INDEPENDENT SCHOOL LIBRARIES

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Independent School Libraries

Perspectives on Excellence

Dorcas Hand, Editor

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Harriet Selverstone, Series Editor

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Foreword

Pauline Anderson

"The tomorrows come and go so swiftly that it is not feasible to plan for only one tomorrow in the world of libraries; one must plan for a series of unknown tomorrows … new technological developments, new concepts of library services, new teaching methods, new curricular developments and revised purposes and goals of our schools will affect our libraries in one of the tomorrows." In 1980 I included those words in *The Library in the Independent School*, published by the National Association of Independent Schools. Three decades of those "tomorrows" have indeed brought changes, mostly technological, which have affected school libraries in dramatic ways.

Generations of librarians have faced new tools and technologies, from early telephones through computers. My generation welcomed copy machines, fax machines, microforms and their readers, film loops, TV, videocassettes, overhead projectors, early versions of computers, and relatively unsophisticated databases. Each new device became an effective tool for helping libraries accomplish their primary mission of functioning as intellectual forces within their schools. The attention of the media to computers tends to make this tool more important than any other ever invented, but in reality the computer is but one more logical tool to take its place in our highly mechanized society.

Despite dire predictions of pessimists that neither libraries nor printed pages would survive, both survive and flourish. Traditional services and programs exist, but the methods of delivery have changed radically. New technologies have caused some services and programs to be redefined even as new ones were being created. New issues such as filtering, gaming, and maintaining intellectual integrity had to be addressed; library infrastructures remained in place but became attuned to the new technologies.

Keeping abreast of changing terminology has been almost as quirky as keeping up with new technologies. Occasionally one had freedom of choice, such as deciding to remain a librarian rather than becoming a library media specialist, or choosing to reign over a library rather than a library media center. Terms such as "AV" became obsolete, and Amazon was no longer just a romantic river. Google acquired a life of its own and is no longer associated with the Barney Google of comic strip fame. The purposes of some interesting developments are lost in what appears to be a new version of "Jabberwocky." What might Lewis Carroll have made of the Lexis-Nexis Due Diligence Dashboard? (http://corporate.lexisnexis.com/Cms_managed_files/documents/DDD_Procure.pdf). The practices of communication and library promotion have merged into "advocacy," and navigating one's way through changing terminology has become a tricky art.

Librarians in independent schools have long been a close-knit group, drawn together by the freedom to develop resources, programs, services, and facilities to meet the needs of parent institutions in the absence of a far-flung bureaucracy. Many avenues of communication—informal and formal—are available. Group sharing through informal, local organizations and one-on-one contacts is supplemented by formal groups such as the Association of Independent School Librarians (AISL) and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL). Independent school librarians have now banded together to

share talents, "ways and means" of administration, views of dynamic leadership, creativity, and problem solving in this book, *Independent School Libraries: Perspectives on Excellence*.

The tomorrows will continue to come and go swiftly, and each will bring new developments: physical, academic, literary, technological, mechanical, and linguistic. Librarians will continue to adapt to new developments, new ways, and new thinking to support their mission to meet the needs of their users. As part of that process, readers can learn from the present and look into the future in the following essays by peer librarians of the independent school community. Independence of thought remains a hallmark of librarianship in the independent school world, and that independence will facilitate new paths to a traditional service ethic.

Pauline Anderson wrote The Library in the Independent School *(NAIS, 1968; second edition, 1980),* Library Media Leadership in Academic Secondary Schools *(Shoestring, 1985) and* Planning School Library Facilities *(Shoestring, 1990). The retired director of the Andrew Mellon Library at the Choate Rosemary Hall in Wallingford, Connecticut, Pauline is a founding member of both the Association of Independent School Librarians (AISL) and the Independent School Section (ISS) of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL). In her retirement, she continues to mentor independent school librarians and to volunteer her expertise to libraries in her home community. We who have written for this book are honored to follow her lead, offering here the first book on independent school libraries published in more than twenty years.*

Acknowledgments

It takes a village to make a book—well, to make this book. Many independent school librarians across the country took time to answer listserv and individual requests for information. Without their support, this book would not have the breadth of experience and examples it offers readers. Our independent school library community is strong and vibrant.

