



Building a School Library Collection Plan

A Beginning
Handbook with
Internet Assist

David V. Loertscher
Blanche Woolls
with an Internet Assist by
Janice Felker

Hi Willow Research and Publishing



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1999**

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• CONTENTS •

Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	4
Prelude: Assemble a Library Advisory Committee	6
Part One: Creating a Collection Development Plan	7
Step One: Analyze the Community	8
Community Analysis Statement Checklist	9
Step Two: Do a Curriculum Study	10
Sample Curriculum Study	11
Step Three: Study the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Collection	12
Sample Collection Size Comparison	14
Sample Copyright Age of Materials Analysis	15
Do a Copyright Age of Materials Analysis for Your School	16
Stop! You May Need to Weed the Collection Before You Proceed	17
Step Four: Create a Current Collection Map	18
Sample Current Collection Map	19
Step Five: Create a Proposed Collection Map	20
Sample Proposed Collection Map	21
Step Six: Match the Money to the Needs	22
Money Talk	23
Part Two: Implement the Collection Development Plan	24
Acquire Only the Best: Selection Criteria	25
Find and Use Good Review Sources and Bibliographies	26
Build a Consideration File	27
Select a Vendor/Purchase Source	28
Build Good Relations With the Business Office	29
Create an Order	30
Receive Materials and Pay Bills	31
Process/Install Materials	32
Automation Systems	33
Part Three: Making the Collection Work!	34
Making the Collection Accessible	35
Working with Teachers to Get the Materials Used	36
Information Literacy and the Collection	37
Maintenance of the Collection	38
Advertising the Collection	39
Intellectual Freedom Issues	40
Part Four: Evaluating the Success of the Plan	41
Evaluation Talk	42
Mini-Evaluation Studies You Can Do: Measure Collection Size and Quality	43
Mini-Evaluation Studies You Can Do: Judge the Impact of Amount Read	43
Mini-Evaluation Studies You Can Do: Make a Collaboration Log	44
Mini-Evaluation Studies You Can Do: Measure the Response of the Collection	46
Charting Trends Over Time	47
Reporting Back to Stake Holders	47
Index	48

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⊙ INTRODUCTION ⊙

The immediate stimulus for writing this book with its web assist page was the legislative grant of \$158 million to the schools of California to strengthen library collections. This money, approximately \$28 per student, comes after a 20-year history of neglect of school libraries caused originally by the passage of the famous Prop 13. The money also comes at a time when paraprofessionals are in charge of hundreds of school libraries in California but also at a time when new positions for professional librarians are opening up. The authors are also aware that there is a new wave of professionals entering the school library field all over the United States and beyond. We have tried to take into consideration the needs of these persons as they face the challenges of new jobs in an oft-confusing world of information and technology.

The purpose of this brief volume is to serve as a beginning guide to school library collection development. It may also serve as a review for the person with some experience because of its unique approach to the development of collections to match school curriculum. By providing an accompanying web page for the book, the authors are able to provide a great deal of information that would usually take up a large amount of print space and also would be outdated the minute it was in print. Thus, when you see in the text the following icon, access the web page for further information.



Web Assist Here!
<http://LMCsource.com>
click under "Free"

Remember that information on the web site will change and so it should be consulted for updated information as needed.

This book is based on the approach to collection development in the book: *Collection Mapping in the LMC: Building Access in a World of Technology* by David V. Loertscher, Hi Willow Research & Publishing, 1996 and available from LMC Source.

Designed to help everyone who is responsible for selecting school library collections, this book takes the broadest possible definition of library collection. The authors assume that the modern school library collection embraces everything that will improve teaching and learning in the library and classroom and even information to be transmitted to the students' and teachers' homes. Methods to choose the more traditional items, books, expands to include electronic resources.

The selection process described is a simple step-by-step procedure leading from Creating a Collection Plan through Evaluating the Success of the Plan.

Part one centers on creating a collection development plan and includes the process of analyzing the school community and the curriculum. A sample curriculum study provides an example to follow. Studying the strengths and weaknesses of the current collection includes doing a copyright age analysis of the materials to be used by patrons. Suggestions are given for weeding a collection before creating a collection map, a tool to match collection to curriculum. A sample collection map details the current collection. Instructions are given for creating a proposed collection map to draw input from teachers and students into the shaping of the library collection.

Implementing the collection development plan (Part Two) includes selection criteria, how to use good review sources and bibliographies, and creating a consideration file. Instructions are then given to help select vendors and purchase sources for materials. Building a good relationship with the school or district business office is given a high priority. How to create an order, receive materials, and pay bills is outlined followed by processing and installing the materials and equipment once they have been delivered and the invoices have been paid. A discussion of automation systems includes information to help decide if you should try to upgrade your current system or purchase a new system.

Part Three includes how to make the collection work to really support the curriculum. Sharing the best items in the library, on the shelves and online, and working with teachers to get these resources used is a part of collection development. The role of the librarian in information literacy is discussed as well as maintaining and advertising the collection. Intellectual freedom issues complete this section.

The last part includes assistance in evaluating the success of the collection plan. The surest way to see that adequate and consistent funding is given to the library for collection building is to collect the statistics that show the use made of the collection. Instructions on collecting baseline data so that increased use and support can be measured is described. Suggestions are given for the sharing of the collected data with stake holder groups who are or should be interested in a good library.

The authors appreciate feedback and suggestions for this work either directed to them at:

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Prelude

⊙ Assemble a Library Advisory Committee ⊙

Making the assumption that a single person in the library can build the kind of library collection that will support the curriculum of a school is beyond possibility. Even if it were possible, students and teachers in the school are likely to view such a collection as the librarian's property.

Individual teachers and students have unique teaching and learning styles requiring any successful collection to have a wide variety of information sources. Such a collection will not emerge unless those who have a "stake" in a rich information environment, the stakeholders, participate in the creation and constant enrichment of that collection.

Who might serve on an advisory committee? Who would provide the guidance needed?

- **Superintendents** whose vision includes the wise use of technology and information need to provide the leadership to see that materials and the accompanying technology take their place as rich resources leading to an end - excellence in teaching and learning.
- **Principals** as the instructional leaders of the school, participate not only to provide fiscal resources, but in a role to see that the educational initiatives of the school are supported by the library, the collection, and the technology that delivers the information.
- **Teachers and Teacher Leaders** in their classrooms and as heads of grade levels or departments are closest to the instructional process and the implementation of curriculum. They feel the pressure to deliver good education and often dream of having at their fingertips the right type of instructional material and the right technology application. They need to help choose appropriate materials to support their curriculum.
- **Librarians** are educated in the building of collections to match the curriculum, to choose technology to enhance instruction, to be the human interface between technology tools and their educational applications. They often feel lonely and weighed down with the responsibility to spend hundreds or thousands of dollars hoping that what they choose will get used and make a difference.
- **Students** don't have to use a library very often before they start to get a sense of whether the collection is helpful or irrelevant for their needs. Most will be quite vocal, if asked, about what a library needs to have if it is really going to serve their needs. They should be consulted.
- **Parents** want a good education for their children and most understand that the quality of the materials their children have access to is a factor in how much their children are learning. Some are afraid that the information contained in libraries may not match their ideals, but when given an opportunity to contribute advice, do.

Sample Advisory Committee Wilson Elementary School

At the Superintendent's encouragement, the principal at Wilson Elementary School appointed a library advisory committee consisting of the librarian, three department heads, two other teachers, three student representatives, and a representative from the PTA with the principal as an ex-officio member. As a part of the technology plan for the school, the principal invited the committee to prepare and implement a plan for building a collection made up materials, software, and instructional tools needed to create a solid information-rich environment in which students and teachers could flourish.

Part One

☉ Creating a Collection Development Plan ☉

Delivering

- the right information
- to the right person,
- at the right time,
- in the right place,
- in the right format,
- using the best technology delivery system

is the vision of the collection development plan.

Just 40 years ago, school libraries contained mostly books. Relatively few books were published that were suitable for children, and so the task of selecting materials to satisfy the needs of teachers and students was simpler compared to this time.

Now we are in the information age with print materials and a vast array of technologies and information distribution systems. These systems costing a typical school millions of dollars to build an information infrastructure in which effective teaching and learning can be facilitated.

Does such an information-rich environment enhance the education process? We presume it does. We hope it does. Research suggests it does.¹

Certainly, better education in an information-rich and technology-rich environment will not happen automatically. Millions of dollars can be wasted unless the right people plan at the right time and in the right way to develop a plan that will work.

Part One of this book provides an advisory committee the six critical steps for creating an effective plan to lay the foundation for a quality education.

Contents of this part:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| • Analyze the Community | p. 8 |
| • Do a Curriculum Study | p. 10 |
| • Study the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Collection | p. 12 |
| • Create a Current Collection Map | p. 18 |
| • Create a Proposed Collection Map | p. 20 |
| • Match the Money to the Needs | p. 22 |

¹ Lance, Keith Curry, Lynda Welborn and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement*. San Jose, CA: Hi Willow Research and Publishing, 1993.

Step One

☉ Analyze the Community ☉

Who? The library advisory committee.

Goal: To understand the audience that the library collection will serve.

What? Do a community analysis so that the entire advisory committee understands the clientele thoroughly (brief discussion; could be a research project) Write a brief statement answering the following questions:

Who is our potential audience for the LMC collection?

- Numbers of students and teachers.
- Socioeconomic status of the community and the families of students.
- Cultural backgrounds.
- Languages spoken and read.
- Academic achievement scores.

Who currently uses the collection?

- Regular users and why they are regulars.
- Occasional users and why they only use the collection occasionally.

Who doesn't use the collection and why not?

- Barriers to collection use: people, facilities, technology, at-risk factors, interests and needs not met.
- Problems to be solved include

Will the collection building plan be targeted toward all users?

- Theoretical goals.
- Realistic goals.
- Can and will everyone be served given our constraints?

Where will they use in the collection?

- In the library.
- In their classrooms.
- In their homes.

What will they use the collection?

- Materials only.
- Technology only.
- Both.

How will they use the collection?

- For recreational reading.
- For research papers.

When will they use the collection?

- Before and after school.
- With whole classes.
- In small groups.
- Individually.

