
School Libraries Count!

*A National Survey of
School Library Media Programs
2007*

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Introduction

The American Library Association's divisions for academic and public libraries—the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and the Public Library Association (PLA)—have long collected and reported annual statistics about the types of libraries they represent. This year, 2007, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) joins its sister divisions by initiating an annual survey of school library media programs. The development of this longitudinal survey project was mandated by the AASL Board and advocated by the division's Research and Statistics Committee and Independent Schools Section. The survey was promoted via a wide variety of venues, including: AASL events at recent ALA Midwinter Meetings and Annual Conferences, AASL e-mail lists, AASL chapters and affiliates, telephone calls and e-mails placed by selected interested parties, and mass mailings by the survey contractor.

The survey launch coincided with ALA's 2007 Midwinter Meetings in Seattle, Washington. Over 5,000 responses to the survey were initiated, over 4,500 responses were completed, and the respondents include almost 4,000 regular public schools and over 200 independent schools.

This report summarizes the overall results as well as more detailed results, when statistically significant relationships between those results and selected factors were found. These factors include: school level, enrollment, region, a school's poverty and migrant statuses, locale (metropolitan versus non-metropolitan), and whether a school is public or private. Other factors did not yield sufficient numbers of cases to look more closely at specific types of schools (e.g., charter, special education, vocational-technical, alternative, magnet). Statistical significance was assessed using the t test of independent samples and the standard minimum criterion, $p < .05$. (Translation: No more than five percent of the time would repeated and infinite samples yield meaningfully different results.)

As with its sister surveys by ACRL and PLA, respondents to the AASL survey were self-selected. For this reason, it is not possible to generate national totals. In this inaugural effort, for instance, 16 states (two-thirds) generated three-fourths of the responses.

Reports of the survey's results are available in a variety of formats, including:

- PowerPoint presentations from ALA's 2007 Annual Conference and AASL's 2007 National Conference;
- this document; and soon,
- an online data analysis tool, for which AASL is currently soliciting proposals.

Additional reports and products based on survey data from 2007 and future years will be developed in due course. Notably, beginning with 2008, reports will also address year-to-year trends.

To find these documents and the latest information about the survey, visit the AASL website at <http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/slcsurvey.cfm>, or the survey website at <http://www.aaslsurvey.org>.

To ask questions, make suggestions or comments, or volunteer to assist in promoting the 2008 survey, contact:

- Beverley Becker, AASL Deputy Director, bbecker@ala.org;
- Nancy Everhart, Chair, AASL Research and Statistics Committee, everhart@ci.fsu.edu; or
- Keith Curry Lance, Consultant, RSL Research Group, keithlance@comcast.net.

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School Library Media Specialists & Total LMC Staff

How much can be achieved by a school library media program depends almost entirely on the level at which it is staffed—its total staffing level, and especially the extent of the presence of a state-certified school library media specialist (LMS).

Half of responding LMCs (50th percentile) have almost one full-time equivalent (FTE) LMS—37 hours per typical week—and total LMC staff hours reflecting full-time coverage—40 hours per week.

These figures suggest that, while a full-time LMS is present about half the time, they typically have only three hours a week of staff support, making that the only time they are free to meet with their principals, attend faculty or committee meetings, deliver in-service professional development opportunities to teachers, or work with teachers and students in their classrooms.

The top quarter of responding LMCs have a full-time library media specialist—40 hours per typical week—and almost two FTEs of total staff—74 hours per week. The fact that these schools provide full-time support to their LMSs enables them to pursue activities such as those listed above—activities that research has linked to higher scores on reading, writing, and other achievement tests.

The top five percent of responding LMCs have more than one full-time LMS—50 hours per typical week—and almost three FTEs of total staff—115 hours per typical week. With access to more than one LMS, teachers in these schools are more likely to enjoy the benefits of collaboration with a LMS on the design and delivery of instruction.

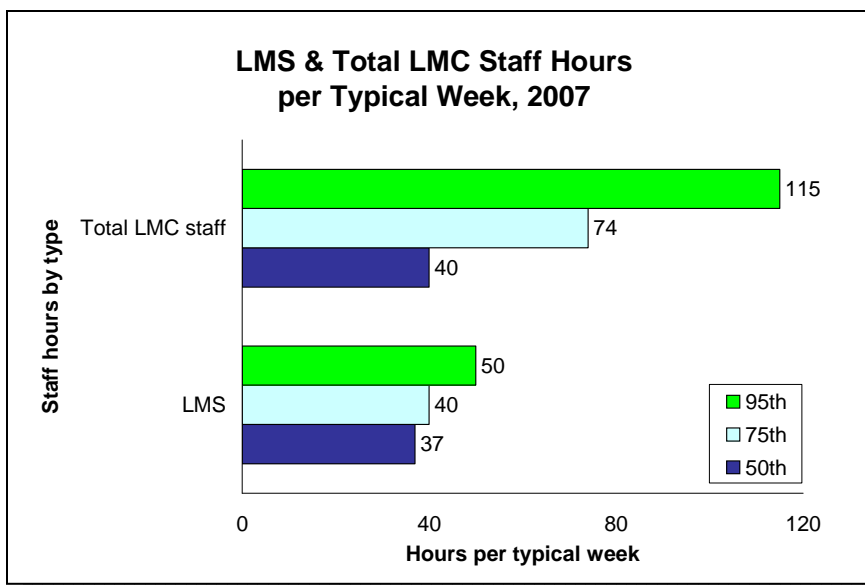
Several factors affect the levels of LMC staffing in participating schools:

School Level

The top five percent of high school LMCs report two full-time library media specialists. The top five percent of elementary and middle schools report only one LMS. While half of elementary and middle schools report only one FTE of total library staffing, half of high schools report one and a half. Among the top five percent at each grade level, the high school advantage in total LMC staffing is even more dramatic—150 hours per week versus 80 and 90 hours per week, respectively, for elementary and middle schools.