In particular, we thank Dianne Langlois for her inspirational class, "Libraries in the Age of Google," offered at the Taft Education Center in summer 2006, and for her ongoing support of this book effort.

Jen Cotton and Karen MacMeekin of Colorado Academy will work to set up and maintain the accompanying Web site.

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Harriet Selverstone and Sharon Coatney of Libraries Unlimited have patiently shepherded this book from the drawing board to completion.

And I thank my library staff and the administration of Annunciation Orthodox School (Houston, Texas), who encouraged my efforts at village leadership and writing.

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Introduction

Dorcas Hand, Editor

The word "essay" comes from the French verb *essayer*, to try. In the Middle Ages, students worked out their thoughts for professors in essays. In gathering these essays together, we have tried to collect useful and discerning thoughts on independent school libraries today and looking forward into the future. We have worked to break down the overarching concept of a library program into approachable elements that would allow us to reasonably present our understandings. However, library programs are vibrant because their various elements are entirely interrelated. The resources we buy depend on the school's mission and the curriculum we support, as well as on library staff time, knowledge, and budgetary constraints. Digital resources are only as accessible as available hardware and Internet access make them. The library's efforts to advocate for its students and program demonstrate success when the facility and materials are used by students. Development and institutional advancement support the budget and funding aspects of the library, and they use the excellence of the library as a demonstration to the outside world of the standards the school upholds for programs and student achievement. Every essay in this book relies directly on several other essays, and indirectly on all of them.

A group of independent school librarians, some of them among the authors of these essays, collaborated in the winter of 2008 to write what became the National Association of Independent Schools *NAIS Guidelines of Professional Practice for Librarians* (GPP). Several essays refer to these guidelines, which are included as appendix A. NAIS is an umbrella organization for accrediting agencies for many independent schools. That the GPP was the first posted to www.NAIS.org speaks to the determination of both the librarians who wrote the document and the organization that saw them as important; the posting also speaks to the need of the community of schools and librarians for guidelines that could strengthen their campus library programs.

The writing of these essays pushed each of us to reconsider our own current practices and to seek ideas from our colleagues across the country. Action research was alive and well as we sought examples to illustrate our points. The resulting conversations demonstrated the reasons we are such a strong professional community. Independent school librarians are simultaneously independent and collaborative, looking always to both our individual school missions and the broader world of school libraries, public and independent, for fresh perspectives on similar problems. We model our stated goal of "developing lifelong learners" as we consistently work to develop new solutions to ever-changing issues. We are living in the tomorrows to which Pauline Anderson refers in her foreword, and we are looking ahead to more decades of tomorrows and their anticipated changing demands on our libraries.

We offer this book to current independent school librarians who would like to reconsider their own policies and practices; to administrators who would like to better understand excellence in library service; and to new practitioners who aspire to become leaders in the community of independent school libraries. We recognize that many of the core principles here apply equally to all school libraries, whether in public or independent schools, and we hope these essays will be of some interest to the wider community as well.

We also offer a Web site that extends the content of the book, providing direct links to schools and information referred to in the essays: **http://www.lu.com/excellence.** Looking ahead from 2010, libraries will likely maintain book collections, but they will also support digital materials; this book does the same.

ESSAY I

The Librarian as Gardener

Liz Gray, Dana Hall School (Wellesley, MA)

> *Gardening and scholarship were not so different; both took long hours and single-mindedness, resiliency in the face of major setbacks, a gift for tedium and a flair for the marriage of the unusual. Both strained the eyes and the lower back and depended to some degree on fate, prejudice, perspective and the intuitive flash.*
>
> —Beverly Lowry, *Breaking Gentle*

A well-tended garden, no matter its shape or size, is a wonder to behold. With its clear design and unique personality, it is invariably a welcoming and sheltering space. The daughter of two accomplished English gardeners, I am cursed with a black thumb when it comes to tending anything imbued with chlorophyll. However, I do see many parallels between my role as a librarian in an independent school library and the crucial role of a gardener in making a garden grow and thrive. In the words of a librarian at an all-girls, K–12 day school in Virginia (and the wife of a landscape architect), "A good library is like a good garden: it has structure provided by a harmonious blend of evergreens (the basic print collection), perennials (those titles—both print and non-print and digital) that come back, updated and renewed, each year, and annuals (the hot new titles and trends). Plus, like a garden, a library provides solace and feeds both the soul and the mind" (Gray 2009). It is the daily care and feeding by committed librarians that cultivates a healthy library.