☉ Community Analysis Statement Checklist ☉

For most school groups, the community analysis will take very little time to construct if the advisory group is very familiar with the community already. For inexperienced groups or where a new school has been formed or boundaries changed, the task is more difficult. Examine the following sample community analysis statement:

**Sample Community Analysis
Wilson Elementary School**

Wilson Elementary School is in a bedroom community of San Jose, California with mostly working class parents who have larger families than is typical of the city as a whole. The population is 45% Hispanic, 23% African American, 19% white, 10% Asian, and 3% other. Incomes average \$35,000 a year. The trend over the last five years has been in the increasing Hispanic population and in another five years, this group is expected to expand to at least 60% of the population. Academic achievement scores have hovered at about the 35th percentile when compared with other schools in California and much of the difficulty seems to stem from a large population of English learners. Through grants, the school has acquired a rather sophisticated technology infrastructure, but the materials and software in the library have been neglected to the point that the use of the technology as an effective tool is threatened. Most students have an opportunity to use the library weekly, but interest lags because there is such a poor selection of materials, and appeal to the variety of ethnic groups we have is decidedly lacking.

Write your own Community Analysis.

Did your community analysis:

- Describe the makeup of the current community?
- Note any changes in demographics such as a change in ethnicity?
- Note any trends in test scores? Subject areas where students are doing poorly?
- Describe both users and nonusers of the materials collection and technology?

Step Two

☉ Do a Curriculum Study ☉

Who? The library advisory committee with input from teachers and students.

Goal: To understand the major topical areas and curriculum needs to be served by the collection.

Objective: To identify those major topical areas that will receive enough funding to build strengths in the collection.

What are the major subjects and disciplines taught in this school?

Make a list.

Which of these major subjects would benefit from an information-rich environment?

Make a list.

Star those that will take precedence or prioritize the subjects having limited resources.

What major curricular initiatives, either old or new, will require information-rich or technological-rich environments?

Make a list.

Star those that will be high priority.

Which teachers or groups of teachers will need information-rich or technological-rich environments?

Make a list.

Star those that will be high priority.

What major projects or topics (by grade level) should be on a checklist to guide collection building?

Make a list.

Star those that will be high priority.

What recreational needs do students have that should be supported by the library collection?

Make a general topics list.

Star those that will be high priority.

What personal needs of students should be covered in the collection? (such as self-help, legal problems, family problems, grooming, etc.)

Make a general topics list

Star those that will be high priority.

Should the collection have professional resources for faculty? Resources for parents?

Make a general topics list.

Star those that will be high priority.

☉ Sample Curriculum Study ☉ (Elementary School)

After analysis of the curriculum and the needs of the student population, our school library advisory committee has prioritized the following curriculum topics for a two-year collection and technology focus:

Sample Curriculum Study Wilson Elementary School

The Reading Program

- A program to have every Kindergarten and first grader read at least 500 books each year with connections to the public library for summer reading.
- An infusion of technology into the lower grades to assist in phonics-building along with our current emphasis on reading good literature - the library to fund software and literature.
- Building expository readers by encouraging students to read much more nonfiction.
- Sustained silent reading (SSR) is to be reinvented with ample materials students want to read.
- Rotating classroom collections from the LMC to keep titles in the classrooms fresh for SSR.

The Science Program

- A newly adopted science textbook changes the topics previously studied:
(List of new topics by grade level.)

Curriculum Areas Needing Materials and Technology Support

- Three new integrated projects (lang. arts, social studies) at the 4th grade level.
- An experimental math computer simulations project at the 4-6 grade level.
- A renewed emphasis on successful science fairs at grades 5-6.
- Student-built portfolios on CD-ROM requiring both software and hardware.

Create your own curriculum study:

Step Three
☉ Study the Strengths and Weaknesses ☉
of the Current Collection

Who: The library staff.

Goal: To describe both the size, content, and quality of the current collection as a basis for determining the direction needed to support the curriculum.

Product: To create various charts, graphs, or data comparisons that will accurately describe for a non-librarian audience the condition, the direction, and trends of the collection over time.

What is the size of the LMC current collection?

- Hint: use estimates if precise figures are not available.
- Hint: tally by type of media.
- Compute numbers of materials owned by the library (books, videos, CDs, etc.).
- Include materials in other locations if appropriate.
- Create a graphic/chart/pictogram that is easily understood.

What is the trend in the size of the collection over time?

- Has it been increasing or decreasing over time?
- Show the growth of newer media or technologies (such as video and computers) and the demise of older technologies (such as filmstrips and 16mm film).
- Consider showing the effect of weeding on collection size.
- Do you have enough materials for the number of users in typical topical areas?
- Do you have materials to support new types of technologies available in the school?

What is the trend in the currency of the collection?

- Using some of the sample topics identified in step two, what is the average copyright or production date of various types of media?
- What is the current state of weeding to keep the collection current?
- What is the state of computer software and equipment considering upgrades available, current hardware available, etc.?
- What outdated technologies such as filmstrips and phonograph records are still warehoused but little used?

What is the condition of the current collection?

- Describe the condition of various segments of the collection as a result of use, abuse, non-use, or environmental factors.
- Are various segments of the collection attractive and inviting?
- Are software versions current and usable on the computers owned by the school?
- Are equipment and technology in good repair?

What is the quality of the current collection?

- Do the materials owned actually support the current curriculum of the school?
- Are the materials useful to the age, level, and sophistication of the current students?
- Are the available types of media those needed by the clientele?
- Are there materials available to satisfy the needs of the various cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the students?

How does the current collection compare with other schools, state and national standards?

- How does the size and quality of our collection compare to targets set by accreditation bodies, professional association standards, or state standards?²
- How does this collection compare to other local schools of its type?
- How does this collection compare to other schools with similar missions?

What impact has spending over time had on both the size and quality of the current collection?

- How has spending on technology affected acquisition of other types of materials?
- What is the spending for hardware vs. software?
- Considering inflation for various types of materials, what has happened to buying power over time?

Notes about your collection:



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² Find the state and national documents that best help you compare your library to some type of norm. The Miller/Shontz statistical articles in *School Library Journal* annually are helpful. The publication *Information Power*, 1988 edition published by the American Library Association had comparative figures. Some states have collection target sizes (for example, California recommends 20 up-to-date, relevant, enticing books per student as a minimum).

☉ Sample Collection Size Comparison ☉

Library Collection Size Comparison Wilson Elementary School			
	<u># of Items</u>	<u># of Students</u>	<u>Items per Student</u>
<u>Our Collection</u>	<u>4,256</u>	<u>625</u>	<u>6.80</u>
Comments: Old, outdated, ratty, uninteresting for the most part.			
<u>California Goal</u>	<u>12,500</u>	<u>625</u>	<u>20</u>
Comments: California recommends 20 up-to-date, relevant, enticing books.			
<u>National Goal</u>	<u>15,625</u>	<u>625</u>	<u>25</u>
Comments: Miller/Shontz exemplary high-tech school comparison, 1998.			

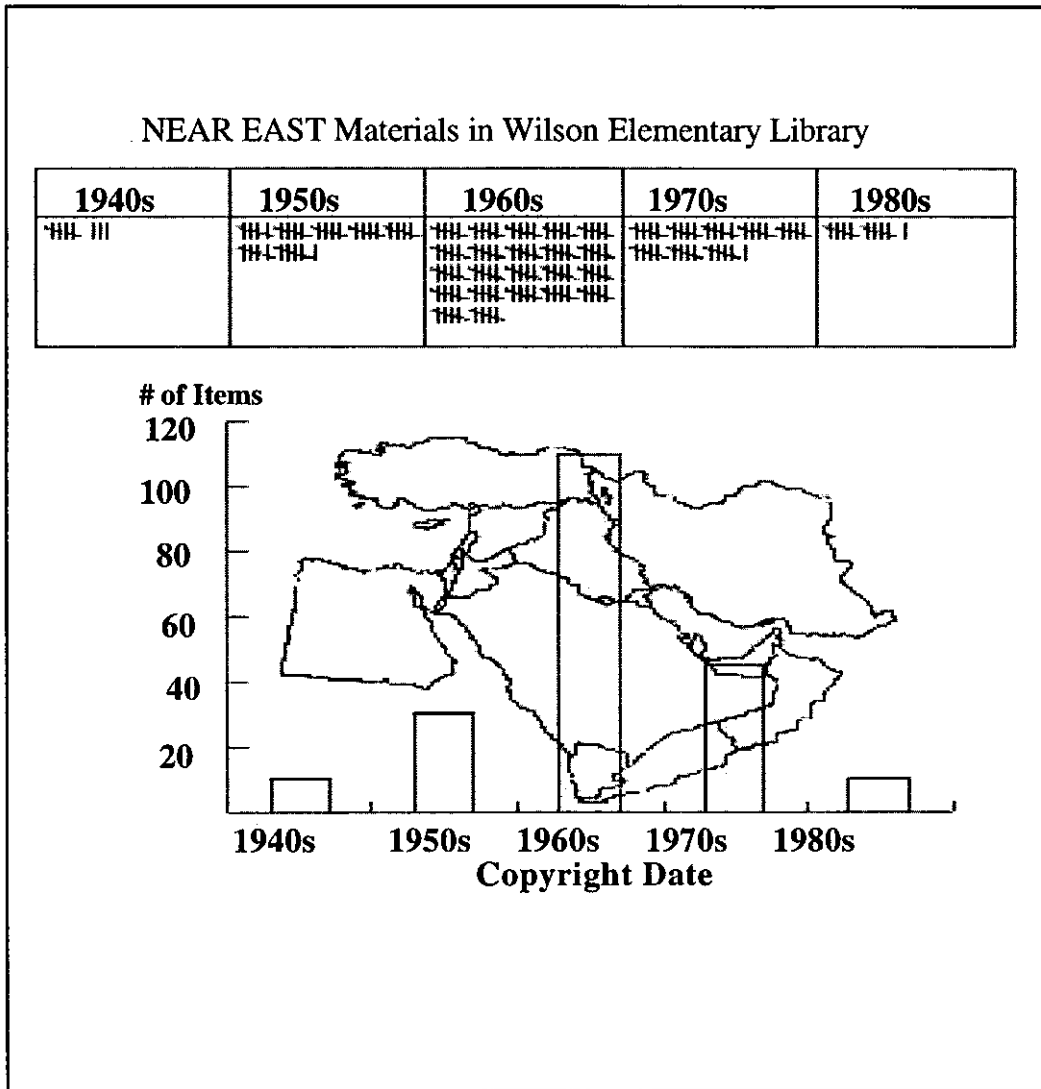
Notes for your school:

Library Collection Size Comparison School Name: _____

	<u># of Items</u>	<u># of Students</u>	<u>Items per Student</u>
<u>Our Collection</u>	_____	_____	_____
Comments:			
 <u>Goal</u>	_____	_____	_____
Comments:			
 <u>Goal</u>	_____	_____	_____
Comments:			

Sample Copyright Age of Materials Analysis

The following chart demonstrates the copyright dates of materials on the topic of the near east:



Activity: Complete your own copyright age of materials analysis graphics using the form on the next page.

☉ Do A Copyright Age of Materials ☉ Analysis for Your School

List 5 common topics that students do research about in the library. What is the average copyright date of the materials they would encounter?