Enrollment

The top five percent of schools with enrollments of 1,000 or higher reported two or more LMS FTEs, and the top quarter of those with enrollments of 2,000 or higher reported almost two LMS FTEs. For schools with enrollments below 1,000, the top half of responding schools reported one or



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almost one LMS FTE. For schools with enrollments under 300, half report less than a half-time LMS—16 hours per week. Half of schools with enrollments of 1,000 and over report two or almost two total LMC FTEs, while the top five percent report at least three-and-a-half to more than five total FTEs.

Region¹

LMC staffing is substantially lower in the West than in other regions. On average, responding LMCs from Western states report 19.8 hours per week of LMS staffing and total LMC staff of 44.5 hours per week. In other regions, LMS staffing averages 29.1 (Northeast) to 33.9 (South) hours per week, and total LMC staffing averages 53.1 (Northeast) to 56.9 (South) hours per week.

High Poverty Schools

LMCs at schools serving more poor students (32% or more eligible for the National School Lunch Program) average fewer hours of library media specialist and total library staffing. Schools with fewer poor students have a LMS 32 hours per week, on average, compared to 27 hours per week for schools with more poor students. There is a similar gap for total staffing—57 and 47 hours per week, respectively.

Migrant Schools

There are no statistically significant staffing differences associated with migrant and non-migrant schools.

Metropolitan Schools

LMCs at schools in central cities and suburbs of metropolitan areas average 30 hours per week of LMS staffing and 54 hours of total LMC staffing, compared with 27 and 48 hours, respectively, for schools in outlying towns and rural areas. These differences are small, but statistically significant.

Public and Private Schools

On average, public school LMCs report 29 hours per week of LMS staffing, compared to only 20 hours per week for private schools. But, private schools tend to have more total LMC staffing. The average private school reported 73.5 hours of total LMC staff, compared to only 52 hours for public schools.

¹ U.S. Census regions were used. The Northeast includes: CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT. The Midwest includes: IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, and WI. The South includes: AL, AR, DC, DE, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, and WV. The West includes: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, and WY.

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Selected Activities of School Library Media Specialists

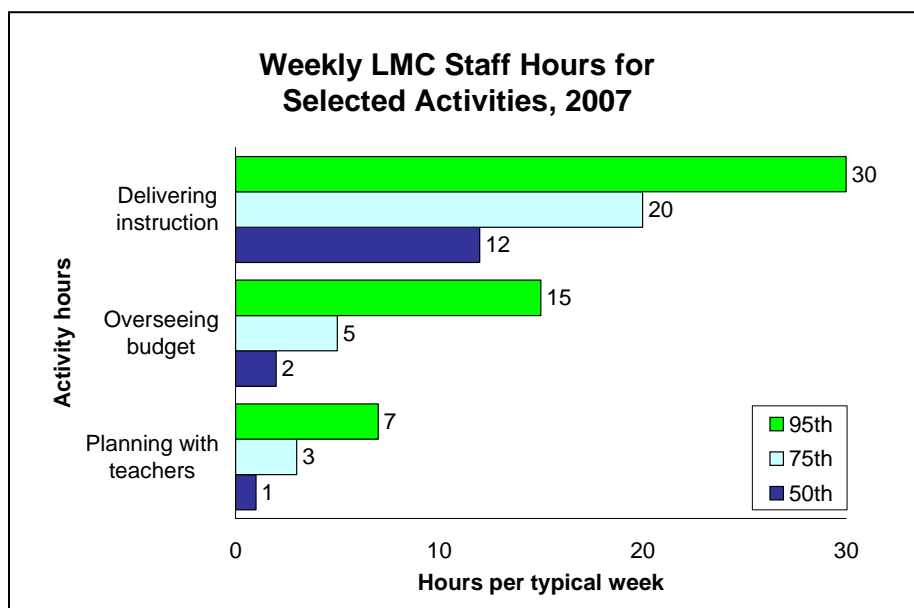
Three activities of school library media specialists are key to their roles as teachers, administrators, and instructional collaborators:

- Delivering instruction,
- Overseeing a budget, and
- Planning with teachers.

Delivering Instruction

Of these three activities, not surprisingly, delivering instruction is the one that demands the most time. At half of responding schools, LMSs spend at least 12 hours per week—or, almost two and a half hours per day—on this

activity. The top quarter of schools reported 20 or more hours per week of instructional delivery—half of the time of a single full-time equivalent (FTE). The top five percent of schools reported that delivering instruction takes up at least 30 hours per week—three-quarters of a single FTE.



Overseeing LMC Budget

LMC budget oversight requires at least two hours per week for half of responding schools, at least five hours for the top quarter of schools, and 15 hours or more per week for the top five percent of respondents.

Planning with Teachers

For collaborative planning of instructional units with classroom teachers, responding LMCs reported surprisingly low numbers of hours per week. Half of the respondents spend one hour per week or less on this important activity. The top quarter of schools reported three or more hours per week of collaborative planning—on average, a little more than a half hour per day—and the top five percent reported seven or more hours for this activity—a little more than an hour a day.

Doubtless, two reasons above all others explain these figures. Many LMSs have little or no support staff to cover the LMC while they meet with teachers. Likewise, many LMSs are in schools that do not embrace flexible scheduling of visits to the LMC—very often because fixed schedules are utilized to provide solitary planning periods to teachers, while LMSs and other LMC staff are required to supervise students during those periods.

Several factors affect the amount of time devoted to these activities in participating schools:

School Level

Delivering Instruction

Typically, LMS hours spent delivering instruction descend with grade level. Median weekly hours spent on this activity are 15 for elementary schools, 10 for middle schools, and eight for high

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schools. Similarly, though to a lesser degree, the 75th percentiles descend with grade level—23 hours per week for elementary schools, 20 for middle schools, and 16 for high schools. Notably, however, the constraints of the clock limit the number of hours per week an LMS can devote to instruction. At all three grade levels, the 95th percentile is 30 hours per week. In other words, regardless of grade level, only the top five percent of responding LMCs have staffing levels required to spend 30 or more hours per week teaching, either alone or collaboratively.

