of school change rivals that of administrators and exceeds that of most teachers:

- Instant access to the periodicals to which they subscribe;
- The print and media resources in their collection that relate to schooling;
- The wealth of material through the Internet—from the ERIC database to full text journals and newspapers to government publications to the home pages of other schools and beyond; and
- Information exchanges such as the LM_NET and other e-lists.

All these and other resources increase the odds that media specialists can assume leadership positions. They can be used to establish the specialists' intellectual and operational credibility, and provide wonderful tools for specialists to use in reducing the ambiguity that attends change. Among the consistent attributes of effective leaders is the capacity to clarify questions, identify priorities, and place information in perspective (Evans 1996; Kouzes and Posner 1987; Yukl 1994). The media specialist's global view of the school, its programs, and its resources can be invaluable in these efforts. People follow others who can effectively resolve conflicts.

Second, media specialists are an especially literate group, and they are numerous enough to support their professional organizations, sustain interactive networks, and make their presence felt in the company of other educators. They have the capacity to influence teacher and

administrator thinking through writing for teacher and administrator publications and making presentations at teacher and administrator conferences. These efforts to use their influence have already begun—some by media specialists acting as independent professionals, others with either the stimulation or the support of library advancement programs such as the National Library Power Project funded by the DeWitt Wallace Foundation and administered through the American Library Association.

Viewed as a whole, the resources available to library media specialists encourage optimism. Put to effective use, the library media community has the potential to help shape and then to capitalize on most of the positive implications of school change and to blunt a good measure of the negative. But it must begin now to secure its position at the planning table. As Cleaver and Taylor (1989) contend, the notion of what it means to be an effective library media specialist is conceptually mature. Now the task is to fulfill the implications of that concept.

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