Topic Title: _____ # of Items _____ Average copyright Date _____
Explanation:

Topic Title: _____ # of Items _____ Average copyright Date _____
Explanation:

Topic Title: _____ # of Items _____ Average copyright Date _____
Explanation:

Topic Title: _____ # of Items _____ Average copyright Date _____
Explanation:

Topic Title: _____ # of Items _____ Average copyright Date _____
Explanation:

Conclusions: What are the strongest and weakest areas of your collection? (Note: You can make graphics like those on the previous page using Apple Works (Claris Works), Microsoft Word, or Excel computer packages.)

Strengths:

Improvements Needed:

Stop! You May Need to Weed the Collection Before You Proceed

Weeds in nature are simply plants in the wrong place. Likewise, materials in library collections may not be useful to the teachers or students. The collection may have so many outdated materials that students will never find the new items. They will be hidden among the old.

Automating a collection, applying for a collection renewal grant, and adopting a new curriculum are all good reasons to get rid of materials that no longer belong in the library collection or in collections in other locations in the school.

Here are a few tips for selecting candidates to leave the collection:

Rarely or never used. The item may be perfectly good, but has not been used in a long time and is not likely to be used even if attention is drawn to it.

Poor condition. Materials do wear out with use. Retire them. Perhaps students can clip any good pictures, then write new, more current text, making their report into a new book.

Lacking in relevance. Items that don't fit the curriculum and are not likely to be a part of any student interest are candidates for a new home.

Out of date. The copyright date doesn't have to be very old to totally negate the information in the material. However, copyright date is certainly indicative that the information is no more recent than the date of publication. Some material is valuable for its perspective from a certain time period. In these cases, the needs of the curriculum and the type of research students do help you decide whether to retain or discard. Don't consider shipping out-of-date materials to third-world countries. They probably have more current resources than you intend to ship to them!

Usability level. Perfectly good material can be above or below the level of the users of your school. A good opportunity to find the item a new home.

If teachers and administrators seem to object:

Store them in boxes in a back room and see if anyone notices. After five years and no one has requested them, call the fire marshal and see if they can be declared a fire hazard.



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Step Four

☉ Create a Current Collection Map ☉

Definition: A collection map is a graphical representation of the strengths and weaknesses of a library collection.

Its Audience: Decision makers, library advisory committee, school boards, parents.

Goal: To show visually to a non-librarian audience the strengths and weaknesses of the library collection.

Who: The library staff.

Method: Using the data collected in step three, create one or several visuals showing the state of the current collection. The visuals can be graphs, pictograms, words, pie charts, or any other visual that quickly communicates a message about the collection. Collection maps include both collection size and quality representations. Many word processors, databases, and spreadsheets will convert data instantly into charts. Programs such as Microsoft's PowerPoint can be used to make simple yet effective slides for presentation. Create messages that inform, alarm (if needed), congratulate (if deserved), summarize, examine trends, and/or look at various types of materials and technology. Be sure you can back up with facts and data the messages presented in the visuals.

Possible Representations:

- Show the size and quality of the core collection. (The general collection; materials that provide breadth; the core materials on hundreds of topics; the essential materials on many topics and in a wide variety of media)
- Show the size and quality of emphasis collections (in-depth collections built to serve a specific curricular topic, teacher, school initiative, or purpose)
- Materials to support a particular type of technology (videos, desktop publishing software, CD-ROMS)
- Genre materials used for a particular curricular purpose (beginning-to-read titles, quick picks for teens, data banks for science, clip art for publishing, large-print books for the visually impaired)

Possible Uses:

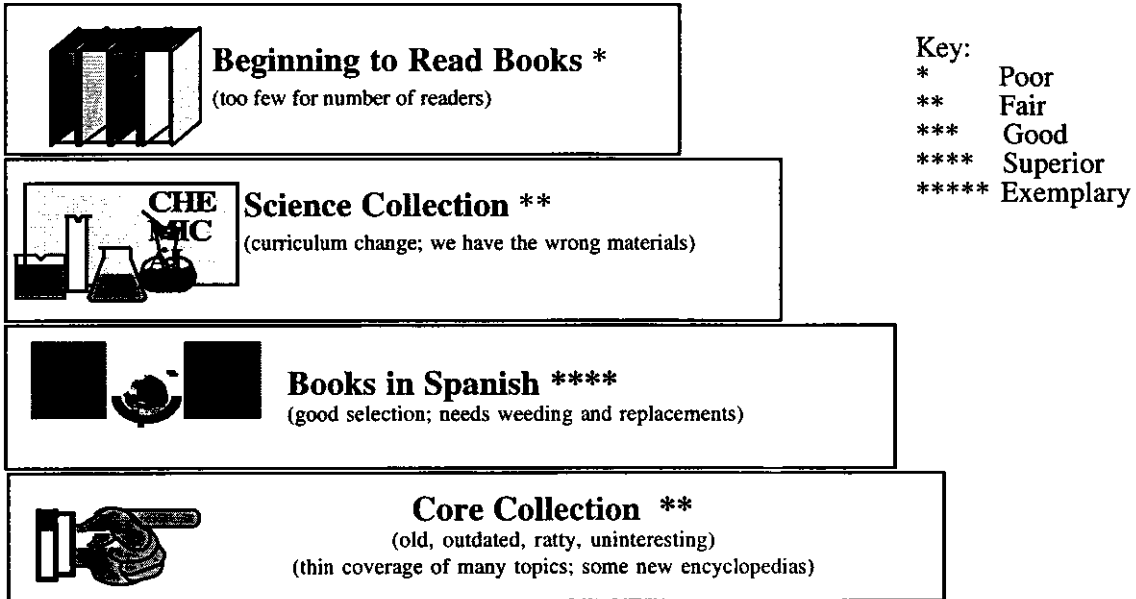
Show trends
Show needs
Show strengths
Point to embarrassments
Congratulate
Show progress
Show size and quality

Possible Audiences:

Boards
Students
Administrators
Decision makers
Teachers
Departments
Parent groups
Community stake holders

☉ Sample Current Collection Map ☉

Wilson Elementary School Collection Map



Rough drawing of your own collection map: (Use words, pictures, star ratings to indicate size and quality.)

Step Five

☉ Create a Proposed Collection Map ☉

Definition: A proposed collection map is a graphical representation of the direction a collection should move in the next year, three years, five years, etc.

Audience: Decision makers, library advisory committee, school boards, parents.

Goal: To create visual(s) that can be understood instantly by a non-librarian audience showing the direction a library collection should take .

Method: Create a second view showing collection targets and estimated costs.

Possible Representations:

- Show the size and quality of the core collection now and in the future.
- Show the projected size and quality of emphasis collections³ -with cost estimates.
- Show the materials needed to support a particular type of technology (videos, desktop publishing software, CD-ROMS, or online information products⁴).

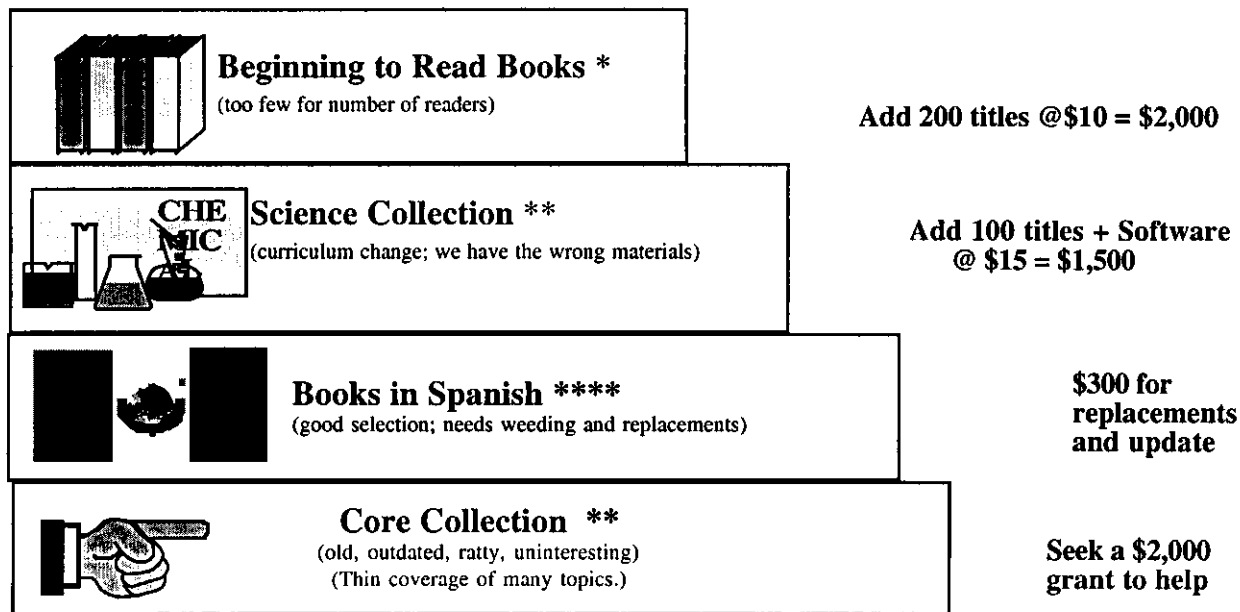
Possible Uses:

- Show audiences where we are and where we propose to be.
- Demonstrate the need for funding.
- Visualize as a part of a grant proposal.
- Demonstrate problems, trends, and possibilities.
- Engender support.

³ An emphasis collection is a group of materials that serve specific functions such as beginning-to-read books; materials to serve the astronomy unit of instruction; Civil War materials.

⁴ Information products such as SIRS, EBSCO, Electric Library, NewsBank, ProQuest Direct are examples of online information systems to be purchased and renewed each year. Many of these products serve multiple curricular areas and are Internet -based. Some can be accessed not only in the LMC, but in the classroom, and even from home.

Wilson Elementary School Proposed Collection Map



Other Proposed Collection segments:

- Paperback collection for SSR time \$800
- Mini grants for teachers doing special projects with the library staff \$500 (five \$100 grants)
- Materials with an African American focus \$500
- Basic Internet-based periodicals package \$1700

Step Six

☉ Match the Money to the Needs ☉

Who: The library advisory committee and decision makers.

Goal: To prioritize wants and needs to available funds.

Activity:

- Itemize available funds.
- Cost out proposed collection development costs matching the proposed collection map.
- Prioritize the requests to the available funds (separate needs from wants).
- Project the effects of money on outcomes (justification).
- Explore additional funding possibilities:
 - Extra local allocations
 - Governmental funding sources
 - Business partnership grants
 - Fund-raising tied to specific collection targets
- Make a budget that matches the proposed collection map such as the two examples below.