Overseeing Budget

Predictably, an elementary school LMS has less time to spend on budget oversight than her or his colleagues at middle and high school levels. Half of middle and high school LMSs spend three hours per week on this activity, while half of elementary LMSs spend only two hours on budget oversight. LMSs at secondary schools are probably more likely to have any budgetary authority at all, and more likely to have support staff whose presence makes possible the division of labor that would permit spending more time on fiscal matters.

Planning with Teachers

Time spent on collaborative planning involving LMSs and teachers is also higher for secondary levels than elementary level. Half of elementary LMSs report spending less than one hour per week on planning, while half of middle and high school LMSs report spending two or more hours on this activity. Among the top five percent of respondents at each grade level, however, the gaps are more dramatic—minimum weekly hours devoted to planning rise from five for elementary schools to seven for middle schools to 10 for high schools.

Enrollment

Delivering Instruction

Half of schools with enrollments of 1,000 and over report that the LMS spends 10 or more hours per week delivering instruction. For schools with enrollments from 300 up to 1,000, half of LMSs spend 15 or more hours per week teaching. For schools with smaller enrollments—those under 300—half of LMSs spend seven or fewer hours per week on instruction. Enrollment does not appear to affect LMS instructional hours among the top quarter and top five percent of respondents. At every grade level, the 75th and 95th percentiles spend at or near 20 and 30 hours per week, respectively, on instruction.

Overseeing Budget

Weekly hours spent on budget oversight by LMSs varies by school level. For responding schools with enrollments of 1,000 or more students, half of LMSs spent three or more hours overseeing budgets. For schools with enrollments from 300 up to 1,000, that number of hours decreases to two; and, for schools with fewer than 300 students, it drops to one hour per week. The impact of school size on LMC staffing and thus division of labor is quite obvious when comparing the top five percent of each enrollment cohort: At schools with 2,000 or more students, the top five percent of LMSs spend 20 or more weekly hours on budget matters. At schools with enrollments under 500, the top five percent of LMSs spend 10 or more hours on that activity.

Planning with Teachers

For weekly hours LMSs spend planning with teachers, enrollment of 1,000 students is a critical point. At schools with that many or more students, half of LMSs spend at least two weekly hours planning with teachers, the top quarter spend at least five hours collaborating, and the top five percent spend at least 10 hours. At schools with fewer than 1,000 students, these norms are one, two, and five hours per week, respectively. In other words, once a school achieves an enrollment of at least 1,000, the number of weekly LMS hours devoted to planning tends to double. Quite likely, this relationship is explained by the fact that larger schools tend to have more hours of LMS or support staffing, or both. For example, among schools with 1,000 or more students, those

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staffed by fewer than four people average three to four hours per week planning with teachers, while those staffed by five and six people average almost five and more than six hours per week, respectively, for this activity.

Region

As with LMC staffing levels—and quite likely because of them—LMSs in the West tend to report fewer hours devoted to delivering instruction, overseeing budgets, and planning with teachers than their counterparts in other regions. Among western LMSs, time spent on these activities averages 11 hours per week for instruction, 3.5 hours for budget, and 2 hours for planning. Their counterparts in the Northeast and the South tend to spend more time on all three activities (14 and 15 hours, respectively, on instruction; four and five hours, respectively, on budget; and 2.4 hours on planning).

High Poverty Schools

At high-poverty schools, LMSs tend to spend somewhat less time on budget oversight and planning with teachers than their counterparts at low-poverty schools. The differences are small—4.5 and 4.0 hours per week on budget oversight; and 2.4 and 1.9 hours per week on planning—but they are statistically significant. Notably, poverty status has no impact on LMS hours spent on delivering instruction.

Migrant Schools

Similarly, LMSs at schools that serve migrant students tend to spend slightly less time on delivering instruction and planning with teachers than their colleagues at schools without migrant students. The differences are comparably small—12.2 and 13.4 hours per week, respectively, on instruction; and 2.3 and 2.0 hours per week on planning—but, again, they are statistically significant. LMS time spent overseeing budget is unrelated to migrant status.

Metropolitan Schools

School locale has an analogous impact on planning and instructional time of LMSs. LMSs in city and suburban schools in metropolitan areas tend to spend a little more time on these activities than their counterparts in outlying towns and rural areas. LMSs in metropolitan areas average 14.2 weekly hours delivering instruction and 2.3 weekly hours planning with teachers, while their non-metro colleagues average only 10.2 hours on instruction and 1.8 hours on planning. As with findings about poverty and migrant status, these small differences are statistically significant.

Public and Private Schools

LMSs at public schools tend to spend more time delivering instruction than their private school colleagues (13.4 and 10.9 hours per week, respectively); but private school LMSs generally exceed their public school counterparts on time spent planning with teachers (2.6 and 2.2 hours per week, respectively). As in other instances, these modest differences are statistically significant.