"A good library is like a good garden: it has structure provided by a harmonious blend of evergreens (the basic print collection), perennials (those titles—both print and non-print and digital) that come back, updated and renewed, each year, and annuals (the hot new titles and trends). Plus, like a garden, a library provides solace and feeds both the soul and the mind."

My mother told me that the elements of a successful garden are shape, perspective, discovery of vistas, skillful use of light and shade, and knowledge of plants (Gladstone 2009). Though futile to me as a gardener, this information serves me well as a librarian. In a library, shape means having a clear mission and a program and a facility that support it. Perspective is the knowledge of where one's library sits relative to standards, best practices, and the school community that

it serves. Discovery of vistas entails taking advantage of your school, your faculty, and your librarians' unique strengths. Skillful use of light and shade can be equated with establishing the correct balance of instruction and programming and finding the time to establish a strong infrastructure to support both. And finally, the all-important plants are the resources we collect over time, which will meet the needs of our users. To create this vibrant and thriving garden, the gardener/librarian must shape, fertilize, plant, water, and prune.

Shape

Shape is the consideration of the result to be achieved and has to take into account the way the light falls and the nature and quality of the soil. In a library, this translates into establishing goals and objectives, bearing in mind the students and faculty with whom one is working and the amount of time and money available to accomplish the goals. As in a garden, shaping must be repeated with every new cycle of the seasons.

The main challenges in creating one's desired shape in an independent school library are the exponential growth of information to be evaluated and the increased number of responsibilities required of the librarian. Like a gardener, a librarian is called upon to play a multiplicity of roles. In the library itself, there are the expected ones—teacher of information literacy skills, subject specialist, readers' advisor, department head and manager (if one is fortunate enough to have librarian colleagues); the ones learned through time and experience—facility manager, mediator, budget wizard, counselor to both children and adults, and archivist and/or school historian; the ones that in other environments are considered entirely separate careers—event planner, graphic designer, writer, Web page designer; and finally, ones that even those of us with active imaginations never dreamed of, like bathroom custodian. Then there are the nonlibrary roles, which include but are not limited to dance and weekend duty chaperone; dorm parent; yearbook and club advisor; car pool, playground, and lunch room monitor; committee member; trip coordinator; student and class advisor; exam proctor; hospital driver; AP coordinator; receptionist; textbook distributor; grade dean; study hall scheduler; and bus pass administrator.

Given this multiplicity of roles, the most important skill of all is the ability to juggle many balls, whether they be Web sites or job responsibilities. There are definite benefits to being a fully involved member of a school community, particularly a residential community, and as professionals, we enjoy helping people get what they need and often step up to the plate when asked to do so. However, one has to be wary of allowing the nonlibrary responsibilities to overshadow the library ones. Cultivating our library garden takes time, and its success depends on the judicious investment of our professional resources.

Cultivating our library garden takes time, and its success depends on the judicious investment of our professional resources.

In addition to the demands on our time delineated above, in many of our institutions we have to spend a great deal of our available time educating others about what we do and explaining how we add value to the curriculum. Our ability to do this is governed in part by our placement in the school's organizational structure. An unscientific online survey conducted in June 2009, to which 141 independent school librarians from twenty-five

states, Canada, China, and Morocco responded, revealed that although 76 percent of us are considered faculty, 7 percent are staff, 5 percent are administrators, and 11 percent are not classified in any of these categories. In addition, only 65 percent of those surveyed are considered department heads. This is in spite of the fact that, of the librarians surveyed, not only do 68 percent hold a master's in library science, but 17 percent also hold an additional advanced degree (Gray 2009).