Sample Wilson Elementary School Budget

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Collection Segment</i>	<i>Proposed Amount</i>	<i>Proposed Source</i>	<i>Justification</i>
<i>One</i>	<i>Beginning to Read Books</i>	<i>\$2,000 first year</i>	<i>Regular District Funds</i>	<i>Best prediction of Reading Success</i>
<i>Two</i>	<i>Science Collection</i>	<i>\$1,500 first year</i>	<i>State Grant</i>	<i>New Textbook Adoption</i>
<i>Three</i>	<i>SSR Paperback Collection</i>	<i>\$800 half each year</i>	<i>PTA Grant</i>	<i>Rejuvenate SSR</i>
<i>Four</i>	<i>Internet-based Periodical Package</i>	<i>\$1700 first year</i>	<i>State Grant</i>	<i>All students benefit</i>

Other lines as needed.

A Second Example:

<i>Funding Amount</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Category # for P.O.</i>	<i>Must be Spent by:</i>	<i>May be Spent for</i>
<i>\$2,000</i>	<i>Local funding</i>	<i>232.10 account</i>	<i>March 15</i>	<i>Printed materials</i>
<i>\$2,000</i>	<i>State funding</i>	<i>736 account</i>	<i>Dec. 31</i>	<i>Software</i>

Create your own budget plan using a spreadsheet or word processor.

☉ Money Talk ☉

If you thought book libraries were expensive, high-tech libraries require much more care and attention. Everyone connected with the school has a stake in securing funds and maintaining high levels of spending to keep the collection and the technology viable for a sound learning environment. Here are a few sources to investigate:

School Boards Together with administrators, school boards formulate the vision, create policies and secure the funding to build a quality information and technology infrastructure for students and teachers.

School and District Funds. Nothing replaces a financial commitment at the local level. Principals and superintendents who fund materials and technology at reasonable levels send a message that information, technology, and their uses are important parts of the educational process.

State and Federal Funds. There are many opportunities in various governmental programs to apply for, write grants for, and participate with other institutions to get monies to support programmatic initiatives. Your district has someone watching for opportunities and someone to lead the grant writing effort to take advantage of these sources. School librarians are wise to seek and accept monies that support the local educational initiatives. Examples might include grants for technology to help children with special needs. This grant might include the purchase of professional books or periodicals for teachers who need information to help these young people. *You must have all grant writers keep the "library" in mind no matter what area of the school is being affected, but not to force a fit in a different direction.*

Funds Coming Directly to Departments and Teachers. If the understanding is that the minute you walk into the high-tech school, you have entered the "library," then all departments and teachers should understand and promote the information-rich environment. Everyone can add to that capability in their own rooms and departments as they have the total library collection development plan in mind. Informed teachers may add library items from departmental funds.

Business Partnerships. Many grants from business organizations are available to accomplish certain educational tasks. If there is a match in objectives, both organizations can benefit. There are costs, however, as children are exposed more and more to advertising as a part of the partnership. Educators should be wary of such cost/benefit relationships.

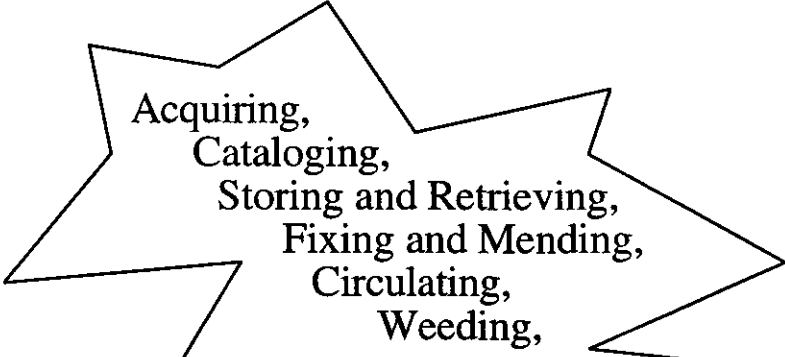
Fund Raising. Most schools do fund raising for numerous school-related projects. Many of these projects can center on increasing the resources and technology for the children in the school. The library is a wonderful place to center these efforts because materials and technology can be used by everyone in the school, or at least become a part of the information network that stretches to every corner of the school.

Book Fairs. Many parent groups and librarians conduct annual or semi-annual book fairs as a source of funds and to get more books in the hands of students. Ask around and compare the several companies in your area that provide the books for sale. Check the quality of the reading materials, the prices of the materials to students, and the amount of profit expected to be generated. It is usually helpful to have parent volunteers assist during the fair so that it causes the least disruption of education. Keep the reading program at the center of this effort.

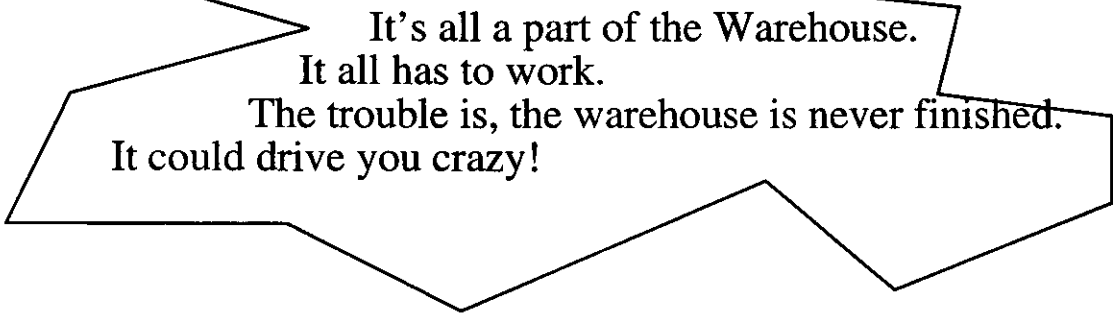
Birthday Books. One of the easiest ways to increase the book or software collection is to ask all students, parents, teachers, and administrators to see that each year a book or software package is donated to the library in their name. The library should display preselected new materials for buyers to select.

Part Two

☉ Implement the Collection Development Plan ☉



Acquiring,
Cataloging,
Storing and Retrieving,
Fixing and Mending,
Circulating,
Weeding,



It's all a part of the Warehouse.
It all has to work.
The trouble is, the warehouse is never finished.
It could drive you crazy!

Contents of this part:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| • Acquire Only the Best: Selection Criteria | p. 25 |
| • Find and Use Good Review Sources and Bibliographies | p. 26 |
| • Build a Consideration File | p. 27 |
| • Select Vendors/Purchase Source | p. 28 |
| • Build Good Relations with the Business Office | p. 29 |
| • Create an Order | p. 30 |
| • Receive Materials and Pay Bills | p. 31 |
| • Process/Install Materials | p. 32 |
| • Automation Systems | p. 33 |

☉ Acquire Only the Best: Selection Criteria ☉

Library shelves and electronic networks have no room for inaccurate, outdated materials, or misinformation. Selection criteria create benchmarks against which all information sources should be judged before being acquired. This rule applies whether the material is free or purchased.

Authenticity and Accuracy: Great care should be taken to ensure that the information found in any factual source can be substantiated. Because new knowledge is being discovered rapidly, much information in our collection is superseded on a regular basis and needs replacement. Even in the areas of point of view, political concepts, religious beliefs, ethnic cultures, and historical reports, accuracy over unsupported hearsay is required.

Relevance: Information and materials that target the school curriculum, age, and sophistication levels of the students are always to be preferred over just filling shelves or disk drives with “stuff.” A wonderful book about the Civil War too sophisticated for the readers in the school is not a wonderful book. Hundreds of thousands of Internet sites provide only data rather than essential information directly related to the needs of the user.

Content: Good content supporting the school’s curriculum is always preferred over other materials, particularly when funds are limited. While core collections must contain hundreds of topics, the collection as a whole is targeted for learning.

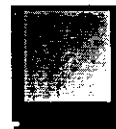
Usefulness: An item that helps real students doing real projects is appreciated and preferred to material that may be pretty, “glitzy,” esoteric, or critically acclaimed but don’t “pay their dues” when students need help.

Technical Qualities: Audiovisual items, digital materials, and online resources need to be designed and produced in such a way as to be informative and relevant to the school curriculum. Students will not get a sense of a time period, a foreign country, or a science concept if the technical quality is so poor that misunderstanding is the result.

Student Appeal: Materials that students have interest in are good candidates for consideration. These materials may be considered part of the popular culture but wise librarians start where students are and gently lead them to the better materials.

Appeal over Time: Data banks and online information services should have content over time that is easy to find, use, and satisfies user needs. Students will need both current and retrospective information. Full-text sources are to be preferred over just “listings” of possible articles.

Cost: The adage, “You get what you pay for,” has true implication in information resources. Buying remainders at the book sale may get you quantity, but they often lack quality and may not fit the curriculum. Purchasing a more expensive database may provide more resources than a lesser-priced product. Don’t be afraid to justify the high cost if you want the better product. Let your administration know what the more expensive product provides.



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⊙ Find and Use Good ⊙ Review Sources and Bibliographies

There are hundreds of bibliographies compiled by knowledgeable experts to help you sort through the maze of published materials. Set aside some of your budget to acquire the best of these bibliographies and scrutinize these lists before you automatically purchase what they recommend.

Helpful criteria for choosing a list:

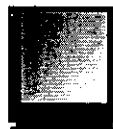
Basic Core Lists try to itemize the essential materials most libraries would want to acquire. An example is *Elementary School Library Collection* published by Brodart annually.

Professional Journals often review materials critically or only list an item if it is recommended. Look for library periodicals such as *School Library Journal* or *Booklist* as examples. Professional education journals in other curricular areas often have excellent review columns.

Topical Bibliographies are published in book form (check their currency), in list form, and are increasingly found on the web. Judge each bibliography for authority, currency, relevance for your school's curriculum, appropriate age level, and sophistication level before you automatically order from the list.

Publisher's Catalogs are often useful, but you will never find a bad review there! Watch out for old stuff being pawned off as new stuff. And those excerpts from reviews published in the catalog? They are excerpts. Beware of package deals with a few goodies mixed in with stuff they want to unload. Check publisher's web sites for helpful materials and their latest editions.

Jobbers often publish helpful lists targeted at schools and libraries. Try to find out the credentials of the persons who chose the list. A source such as Amazon.com on the web has many lists and reviews connected with titles you find.



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Build a Consideration File

A consideration file is a shoe box, a card file, or a database containing a list, notes, reviews or other information needed to order an item you *wish* were in the collection or you plan on buying. The collection development plan should provide you a list of areas in which to build the collection. Finding the best materials to purchase to fulfill the dreams of a quality library is a slow process. There is no magical source, no one publisher's catalog, no one vendor who will have just the right items to create a perfect collection even though the commercial vendors would have you think otherwise.