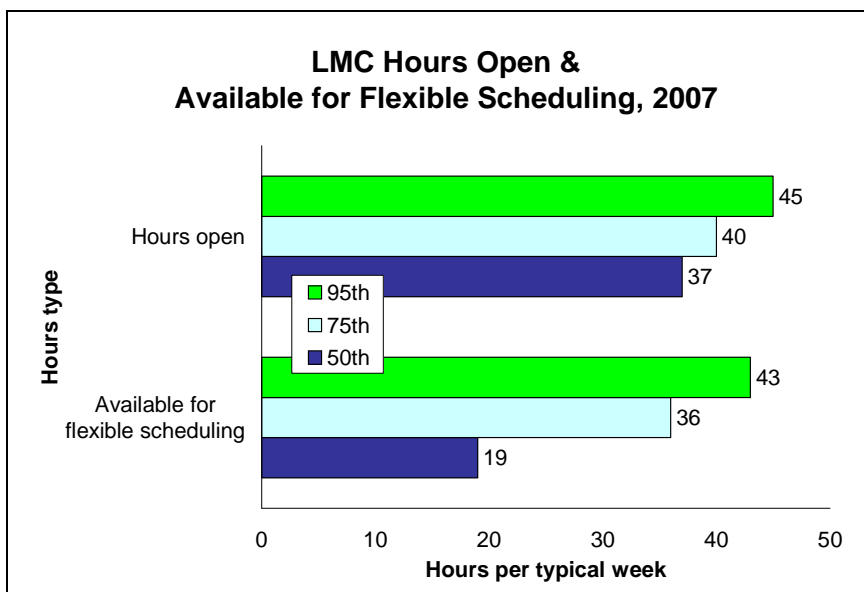
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LMC Hours Open & Available for Flexible Scheduling

The value of a school library media center to its students and teachers is determined largely by the extent to which it is available—both generally and especially when needed to address curricular needs. LMCs to which class, group, and individual visits are welcome as curricular needs dictate are “flexibly scheduled.” (The alternative—fixed scheduling—occurs when classes visit LMCs on a regular schedule without regard to learning that is taking place.)

Half of LMCs for which a survey response was received are open at least 37 hours per week. The top quarter are open 40 hours per week, and the top five percent, 45 hours.



Half of responding LMCs are available for flexible scheduling only 19 hours per week—less than half the hours they are open. The top quarter are available for such scheduling 36 hours per week, and the top five percent, 43.5 hours—in both cases, almost all of the hours they are open.

Several factors affect LMC hours open and available for flexible scheduling:

School Level

As grade level increases, so do hours open per typical week. Half of elementary schools reported that their LMCs are open 35 hours; half of middle schools, 37.5 hours; half of high schools, 40 hours. Weekly LMC hours available for flexible scheduling tend to be dramatically lower for elementary schools (8 hours) than for secondary schools (32.5 hours for middle schools, 36 hours for high schools).

Enrollment

Both hours open and available for flexible scheduling are associated with enrollment size. Half of schools with enrollments of 1,000 or more students are open at least 40 hours per week, 35 or more of which may be flexibly scheduled. Half of schools with enrollments of less than 700 are open at least 35 hours per week, 10 to 15 of which may be flexibly scheduled. Schools with enrollments from 700 up to 1,000 fall in-between with at least 38 hours open, at least 29 of which may be flexibly scheduled.

Region

As for staffing levels and staff activities, LMC hours are associated with region, with the West comparing unfavorably to the rest of the nation. On average, LMCs in the West are open 31 hours

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per week, 19 of which are flexibly scheduled. Other regions average 32 hours open, 21 to 22 of which are flexibly scheduled.

High-Poverty Schools

The number of weekly hours an LMC is open is not associated with poverty status, but the number of hours available for flexible scheduling is. High-poverty schools average only 19 flexibly scheduled hours open week, while low-poverty schools average 22 such hours.

Migrant Schools

LMC hours—both total and flexibly scheduled—are not associated with migrant status.

Metropolitan Schools

LMC hours—both total and flexibly scheduled—are not associated with metropolitan status.

Public and Private Schools

Private schools average more LMC hours open and available for flexible scheduling than public schools. Private schools are open an average of 40 hours per week, compared to 31 hours for public schools. Average hours available for flexible scheduling are 29 for private schools and 20 for public schools.

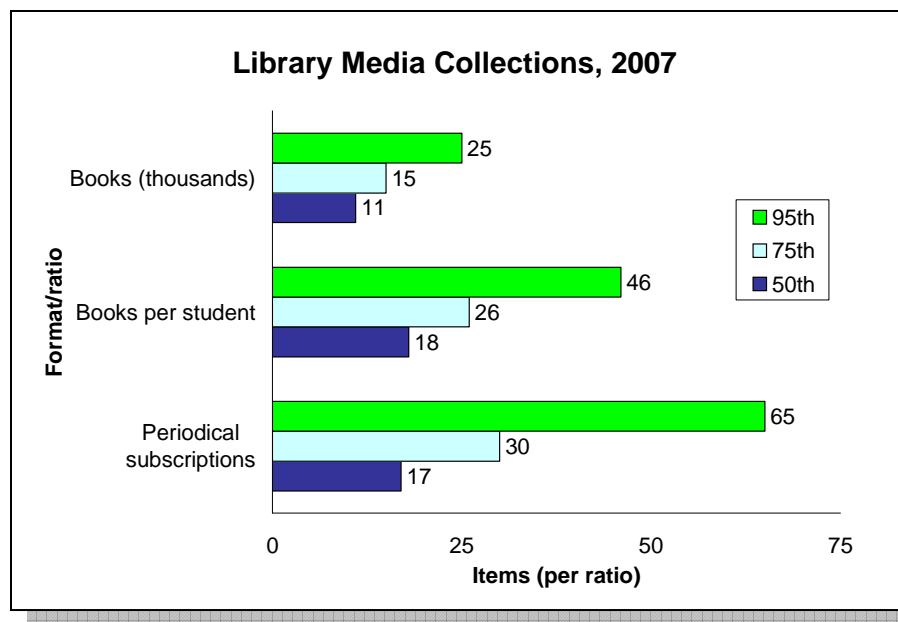
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LMC Collections

LMC collections include materials in a wide variety of formats; but, two of the most important ones remain books and periodicals. For that reason, we use them as general indicators of the size of LMC collections.

Half of responding schools reported collections of at least 11,500 books—or 18 volumes per student. The top quarter reported at least 15,000 volumes—or 26 per student—and the top five percent, at least 25,000 volumes—46 volumes per student.



Half of LMCs reported 17 print subscriptions to periodicals. The top quarter reported at least 30 subscriptions, and the top five percent, at least 65 subscriptions.

Several factors affect the size of LMC collections in participating schools:

School Level

Both book and periodical collections increase, while books per student decrease, with school level. Half of elementary and middle schools reported collections of at least 11,000 volumes, but half of high schools reported owning at least 14,000 volumes. These differences are even more exaggerated for the top five percent of each school level: at least 20,000 volumes for both elementary and middle schools, but almost 31,000 volumes for high schools. Conversely, half of elementary schools reported at least 22 books per student, compared with 16 and 12, respectively, for middle and high schools. Similarly, the top five percent of elementary schools reported at least 47 books per student, while middle and high schools reported 34 and 35, respectively.

Enrollment

Very predictably, the size of book and periodical collections tends to grow steadily with enrollment. Half of schools with enrollments of 2,000 and over reported almost 20,000 volumes and 31 subscriptions, while half of schools with enrollments under 300 reported about 7,000 volumes and 10 subscriptions. The gap is even wider for the top five percent of each enrollment range. Those with enrollments of 2,000 and over reported almost 37,000 volumes and 101 subscriptions, while those with enrollments under 300 reported 15,000 volumes and 43 subscriptions.

Region

While the West stood out as least well-staffed region, regional differences regarding collections are more mixed. The Midwest and South report smaller average book collections—about 12,000 and about 12,500, respectively—while the Northeast and West report larger collections—over 14,000 and almost 13,500, respectively. On a per-student basis, however, the Midwest averages the

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largest book collections at more than 24 volumes per student. The Northeast and West average 22 books per student, while the South comes in last at 20 books per student.

Periodical collection size varies differently among regions. LMCs in the Northeast average 31 subscriptions, while those in the South average less than half as many (15). LMCs in the Midwest and South average 26 and 23 subscriptions, respectively.

High-Poverty Schools

Not surprisingly, schools with more poor students tend to have smaller book and periodical collections, but there is a twist. Compared with schools with fewer poor students, high-poverty schools average fewer total books (more than 14,000 versus less than 12,000) but more books per student (23 versus 20). As with total book collections, high-poverty schools average fewer subscriptions (18) than low-poverty schools (26).

Migrant Schools

The association of migrant status with collection size is mixed. Schools that serve migrant students average larger book collections than those without migrant students (approximately 13,400 versus 12,800, respectively). There is no significant difference in books per student or number of periodical subscriptions associated with migrant status.

Metropolitan Schools

Like migrant status, metropolitan status has a mixed relationship to collection size. LMCs in cities and suburbs average more than 13,600 volumes, compared with only about 12,000 volumes for LMCs in outlying towns and rural areas. Interestingly, non-metro areas also lead metro areas on books per student (26 versus 19). This seemingly contradictory finding probably indicates an economy of scale for metro area LMCs.

Public and Private Schools

Private schools consistently best public schools on collection size. Private schools average more than 16,200 volumes—34 per student—and 35 subscriptions, compared to about 12,800 volumes—21 per student—and 22 subscriptions for public schools.

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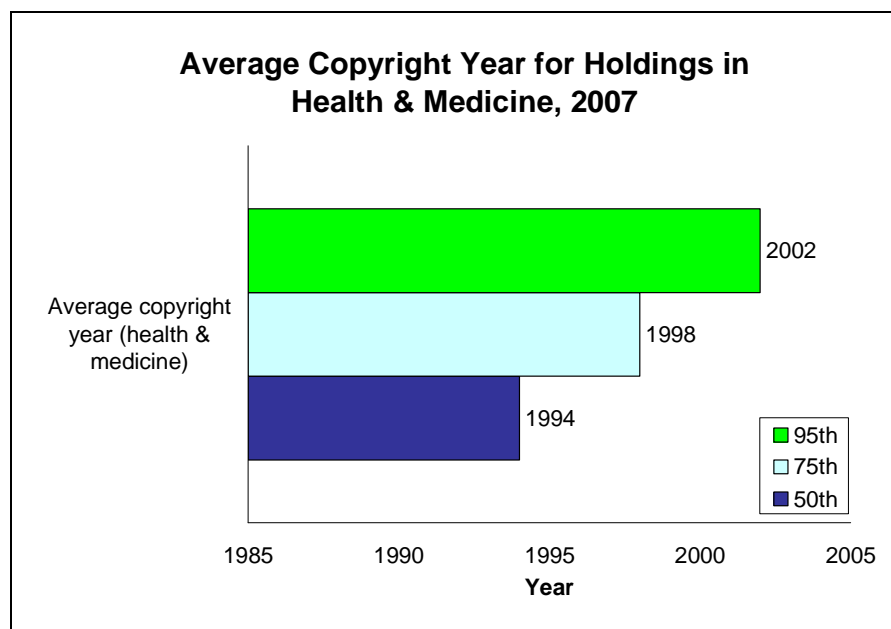
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Average Copyright

Half of responding schools reported average copyright years for health and medicine information of 1994. The top quarter reported average copyrights of 1998, and the top five percent, 2002.

From information published in 1994—13 years ago—a student would not learn about the first AIDS treatment approved by the FDA (in 1995), or the cloning of Dolly the sheep (in 1997).

From a book copyrighted 1998—nine years ago—a student would not learn about the first successful isolation of human stem cell lines (first reported in November 1998).



From a work with a 2002 copyright—five years ago—a student would not learn of the completion of the Human Genome Project (2005).

Several factors affect the age of library collections in participating schools:

School Level

Average health and medicine copyright years vary by grade level. Half of responding combined and high school LMCs reported average copyrights of 1993. For elementary and middle schools, half reported average dates of 1994 and 1995, respectively.

Enrollment

Seven hundred students was the enrollment breaking point for average copyright years. For schools with larger enrollments, the year was 1995; for those with fewer students, 1993 or 1994.