It would be nice to be able to preview every CD, book, or web site that you are considering to add to your collection. Unfortunately, none of us have that kind of time. So while you spend time previewing whatever you can (particularly expensive information sources), you will be taking "expert opinion" or published reviewer's word for whether a particular item belongs in your collection.

When you see a review, get a trusted bibliography, receive a teacher or student recommendation and you decide to acquire the item, add a description of the item to your consideration file until such time as you are ready to purchase the item for the collection.

Here are a few simple procedures:

- Consult local librarians who may have ideas for constructing consideration files.
- Prepare a storage mechanism for your consideration file (a shoe box, a card file, or a computer database). Create sections in that file to match the topics of the proposed collection map, such as "beginning-to-read," "African-American materials," "science collection," "materials in Spanish," etc.
- For each desired item, include the bibliographic data (title, author, publisher, date, etc.), the collection section (such as beginning-to-read), a priority rating (1 = will buy if I have lots of money; 5 = buy as soon as possible), and price.
- Include sources or vendor information on selected items if these items must be ordered directly from the source.
- When you order from a section of the file, delete from the file items once thought appropriate but have now lost their appeal for one reason or another.
- Have this file ready at all times to respond to spending requests. Example: The principal tells you that a \$500 grant is available if you can prepare an order over the weekend.
- When you start to prepare an order, select the materials from your consideration file, sort them by priority, decide what you will buy based on the amount of money you have, make out the purchase request, and refile the items you did not buy but still want.
- If you are using a computerized database to create a consideration file, much of the above can be done with power and precision. Many vendors accept orders directly from databases as long as you set up your files to be compatible with their systems.

Recommended Fields for a Consideration File Database:

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Year of Publication</i>	<i>Price</i>	<i>ISBN</i>
<i>Misc.</i>	<i>Who requested</i>	<i>Collection Segment</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>On order Y or N</i>	<i>Received Y or N</i>

☉ Select a Vendor / Purchase Source ☉

A wide array of sources are available from which to purchase materials. Smart librarians know their sources well, know who gives the best prices, and remember who stands behind their products. It is no different in the library world than in the real world of personal shopping where clever buyers recognize clever purchases. If you are new to the process, ask librarians with experience. They are great sources for inside information. Attending conventions and trade shows is another wonderful source of information, albeit a sales pitch. Personal representatives from companies will usually call on the school trying to net a sale. Publisher's catalogs will arrive at your door unannounced. And don't forget the Internet as a source for companies offering products.

When looking for reputable vendors, look for those who will:

- Give you good value for the price.
- Promptly fill your orders and report out of stock or out of print (unavailable) titles.
- Provide good invoicing and billing procedures that your business office can handle.
- Accept returns on unwanted items, incorrectly shipped items, damaged items, etc.
- Fulfill any warranty requests for repair or replacement.
- Give competitive discounts.
- Respond promptly and courteously to requests for help with problems encountered.
- Help you stay within budget on a group of items (Example: They will fill an order up to \$500 including shipping and handling).
- Supply cataloging information with the materials either in catalog card form or in MARC format for automated systems.
- Have the materials sent to you in shelf-ready condition (Example for books: A plastic jacket, call number, and bar code will already be attached; and cataloging information will be provided on a disk ready to enter into your system).

Ordering Direct. Some materials may have to be ordered directly from the publisher or supplier. Know which companies require direct order and their policies of purchase, billing and returns. They will have many of the same characteristics as vendors in the list above.

Rules of the Road:

- Know a good vendor when you encounter one (experience is a great teacher).
- Be a good customer.
- Make relationships with commercial entities a win-win situation.



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❁ Build Good Relations With the Business Office ❁

Create and build good relations with the business office, the purchasing manager, the ordering clerks, or the school secretary who handles the purchasing of your materials and equipment. All types of benefits accrue to those who create good will in an often frustrating task. One could even give the advice "It's not nice to fool with Mother Nature!" or the Business Office.

Ordering within school districts is usually dictated by the business office to meet the budget year of the district and that year usually coincides with the year of the state budget. If the year is from August 1st - July 31st, one cannot order materials from the next year's budget before Aug. 1. and all funds not expended by July 31st return to the state. Know any cutoff dates before the end of the actual fiscal year when no materials can be ordered.

Knowing when you can order, how long before the purchase year closes, and when all materials must be received and bills paid helps you understand how to approach the vendors from whom you are ordering. Further, you need to know the ordering process. For example, are you able to place orders frequently? Does the business office want you to do major orders two times a year rather than smaller purchases throughout the year? You should also know who authorizes purchase orders whether at the school or district office.

Recognizing that your budget is but a small part of the school district's financial efforts will help you understand and meet those requirements that seem, at times, arbitrary. Your business manager will be the person who can help find solutions to your problems.

Niceties if you can get them, include permission to:

- Order any time throughout the year and instantly to get "good deals."
- Target your orders to the sections of the collection you are building such as beginning-to-read, African American materials, etc., instead of having to mix them all together.
- Use open purchase orders with a local bookstore so you can go often to pick up a few emergency items desperately needed.
- Use a school credit card for ordering directly to some suppliers or at conventions.
- Understand the way to be reimbursed for items you buy personally.
- Use open purchase orders you can take to a convention or trade show.
- Have your order ready to go before the fiscal year ends, asking the vendor to "post-date" the order so that materials arrive when the school year begins.

☉ Create an Order ☉

Every district has a set of procedures to purchase materials, equipment, and to renew ongoing licenses for information products. You will need to follow their procedures and also be prepared to recommend streamlining those procedures to fit your needs in the library.

You can expect to encounter the following:

- **An ordering system** that is an official district order to a company for materials, equipment or services for which real monies have been allocated and committed.
- **A procedure** for submitting orders through channels from the school to the district and on to the supplier. (A principal or another district person may need to sign each order).
- **An audit system** to see that the right things were ordered from accepted companies who then billed the items correctly and were paid when the items were received and accepted.
- **A bidding procedure** if materials or equipment are expensive (as defined by the district or at the state level). Supposedly, this helps the district get quality items at the cheapest prices. If bids aren't well constructed you may get lesser quality items which, in the end, cost more.
- **A returns policy** that establishes ways to return materials or equipment that is unsatisfactory or in poor condition when it was received.
- **A system of handling complaints** to suppliers with whom problems develop.
- **A calendar for ordering** that will allow the district ample opportunity to order and receive the item before the purchase year has ended.

Once you know the procedures to follow:

- Prepare the order form (list, requisition, or purchase order) with the supplier's name and address and telephone number.
- Check to see that you have ordered using correct item numbers, model numbers, ISBN number, author, title, publisher, and edition so that you get the product you want.
- Send the order to the appropriate administrator for signature.
- Maintain a list of what you have ordered and the approximate cost so that you can keep a close estimate on what you have spent from your allocation.
- Confirm when the order should be expected to arrive.
- Mark a calendar with the anticipated date of arrival so you can check if materials are not delivered as specified.

❁ Receive Materials and Pay Bills ❁

In a perfect world, everything you order will come immediately after you have ordered it, in good condition, and will cost precisely what you planned on spending. In the real world, receiving materials from suppliers and getting them paid can be an easy task or a nightmare. Having someone at the site who has a sharp eye for errors, omissions, and “out of the ordinary” incidents really helps to make life in this maze livable.

Certain procedures will help streamline this part of the business end of the acquisitions program. Whether you do the tasks yourself or hopefully have someone who will do it for you, a constant eye for accuracy and quality is a must.

Take note of the following checklist and check with your purchasing manager, receiving department, and billing clericals to see how things are done. Do suggest ways to streamline the operations as you become acquainted.

- Locate your order (list, requisition, or purchase order) for the items you have received. (Note: Packing slips and invoices always have the purchase order number on them. Confirm this is your order and not someone else’s order even though it has your library address. Mistakes happen.
- Check carefully to see that the items that have been shipped match perfectly the items you have ordered. In some cases, a particular item may no longer be available just as you have ordered, such as an updated software program. If this is true, you must see if your system will accommodate the newer version before you accept it.
- Return the checked invoice or purchase order to the appropriate office for payment only *IF* all items are correctly shipped. If not, make note of the incorrect items and then return the invoice. Draft a letter to the company explaining the discrepancy and send to the business office explaining the problem. Business office staff may not understand the materials shipped to libraries and will appreciate your explanations of problems.
- Pay the bill as soon as possible. Vendors must meet their obligations and they will be less willing to help you if you do not pay your bills in a timely fashion.

Adjust your acquisitions account to reflect differences in your anticipated amount due.

Other hints:

- Don’t property stamp materials until you know they belong to you! Most companies will not take back a computer that has the school district ownership engraved on the front of the equipment.
- Vendors may report an item as “out of stock.” This means the item is not available at this time. You may wish to cancel any “out of stock” item if it is near the end of the purchase year. If not, it may be shipped and come out of your next year’s budget.
- Vendors list books as “out of print” which means it is no longer available for purchase.
- Damaged items should be noted and repackaged for return. You may wish to return an entire system if a part is damaged. It may be impossible to replace the damaged part before the system has been upgraded.
- Old editions of books or computer software should be returned if you have ordered the newer version. The older may not work on your new equipment.

☉ Process / Install Materials ☉

Materials ordered and delivered to the library must be processed for the shelves. Equipment and software will need to be installed and tested before it can be used by students and teachers. Here are a few suggestions. The procedures used previously in your library will be hints of how things have been done but not necessarily how they should be done. Colleagues in other libraries generally are glad to share what works in their libraries. Streamlining this part of acquisitions work will save you lots of time.

Preprocessed Items will come from the source almost ready for the shelves. You may need only affix or stamp on a property stamp, add a security strip, and add the cataloging data to the online public access catalog (OPAC) or file the cards in the card catalog. If you have the urge to redo the work you have already paid for, think twice. There will be errors to correct, but these should be few. If not, then your specifications to the company for processing is inaccurate or the company is doing sloppy work.

Items Needing Processing will come no matter whether you have a contract with jobbers to process your materials or not. Audiovisual materials, online products, and Internet site cataloging will have to be done by someone in your library. Invariably you think that all the easy cataloging has been done and the difficult items are left for you. You will need some tools to help:

- The Dewey Decimal Classification System—abridged version—from Forest Press
- *Sears List of Subject Headings* published by H.W. Wilson
- *More Easy MARC* by Scott Piepenburg (from LMC Source) if you are cataloging for an automation system.

Also:

- Supplies for processing such as book jackets, tape, labels from library supply companies.
- Supplies for storage such as CD display cases, and blank containers for protecting videos during circulation.