Region

Responding schools from the Northeast reported average health and medicine copyrights of 1991. Respondents from the Midwest, West, and South reported average dates of 1992, 1993, and 1994, respectively. From a book published in 1991, a student would not learn about the spike in prescription drug costs (three times the rate of inflation) that began that year, leading many Americans to have their prescriptions filled by Canadian pharmacies—and, eventually, to recent changes in Medicare prescription coverage.

High-Poverty Schools

High-poverty schools average health and medicine copyright years of 1992, while low-poverty schools average 1993.

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Migrant Schools

Likewise, average copyright year is not associated with a school's migrant status.

Metropolitan Schools

Schools in cities and suburbs average health and medicine copyright years of 1993, while those in outlying towns and rural areas average 1991.

Public and Private Schools

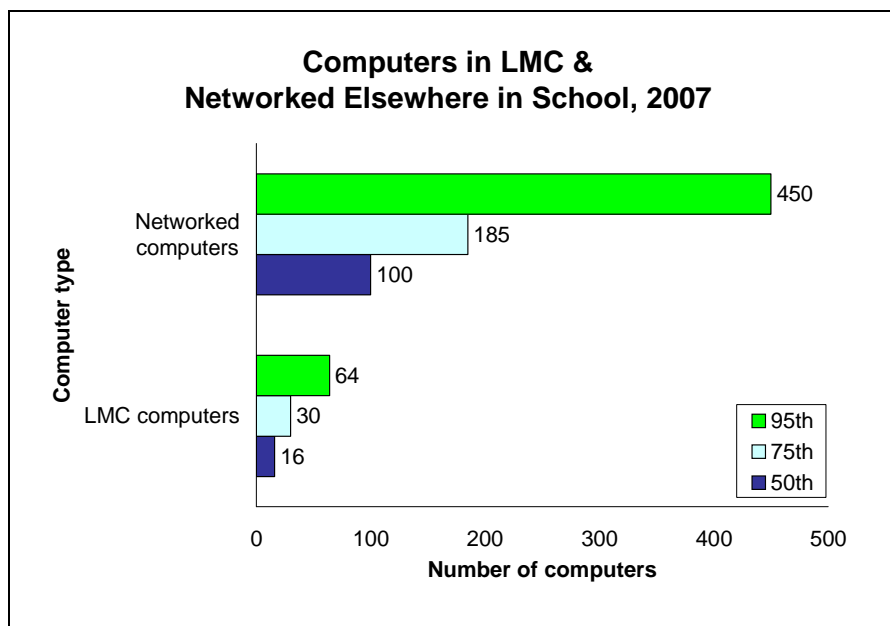
Whether a respondent is public or private school is not associated with this indicator of collection age.

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LMC & Networked Computers

Over the past decade or so, school library media programs have been revolutionized by technology. Internet-capable computers, both in the LMC and throughout the school, are networked together to provide access to library catalogs, licensed databases, and the vast information resources on the World Wide Web. These online resources extend the reach of the LM program beyond the LMC's walls into every classroom, lab, and office in the school. And, in many cases, remote access allows students and teachers to access these resources from home.



Half of responding schools report at least 16 computers in the LMC and at least another 100 elsewhere in the school. The top quarter of respondents have at least 30 LMC computers and another 185 elsewhere in the school, while the top five percent have at least 64 LMC computers and another 450 elsewhere in the school.

Several factors affect the availability of library and library-networked computers in a school:

School Level

The numbers of computers of both types tend to rise dramatically with grade level. Half of elementary LMCs have fewer than nine computers; half of middle school LMCs have at least 20, and half of high school LMCs have at least 32. Among the top five percent of each grade level, the differences are even more extreme: 34, 56, and 90 LMC computers, respectively, for elementary, middle, and high schools in that group.

Similar patterns exist for networked computers elsewhere in the school. Half of elementary schools report fewer than 72; half of middle schools report at least 117, and half of high schools, at least 159. Among the top five percent of each grade level, differences are more dramatic: 220, 400, and 700 computers, respectively, for elementary, middle, and high schools in that group.

Enrollment

Numbers of LMC and networked computers tend to increase steadily with enrollment. Half of the largest schools, those with 2,000 or more students, report at least 41 LMC computers and at least 300 networked computers. The top five percent of that enrollment range report at least 100 LMC computers and at least 1,000 networked computers. By contrast, half of the smallest schools, those with fewer than 300 students, report fewer than eight LMC computers and fewer than 41 networked ones. The top five percent of this enrollment range report at least 35 LMC computers and at least 142 networked ones.

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Region

LMCs in the Midwest average the highest number of LMC computers with 27, compared with 24 for the Northeast, and 21 for both the South and the West. Respondents in the South average the highest number of networked computers elsewhere in the school with 150, compared with 139 for the Midwest, 136 for the Northeast, and 122 for the West.

High-Poverty Schools

High-poverty schools average fewer computers of both types—19 LMC computers and 122 networked computers—than low-poverty schools—28 LMC computers and 161 networked ones.

Migrant Schools

A school's migrant status has no significant relationship to the prevalence of LMC and networked computers in the school.

Metropolitan Schools

Schools in cities and suburbs average more computers of both types—24 in the LMC, 153 elsewhere—than schools in outlying towns and rural areas—21 in the LMC, 113 elsewhere.

Public and Private Schools

There are no significant differences in computer availability between public and private schools.

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Remote Database Access

Online databases are becoming a ubiquitous feature of school library media programs. Less common is remote database access that enables students and teachers to utilize online resources from home or elsewhere. Approximately two-thirds of survey respondents reported offering remote access.

Several factors affect the availability of remote database access from a school.

School Level

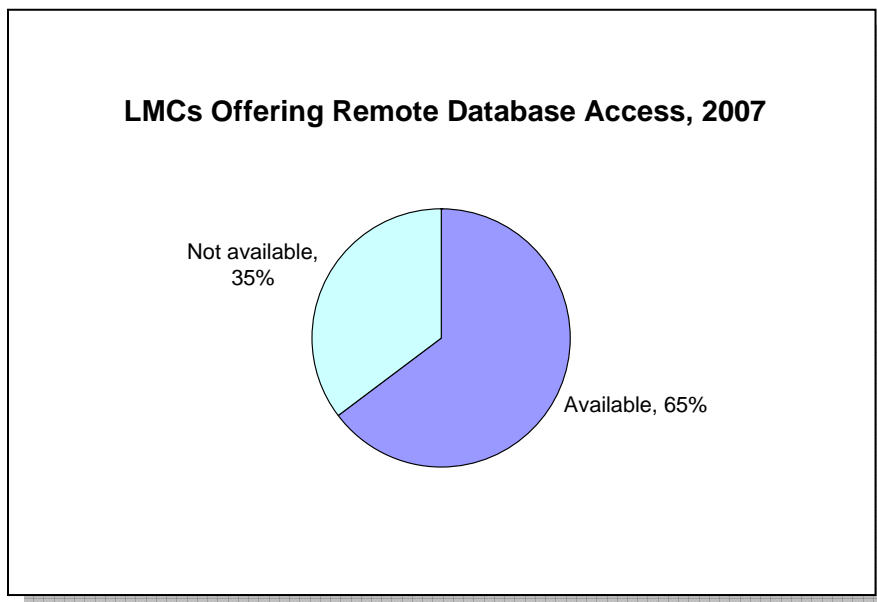
The availability of remote database access rises with grade level—52 percent of elementary schools, 70 percent of middle schools, and 81 percent of high schools. (Fifty-eight percent of combined schools provide such access.)

Enrollment

The larger a school's enrollment, the more likely it provides remote database access. Of schools with enrollments of 2,000 or more, eight out of ten provide it. Of those with 500 to 699 students, six out of ten provide it. And, of those with fewer than 300 students, only half provide it.

Region

Remote database access is more likely to be available in the Northeast and Midwest (seven out of ten) than the South and the West (six out of ten).



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High-Poverty Schools

Of responding low-poverty schools, seven out of ten provide remote database access, compared to fewer than three out of five high-poverty schools.

Migrant Schools

Availability of remote database access is not related to a school's migrant status.

Metropolitan Schools

Remote database access is available from seven out of ten schools in metropolitan areas (cities and suburbs) and six out of ten schools in non-metropolitan areas (towns, rural areas).

Public and Private Schools

Three out of four private schools and two out of three public schools provide remote database access.

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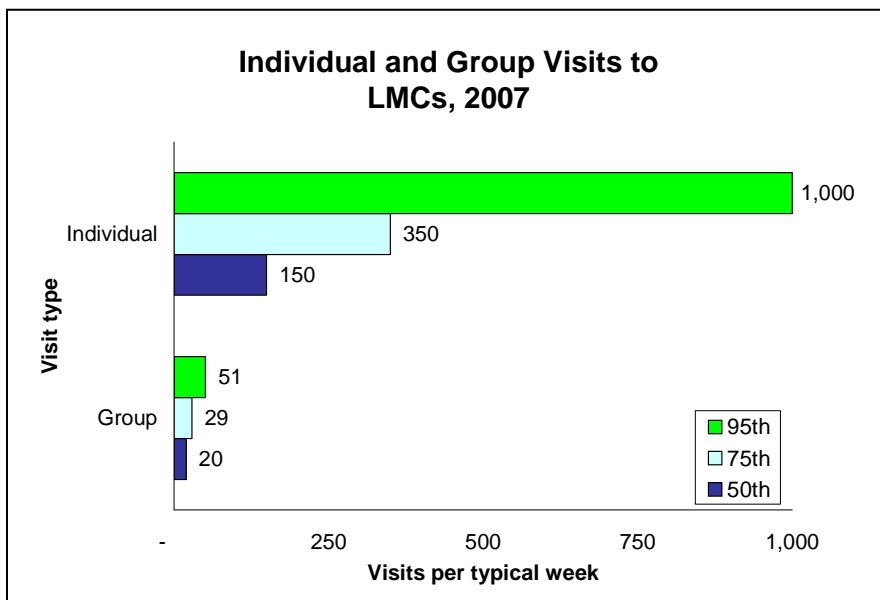
Individual & Group Visits to LMCs

Despite the ability to utilize LMC resources remotely via computer, visits to LMCs remain an important indicator of a library media program's activity.

Sometimes whole classes visit the LMC; at other times, smaller groups of students and, perhaps, a teacher or teacher's aide. Especially in schools with flexibly scheduled LMCs, individual visits result from specific assignments or other instructional needs.

Half of responding schools report that at least 20 classes or other groups and 150 individuals visit their LMCs during a typical week.

The top quarter of respondents report at least 29 group and at least 350 individual visits, and the top five percent, at least 51 group and at least 1,000 individual visits



Several factors affect the numbers of individual and group visits to an LMC:

School Level

Because elementary school LMCs are much less likely to be flexibly scheduled than their secondary counterparts, half of elementary respondents report fewer than 60 individual visits, but at least 23 group visits, during a typical week. At the same time, half of middle and high schools report at least 200 and 300 individual visits, respectively, but fewer than 20 group visits. The top five percent of high schools report by far the highest numbers of visits of both types—at least 75 group visits and 1,500 individual visits per week.

Enrollment

Unsurprisingly, individual LMC visits tend to rise steadily with enrollment; but, this factor has a far less dramatic impact on group visits. Half of responding schools with 2,000 or more students report at least 500 individual visits per week, and the top five percent of that group, a minimum of almost 1,800 such visits. By contrast, for all enrollment ranges above 300 students, half of respondents report 20 to 25 group visits per week, though half of those with fewer than 300 students report fewer than 12 such visits. Nonetheless, among the top five percent of each enrollment range, group visits tend to increase consistently with enrollment. Respondents in that group with enrollments of 2,000 or more students report at least 91 group visits per week, while those with fewer than 300 students report a minimum of only 30 such visits.