Library supply house catalogs such as Highsmith or Demco provide wonderful clues about how other libraries handle materials just by looking through the supply catalogs.

If you are having trouble cataloging an item, find one that is already processed on your shelf that is very similar. This will help you find an appropriate Dewey number and subject headings.

Classification and Subject Headings are important since they allow the patron to find and retrieve materials. In the online world, classification ceases to exist so the entire burden for location comes onto the subject headings that have been assigned. Be liberal in the number of subject headings you add to the collection. If you are a knowledgeable cataloger, catalog outstanding Internet sites on your OPAC. For commonly accessed databases, add subject cross references such as:

GLOBAL WARMING For opinion articles for an against this issue, search the NewsBank database under the heading GLOBAL WARMING CONTROVERSY.

If you are able to add clickable active links to online resources in the catalog, all the better.

Automation Systems

An automation system allows you to streamline warehouse operations in the library itself. They also provide access to materials and technology far beyond library walls. If you have yet to automate your system, you will need to decide

- Do I have enough equipment to do this? It takes more than a single computer!
- Which vendor and system should I choose?
- How do I get my collection on to the automated system?
- How much help will I have from the vendor to set up and maintain my system?

If you have few or non-compatible computers, you need to write an automation plan for your administrators.

- Develop a comprehensive automation plan before you make any commitments to a vendor.
- Fully disclose all related costs for the system. Administrators need to know what it takes, even if they must buy over one to three years. A low estimate will confuse them and you will need to return almost immediately for more money.

If you are ready to buy a new system:

- Listen carefully to vendor options. The better systems provide networking options into the classroom and on into the home. They will also use standard MARC records to be compatible with information systems all over the world.
- Try to see the system in operation in several school libraries. Your colleagues will have many tips for both successful choices and the avoidance of pitfalls.
- Ask other librarians which automated system they are using and what service they get from the vendor. A vendor that ships and slips away is too expensive no matter the price.
- Ask if vendors help with training staff, if they have a service contract, and for how long. You will need help in getting staff onto the new system and you will need help in keeping the hardware and software running. If they do not have almost 24 hour telephone service assistance, they may not be the vendor for you.
- Check ALA's *Library Technology Reports* for their analysis of hardware and software. These are the *Consumer Reports* for library equipment.

While not all libraries are automated, many of them are. If your library is automated, you have some questions to ask before you continue to use the present system.

- How old is the software? How fast is the software?
- How do you add to the program?
- Do you connect to any other systems?
- Are you on a single computer or do you have enough terminals for groups of students?
- Are you on the Internet so students can query the system from classroom and home?

If your automated system is old, slow, and your clerk must input each new item; if you stand alone and do not connect to any other system; if you are running on a single computer; if you have limited terminals; and if you aren't on the Internet, you need to *UPGRADE YOUR SYSTEM*. Don't be frustrated by an out-of-date system to drive onto the information superhighway.



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Part Three

☉ Making the Collection Work! ☉



Contents of this part:

- Making the Collection Accessible p. 35
- Working With Teachers to Get the Materials Used p. 36
- Information Literacy and the Collection p. 37
- Maintenance of the Collection p. 38
- Advertising the Collection p. 39
- Intellectual Freedom Issues p. 40

❁ Making the Collection Accessible ❁

The process of collection development results in a library full of wonderful items just waiting for students, teachers, and administrators to use. Creating policies, distribution systems, and access mechanisms to deliver information and materials when and where it is needed becomes the next challenge. Opening the library's information resources to potential users requires the following:

- Policies that encourage rather than discourage use.
- Distribution systems that expand rather than restrict use.
- Access mechanisms that record use and help justify expansion of programs.

Policies that Encourage Use:

- **Fewer rules mean fewer penalties which means less bookkeeping.** If you extend the loan period for everyone to one semester and use the "recall" system so popular in colleges and universities when an item that is out is requested by another person, you save a great deal of time now spent issuing overdue notices.
- **Encouraging reading means more books circulate making your library more important to the school.** The research says that the more students read, the better their reading skills. Limiting the number of books children choose is a problem rather than a pleasure.
- **Expand the hours the library is open to all students.** This need not extend your school day. It means that you work to allow students to come to the library when they need to come as well as when they may be assigned to come. If you have multiple staff members, staggered schedules will help open the library from very early morning to late afternoon. Rearrange the library so that more than one group can be in the library at one time. It may crowd things, but it will increase usage.

Distribution Systems that Expand Use:

- **Provide revolving classroom collections out of the library collection.** Students can be appointed to make selections for their classroom library from the main library collection. They might even be given the task of acting as classroom "librarian" for the period of time so that every student has an opportunity. Materials are first checked out of the library, then rechecked out of the classroom library using a simple system. Permanent classroom collections lack choice, size, and become stale. Help keep these collections fresh and interesting from the main library collection.
- **Purchase licenses that allow students in classrooms and off campus to access the library's databases.** Whole districts and contract for certain databases at cheaper prices. States are also beginning to license certain products for all.

Access Mechanisms that Record Use:

- Check with your circulation system provider for ways to count circulation.
- Check with your database system provider for ways to count use of the database.
- Use your circulation figures, access to databases, and other statistics to explain to administration how they have increased access to information in your school.

☉ Working With Teachers to Get the Materials Used ☉

Working together, librarians and teachers expand the use of library resources. This is accomplished through collaborative planning of units of instruction to:

- Enhance a unit of instruction that draws upon the library, its materials, and technology.
- Build collaborative partnerships with a few teachers first, then expand to everyone.
- Move across the curriculum to include teachers at all grade levels.
- Expand across the curriculum to include teachers in all subject disciplines.
- Include the entire school in an integrated experience involving all students and teachers.

Meet needs in individual classrooms.

- Work with individual teachers to help develop unit topics where all students will have materials they need to succeed.
- Analyze availability of resources required to complete assignments so that students can plan their own learning. A high sense of frustration is usually an adult problem, not a student one. Lack of planning for projects that can be successfully researched in the collection guarantee not only frustration but a host of other behavioral problems. The library gets a bad name fast when students rarely find what they need on the shelves or through the library networks.
- Plan and provide instruction together with the classroom teacher. This doubles the number of adults working with the students and makes the task much less difficult.
- Work to see that students can access networked information from the library, the classroom and their homes.

Move across the curriculum to include classrooms at the same grade level.

- Serve as the catalyst to get teachers to share in planning units of instruction that include the entire grade level.
- Stagger the times when groups of students will need the same materials so that there will be plenty for all.

Expand across the curriculum to include classrooms in other subject areas.

- Relate the instruction in one classroom to instruction in the second to help students transfer their learning from one classroom to the next.

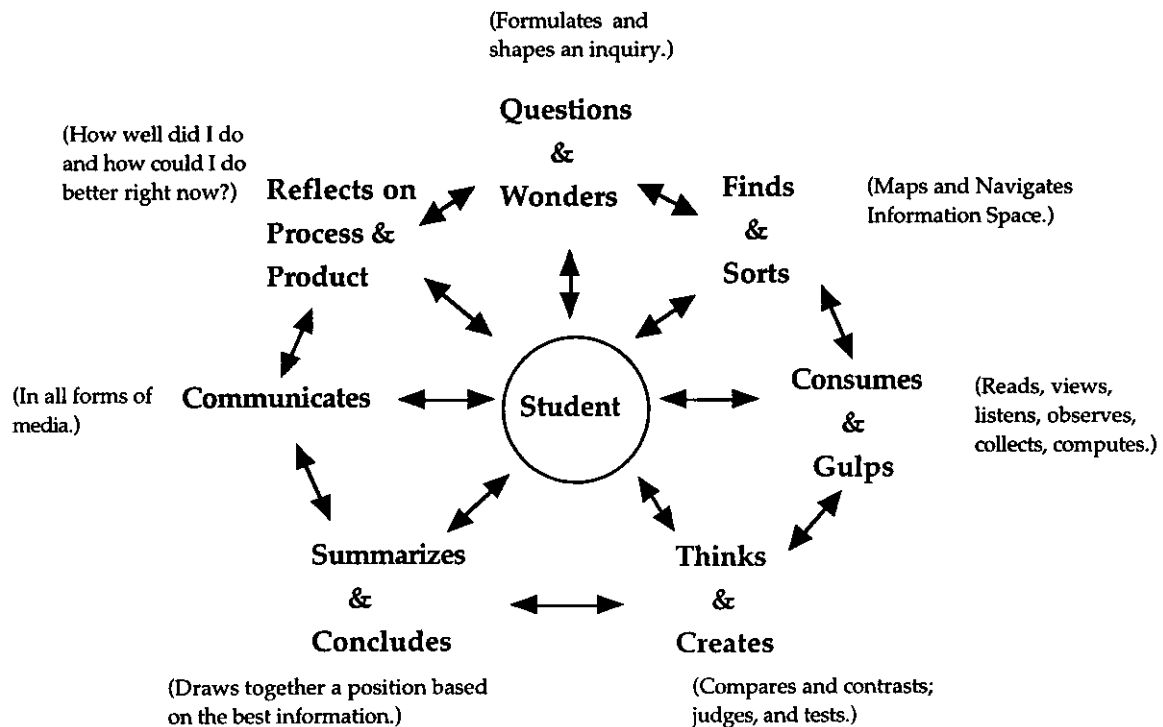
Include the entire school in an integrated experience including all students and all teachers.

- By involving the entire school, students and teachers create real world situations in which lifelong learning becomes a reality and a necessity.
- Share the research on educational innovation, student learning, critical thinking skills, collaborative planning so that teachers confirm their beliefs or acknowledge change. The librarian should be the information provider to teachers and administrators so that they remain aware of the trends and issues in education today.

Information Literacy and the Collection

As the information pool deepens for children and young adults, the prospect of information smog and information overload looms very quickly. In the past, library skills focused on information location skills - how to find a book when you knew the call number - how to find a magazine article by searching *The Reader's Guide*.

Today, school librarians are moving toward teaching information literacy, a term that means teaching the research process. A sample information literacy model is presented below. Here students are learning to become organized investigators.



When students are taught the research process shown in the model they must know much more than just how to find materials. Thus, given time to teach information literacy, librarians need to follow two cardinal rules:

Rules:

1. Teach generic skills, not specific ones.
Sample: Students compare three different dictionaries simultaneously for varying features.
2. Integrate all information skills.
Sample: Students studying manners compare word definitions for mannerly terms in the three dictionaries they are studying.



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☉ Maintenance of the Collection ☉

To see that all systems are up and running, all materials in serviceable order, keeping all pieces and parts to multiple-part items together requires more time than a single person has in a day. And for the most part, maintenance and repair is a technician's job, not a professional one.