Region

There is no statistically significant relationship between LMC visits of either type and region of the nation.

School Libraries Count!

A National Survey of School Library Media Programs 2007

High-Poverty Schools

High-poverty schools average 236 individual visits per week, compared to 330 for low-poverty schools. Somewhat surprisingly, there is no significant difference between high- and low-poverty schools on group visits per week.

Migrant Schools

Similarly, the numbers of LMC visits of each type are not associated with a school's migrant status.

Metropolitan Schools

While there is no statistically significant relationship between individual LMC visits and metropolitan status, LMCs in cities and suburbs average 29 group visits per week, compared to 22 such visits for LMCs in outlying towns and rural areas.

Public and Private Schools

Like several other factors, a school's public-private status is not associated with numbers of LMC visits of either type.

School Libraries Count!

A National Survey of School Library Media Programs 2007

Library Media Expenditures

The budgets of most school library media programs cover expenditures on information resources (e.g., books, audio and video formats, periodical and database subscriptions) and operating costs. (Expenditures on salaries, wages, and employee benefits are part of the overall school or district payroll.)

Half of responding schools report spending at least \$7,000 annually—or \$11.24 per student—on their LM programs. The top quarter spend \$13,000—or \$18.52—and the top five percent, \$33,000—or \$44.49.

The per-student median, \$11.24, is about half the cost of a single work of fiction and about a third of the cost of a single non-fiction title. The 95th percentile, \$44.49, would cover the cost of a single non-fiction volume with less than \$8 to spare (\$36.86, according to the latest figures from *School Library Journal*).

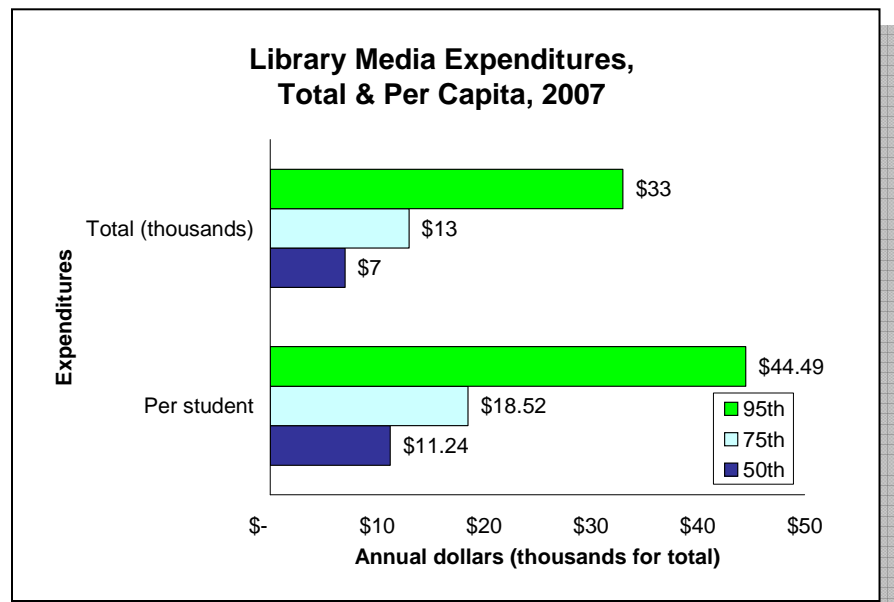
Several factors affect total and per-student spending on library media programs:

School Level

Proportionally, there are greater grade level gaps in total LM expenditures than in expenditures per student. Total expenditures tend to increase with school level. Half of elementary LMCs spend \$5,000 annually; half of middle schools, \$8,000; and half of high schools, \$11,000. But, median per-student spending is comparable from one grade level to the next, differing little more than a dollar, at most. Among the top five percent of respondents at each grade level, gaps in total spending are more pronounced—over \$17,000 for elementary schools, at least \$25,000 for middle schools, and at least \$48,000 for high schools. Among that same cohort, elementary and middle school spending per student is at least \$37, while, for high schools, it begins at more than \$44.

Enrollment

Predictably, total LM expenditures tend to rise steadily with enrollment, while per-student spending tends to decrease. Half of schools with 2,000 or more students spend at least \$20,000 annually, while half of those with fewer than 300 students spend less than \$3,200. Among the top five percent of each enrollment range, the differences are even more dramatic. Schools in that cohort with 2,000 or more students spend at least \$77,000, while spending for those with fewer than 300 students begins at \$15,000. Differences in median expenditures per student suggest an economy of scale for larger LMCs. For half of responding schools with 2,000 or more students, this figure is over \$7.75 per student, while for half of respondents with fewer than 300 students, it is more than \$16.00 per student. The top 95th percentiles for these two enrollment ranges further dramatize this point—more than \$30 and almost \$80 per student, respectively.



School Libraries Count!

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Region

Responding LMCs from the Northeast average the highest total and per-student expenditures at more than \$13,000 and almost \$20, respectively. Respondents from the West average the lowest figures in the same categories—less than \$10,000 and about \$12, respectively.

High-Poverty Schools

Compared with LMCs at low-poverty schools, those in high-poverty schools spend less, on average, both in total (almost \$12,000 versus about \$8,300, respectively) and per student (\$15.16 versus \$13.23).

Migrant Schools

There is no significant difference in total LM expenditures between migrant and non-migrant schools, but non-migrant schools average higher per-student spending than migrant schools--\$14.61 versus \$12.35, respectively.

Metropolitan Schools

Mirroring somewhat the association of enrollment with spending measures, schools in cities and suburbs spend more than their counterparts in outlying towns and suburbs in total (about \$11,000 versus about \$8,800, respectively), though not on a per-student basis (\$12.95 versus \$16.55).

Public and Private Schools

Unsurprisingly, private schools tend to spend more on their LM programs than public schools, both total and per-student. Private schools average almost \$20,500 annually—or more than \$40 per student—while public schools average less than \$11,000 annually—or less than \$15 per student.