It is easy to become the "fix-it genius" of the school. Just look helpful, drop everything else, get everyone's machinery running again, and keep your head full of trouble-shooting tips. You will be overwhelmed with requests. The problem is that nothing else will get done.

It was thought in the recent past that one person could handle the library. That has never been true, but it is particularly an egregious error in the age of information technology. Every library media center staff must have professionals at the helm, clerical assistance, and technical staff. There is no other solution if you wish to have students connected into the information age. Good technical assistance is hard to find. Some find that students attending vocational institutions can successfully work at a school part time. Others recognize the true situation and hire a fully-qualified technician at each school site. For repair of materials, many schools have a system of student and parent volunteers who learn how to keep materials in good condition.

Here are just a few suggestions:

Repair only items that are worth retaining. It is wasted effort and supplies to repair a book that should be discarded.

Book repair techniques can be learned from library supply houses that sell repair supplies. Most have booklets and even videos to help learn more difficult techniques. A rule of thumb is that if it takes more than 30 minutes to repair a book, it should be sent to a professional bindery.

Repair supplies should be ordered from reputable supply houses so that the right repair materials are used. Books mended with the wrong kind of tape destroys the pages rather than repairing them.

Contracts for equipment repair services are essential. The reliability and turn-around time of these services are critical to the operation of a successful library.

A sense of community is vital in the new information world. It only takes about 30 seconds to bring down an information network. An essential attitude toward technology by every student, teacher, school staff, and parent partners should be:

**You teach me,
I teach you,
We all teach each other, and,
We all help keep it running!**

❁ Advertising the Collection ❁

Promoting the collection expands use. Different tactics are used to reach your three different audiences: principals, teachers, and students.

Promoting the Collection to Administrators

- Use your collection to keep the principal informed of the latest in educational innovation, success stories from other areas of the country that might work in your school, and general trends. This permits the principal to be a leader during meetings with other administrators.
- Justify collection needs so that administrators not only understand the issues, but can use your justifications in their discussions with the superintendent and the school board.

Promoting the Collection to Teachers

- Provide professional development for teachers in the use of the collection, particularly when that use is new hardware and software products with which they are not familiar.
- Provide cookies and hot drinks in your workroom, so they can work in the library rather than carry materials to another location.
- Establish a volunteer collection of best sellers or novels in your workroom and let teachers take them to read and return.

Promoting the Collection to Students

- Bulletin boards are as well planned as any commercial signboards or students will not see them. Art classes might help develop these.
- Showcases feature items from the collection and highlight student products. A picture of the school band can share showcase space with CDs of band music, pictures and biographies of John Philip Sousa with the sheet music for *Stars and Stripes Forever*.
- Bibliographies of new items are created, posted in places students frequent, and placed on the school's web page.
- Students write book reviews for the school's newspaper.

Patrons who are successful users of ideas, information, and information technology will develop a success of advocacy about the library and what it does for them personally. Frustrated patrons do not hesitate to let their feelings be known. A library needs many friends and advocates over a long period of time to remain "at the heart of the school." Building long-term positive relationships is the best guarantee of a future in this profession.

☉ Intellectual Freedom Issues ☉

Every item in your collection has the potential to be questioned for there is no such thing as a noncontroversial book, video, or Internet site! How you handle the controversy depends upon your attention to detail before the controversy happens.

- Make sure you have a collection policy that includes procedures for anyone who wishes to question an item in your library.
- Be prepared to listen politely to the complaint should one occur.
- Allow the person to read and complete a complaint form.
- Notify your principal that someone is making or has made a complaint.
- Follow the process that has been outlined in your collection policy.
- If you really have made an error of judgment, rectify the problem and move on.
- Remain as calm as possible.

Should the situation become an issue beyond your school,

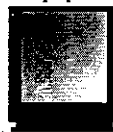
- Remain as calm as possible.
- Call in professional assistance such as the American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom or your state library professional association's Intellectual Freedom Committee if you feel isolated during this time.
- Find professional reviews of the item(s) in question as evidence of quality (if indeed, reviewers recommended that item for your type of library and its patrons.)
- Gather support from the local media. The First Amendment is especially important to them.

If you lose the battle this time

- Remove the item from the library shelves and store it for a better time when you might return it to the shelf.
- Remind your administrator of the Library Bill of Rights and that parents have a right to restrict what their own children read, but not the material other children read.

Much discussion surrounds student use of the Internet. Even Congress has discussed the need to filter the Internet for younger children. The problem is that a filter may not do what parents think it will. A few things you might do are:

- Have the best web sites bookmarked and instantly available when students are looking up materials. Busy researchers aren't looking for trouble.
- Have students and their parents sign an acceptable use policy card showing that the student understands that the Internet is to be used as an educational tool. If inappropriate sites are accessed, the student knows to get off them immediately.
- Have Internet station screens clearly visible to the open room so they can be easily monitored.
- Explain to parents and the community what each filtering product can and cannot do. Most parents after learning that it is impossible to keep students from pornography and violence on the Internet if they are determined to find it, agree that filtering is, at best, an ineffective answer.
- Suggest that parents should talk with children and have an understanding about how they should use the Internet. Many school librarians have an Internet driver's license signed by parent and child.
- Learn to trust young people as they use all forms of information and ideas, building their sense of critical judgment as they encounter ideas both popular and unpopular.



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Part Four

☉ Evaluate the Success of the Plan ☉

**A school library media center program that
contributes to academic achievement
is no accident.**

**It takes careful planning
to be convicted of
contributing to the education of a minor!**

Contents of this part:

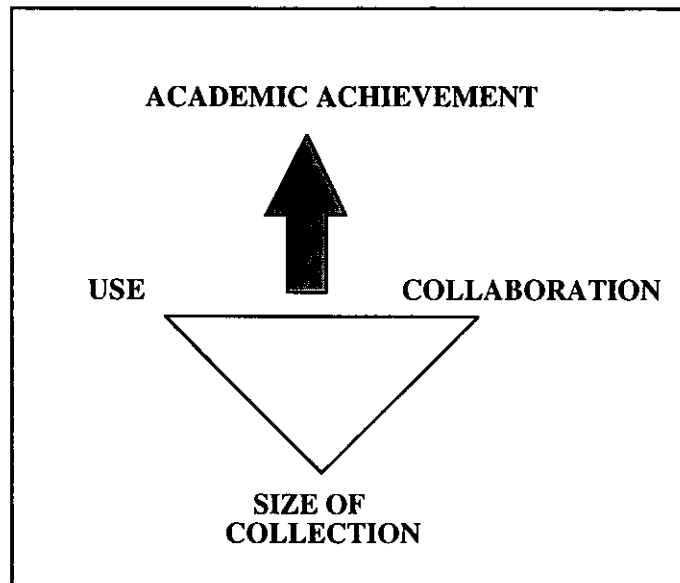
- Evaluation Talk p. 42
- Mini-Evaluation Studies You Can Do
 - Measure Collection Size and Quality p. 43
 - Judge the Impact of Amount Read p. 43
 - Make a Collaboration Log p. 44
 - Measure the Response of the Collection p. 46
- Charting Trends Over Time p. 47
- Reporting Back to Stake Holders p. 47

☉ Evaluation Talk ☉

Libraries are expensive. They always have been. They require steady funding. In this age of technology they cost even more. A nervous administrator and uninformed teachers may ask for an accounting of dollars spent and the contribution your collection is making in the education of students.

Major research studies give us several clues.

- Large school library collections correlate with student achievement.⁵
- Large school library collections correlate to how well students do on the NAEP scores (the nation's reading report card).⁶
- That students who read a lot do better in comprehension, spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and writing style.⁷
- That large collections and collaboration between teacher and librarian correlate with academic achievement.⁸



These studies demonstrate that school libraries and library collections do contribute to academic achievement, the bottom line these days. Results of studies tend not to be believed unless there is ample evidence at the local level to support this claim, and school librarians need to know how to collect similar data to match to other studies. Traditional measures such as circulation of materials and traffic through the library in a week indicate very little. However, both statistics are indicators since books on shelves and empty libraries contribute nothing to anyone. Thus, one could point to hefty circulation and crowded spaces as a first step, but only that.

⁵ Lance, Keith Curry, Lynda Welborn and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement*. San Jose, CA: Hi Willow Research and Publishing, 1993.

⁶ McQuillan, Jeff. *The Literacy Crisis: False Claims, Real Solutions*. Heinemann, 1998.

⁷ Krashen, Stephen. *The Power of Reading*. Libraries Unlimited, 1993.

⁸ Lance, op. cit.

• Mini-Evaluation Studies You Can Do • Measure Collection Size and Quality

Since research has established that size of library collection is correlated to academic achievement, any of the measures suggested on p. 12 and 13 of this book could be used to establish baseline data and then to chart progress over time.

It would be foolhardy, however to presume that size alone, no matter the quality would make the desired difference. It is not difficult to amass large amounts of materials since donations can be solicited from the community. Over the years, simple size standards have been both a blessing and a curse at the same time. To counter abuses, the California State Department of Education now advocates that each library contain at least 20 up-to-date, relevant, enticing books per student.

The measures suggested on p. 12 and 13 can be supplemented with a simple survey of students. Ask students to fill in a short questionnaire during "home room" or at the beginning of their visit to the library. Sample questions could include:

When I need books and materials from the library I find: (circle your answer)

- a. books and materials that are interesting Yes Sometimes No
- b. information that is up-to-date (current) Yes Sometimes No
- e. enough information to do my school work Yes Sometimes No
- f. books I really want to read Yes Sometimes No

What books or materials and equipment would you like the library to have?

If you complete such a study in the baseline year and each year during which you weed the collection and acquire many new items, you should see some movement in the attitude of users.

• Judge the Impact of Amount Read •

Since the research demonstrates that the amount read by students affects their reading comprehension, spelling, vocabulary, grammar and writing style, plus being an excellent predictor of the national NAEP scores, chart across time the impact of a major reading incentive push.

For any class, group, or even individual student, take a base measurement. This could be the scores of the 2nd grade class last year when the reading program was "normal."

Increase the amount read, for example, in the 3rd grade year *exponentially* (librarians, teachers, and parents work to achieve more reading over the year).

Measure the students again. They should have made more than one year of expected gains.

Warning: A simple one or two week reading incentive push will not be sufficient to notice an effect. The effect will be noticed if, for example, kindergartners and first graders read and/or are "read to" two library books every night in addition to what they read at school.

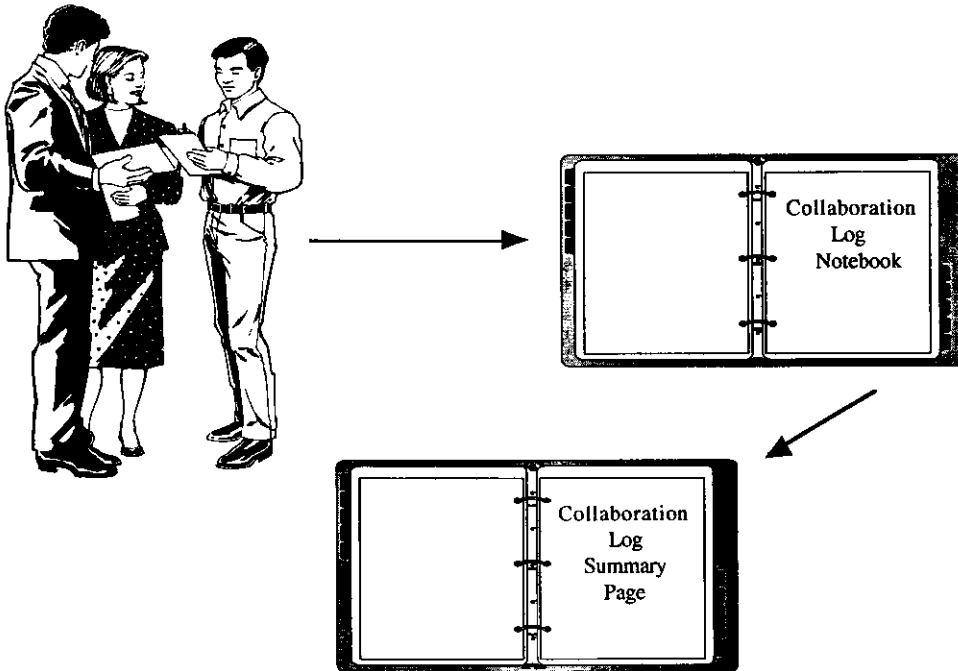
☉ Mini-Evaluation Studies You Can Do ☉ Make a Collaboration Log

Idea: Create a Collaboration Log.

Who: The librarian and classroom teacher teams.

Activity: Each time a major collaborative learning experience is jointly planned, executed, and evaluated by the librarian and classroom teachers, do the following:

- File **collaborative unit planning descriptions** in a three-ring notebook in a convenient place in the library and organized in some sensible fashion. Only fully developed collaborative activities should be recorded — not every interaction between the librarian and the teachers.
- As the **first page** in the notebook, a **collaboration log summary page** maps the collaborative activities and serves as an index to the whole. See the example on the next page
- The **collaboration log notebook** lists the major collaborative experiences throughout the year in all curricular areas and shows patterns of who is collaborating, what curricular areas benefit, and what items are missing from the collaborative effort (what's not on the log).



Sample Collaboration Log Summary Page - Wilson Elementary School

During the school year, the teachers and the library media specialist agreed that the following units were successful collaborations, i.e., the learning was enhanced because the two partners exploited the resources of the library—its resources and technology.

<i>Social Studies</i>	<i>LMS Time</i>	<i>#Students</i>
<i>Our Local Elections - grade 6</i>	<i>2.6 hours</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Family Trees - grades 3 and 4 (Albright and Faire)</i>	<i>3.6 hours</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Reading</i>		
<i>Newbery Novel Unit - grades 5 and 6 (Crane and Finch)</i>	<i>1.5 hours</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Science</i>		
<i>Environment of the School Grounds - entire school (Principal, LMS and Dwight, leaders)</i>	<i>15 hours</i>	<i>465</i>
<i>Simple Machines - grade 3 (Truett)</i>	<i>1.4 hours</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Nutrition - grades 5 and 6 (Handford and Zigler)</i>	<i>2.8 hours</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>Integrated Units</i>		
<i>Local Environmental Hazards - ss and sci. gr. 4 (Todd and Lark)</i>	<i>4.5 hours</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Labor Movements - ss and art grade 6 (Jones and Gregg)</i>	<i>3.7 hours</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Totals</i>	<i>35.1 hours</i>	<i>748</i>

Hints to create your own summary log:

- Create a summary chart similar to the one above that details collaborative units taught. Use a single sheet of paper for this summary page.
- Create a graphic that summarizes the above list.
- Enlarge the chart to poster size, use a transparency, or create a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation when reporting collaborative efforts to the faculty, administration, and the community.

☉ Mini-Evaluation Studies You Can Do ☉ Measure the Response of the Collection

At the conclusion of a collaborative experience recorded in the collaboration log described on the previous two pages, the librarian and the teacher should evaluate together (takes about 5 minutes) the response of the collection to unit needs. Use the following questionnaire or variation thereof and attach the result to each collaborative unit in the collaboration log. Over time, chart mean ratings across units. What trends do you see in various subject areas or grade levels?

Sample Questionnaire for Teachers and Librarians

How well did the library media center collection respond to the unit objectives?

Scale: 5 = excellent; 4 = above average; 3 = average; 2 = below average; 1 = poor

- _____ variety of media (books, audiovisual, electronic)
- _____ materials that are current (as required by the topic studied)
- _____ materials relevant to needs
- _____ materials that are durable and in good repair
- _____ enough materials for the number of students studying the unit
- _____ materials that span reading/viewing/listening levels of students
- _____ materials that span opinion/cultural/political issues if appropriate
- _____ materials that appeal to student interests

- _____ average of above ratings (to be charted or used on the collection map, p. 19)

*****	5.00-4.50	Exemplary
****	4.49-3.75	Superior
***	3.74-3.00	Good
**	2.99-2.50	Fair
*	below 2.50	Poor

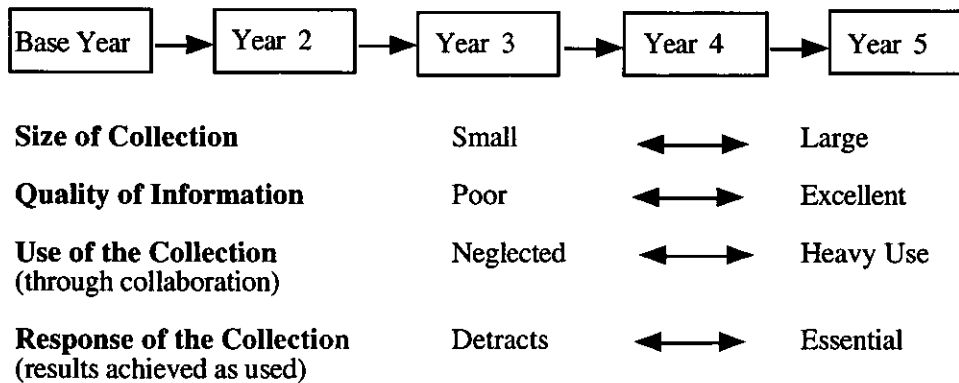
Survey Students

Modify the above questionnaire for students taking into consideration their maturity level and the topic/project done in the library. Administer the questionnaire at the end of the unit of study or project, then tally and attach the results to the unit in the collaboration log. Summarize student responses across units of instruction by topical areas or by grade levels. Have students help tally and interpret results as a mathematical exercise and research project.

☉ Charting Trends Over Time ☉

Noting trends over time is one of the best ways to communicate progress or the lack thereof to groups who do or should care. For example, Claudia Arguries in California did a report for her faculty showing the difference in the information pool a young person in her school experienced five years ago and what it was like now. The faculty were amazed at the marked increase both in information variety, amount, and the increase in technology over that short period of time.

Activity: Create a trend chart, graph, overhead, or report showing progress over time on any or all of the following topical areas:



☉ Reporting Back to Stake Holders ☉

Stake holders are the groups who stand to benefit from the success or failure of the library, its collection, and services. Representatives of these groups such as the school board, faculty advisory committees, PTA leaders, administrative councils, and legislative committees need to receive progress reports, particularly when major investments in the library and the technology infrastructure are made.

Groups who are kept abreast of trends, major events, and stumbling blocks, tend to speak up as the occasion arises. For example, in California, the California School Library Association has a Best Sellers program for community leaders. To be a Best Seller, you agree to speak positively about school libraries at appropriate times and places. Mayors, legislators, authors, corporate executives, and influential people who agree to become Best Sellers receive news about the progress of school libraries in the state through newsletters and a web page where they can get information about school libraries if they are preparing a talk or presentation.

Many librarians are invited or request audiences before school boards. Short, well-prepared presentations made not only by librarians, but by teams of librarians and teachers, librarians and students, or librarians and PTA leaders have a better chance of being heard and heeded.

Reports to groups over time build long-term advocacy rather than short-term public relations campaigns. Regular reports are needed in good times - not just in times of emergency or alarm. It is often too-little too-late to put together a presentation to halt an impending cut in library staffing or funding. Decision-makers who perceive the library as a program with a strong power base do not cut this program first.

☉ Index ☉

- Academic achievement, 42
- Accessibility of the collection, 35-36
- Acquisition, 30-31
- Administration, 39
- Advertising the collection, 39
- Age of collection analysis, 15-16
- Amount read - measuring the, 43
- Automation systems, 33

- Budget, 22-23
- Business office practice, 29
- Business partnerships, 23

- Cataloging, 32
- Censorship, 40
- Charting trends in the collection, 47
- Collaboration log, 44-45
- Collection development plan, 7, 12, 24
 - Size, 14
- Collection mapping, 4, 18-21
- Collections
 - Advertising the, 39
 - Age of, 15-16
 - Charting trends, 47
 - Evaluation of, 42-47
 - Implementation of collection development plans, 24-33
 - Maintenance of, 38
 - Mapping, 18-21
 - Ordering, 30
 - Planning for, 7-23
 - Quality, 12-13, 43
 - Response of, 46
 - Selection criteria, 25
 - Size 12-13, 43
 - Strengths and weaknesses, 12-13
 - Use of, 35-36
 - Weeding, 17
- Community analysis, 8-9
- Consideration file, 27
- Copyright age, 15
- Current collection map, 18-19
- Curriculum study, 10-11

- Evaluation of the collection, 42-47

- Fund raising, 23

- Information literacy, 37
- Information Power*, 13
- Installing materials, 32
- Intellectual Freedom, 40
- Internet, 40

- Library advisory committee, 6, 8, 10

- Maintenance of the collection, 39
- Mapping the collection, 18-21

- Ordering materials, 29-30

- Parents, 6
- Principals, 6
- Processing Materials, 32
- Proposed collection map, 20-21
- Public relations, 39, 47

- Quality of the collection, 12-13, 43

- Receiving materials, 31
- Repair of materials and equipment, 38
- Response of collections, 46
- Review sources, 26

- School boards, 23
- Selection criteria, 25
- Size of collection, 12-13, 43
- Superintendents, 6
- Stake holders, 6, 18, 47
- Students, 6, 39, 43, 46

- Teachers, 6, 39, 46

- Vendors, 28, 31

- Weeding, 17