As we set goals and work to achieve them each year, we also need to remember that "despite the gardener's best intentions, Nature will improvise" (Garofalo 2008). Sometimes these improvisations sidetrack us in negative ways and slow down our progress; at other times they deliver unexpected gifts that enrich our programs. One librarian in a K–12 coed day school in Rhode Island transformed her author visit program after a chance conversation with an art teacher led her to the realization that she could have an even greater impact with an author-illustrator program. And those of us who spend hours that we don't really have learning new technologies when they are first introduced often become the ones in our school who mentor others in the acquisition of these skills. Shaping the library garden is a continuous process that requires the librarian to be flexible and adaptable.

Fertilize

In "If I Were Beginning Again," Marion Cran (1995) says "if I wanted to have a happy garden, I must ally myself with my soil; study and help it to the utmost, untiringly. . . . Always, the soil must come first." Happy soil requires the gardener to dig in as much fertilizer as possible to get the earth in good heart prior to planting. In any flourishing school library, this requires the librarian to build a strong collection, create a welcoming and pleasing environment, establish ties to faculty and their curricula, and be an involved member of the school community.

"[I]f I wanted to have a happy garden, I must ally myself with my soil; study and help it to the utmost, untiringly. . . . Always, the soil must come first."

The extent to which independent school librarians become involved in the school community has been referenced above, but one area of involvement that bears expanding upon is committee membership. Much of the forward motion in an independent school—around curriculum, technology, and interdisciplinary work—is initiated and developed in committee work, and it is essential that librarians be a part of all these conversations. Participation in these committees is usually voluntary, but the value of being a part of the process cannot be overestimated.

Although later essays describe in greater detail the guiding principles of effective collection development, facility planning, and curricular collaboration, here are some examples of the many creative and unique things that independent school librarians do to prepare their soil: lead weekly book discussion groups, teach a knitting activity to ninth graders, sponsor community service trips, tutor reading and study skills after school, teach courses as varied as world mythology and AP Spanish, serve on the Honor Society committee, advocate for and manage a redesign of the library, administer Birthday Book programs and annual book fairs that supplement the library's acquisition budget, prepare summer reading lists, sponsor author visits, and participate in schoolwide curricular initiatives.

Plant

The successful gardener/librarian plants with a view to maintaining interest in the garden throughout the year: she teaches a variety of skills tied to specific curricular projects, changes displays and modifies the Web site and/or blog regularly, and keeps ahead of the curve on technological innovations. Maintaining interest in the library garden also involves engaging in a variety of advocacy and public relations activities and asserting the library's role in issues and initiatives like intellectual freedom, diversity, and sustainability that have schoolwide impact. In the words of a librarian at a coed, boarding, day high school in Michigan, "Advocacy involves making sure the administration and faculty know what the librarians do and what our present and future role is in this age of advanced technology and the Internet—through discussions, reports and any other means possible" (Gray 2009). Essay 6 expands on this point.

Gardeners are encouraged to always bear in mind the Line of Beauty, which, according to eighteenth-century artist William Hogarth, is an S-shaped curve. Such a curve signifies liveliness and activity and excites the attention of the viewer, as contrasted with straight lines, parallel lines, or right-angled intersecting lines, which signify stasis, death, or inanimate objects. In planting our libraries, this Line of Beauty can be interpreted not only literally, in the physical design of a space, but also figuratively, in creative ways of implementing programming, instruction, and even collection development. Sometimes doing the unexpected or planting a new variety results in the rejuvenation of the garden.

Water

"Gardening requires lots of water—most of it in the form of perspiration," says gardener Lou Erickson (Garofalo 2008). After the hard work of designing, fertilizing, and planting a garden comes the need for regular irrigation, which is essential to growth; without water most plants eventually wither and die. For the gardener/ librarian, this watering process includes building the collection steadily and continuously, talking with students and faculty every day and therefore staying in touch with their needs and concerns, making improvements and additions to the physical environment and to the ways in which information is communicated, and engaging in continuous professional development.

Professional development is especially important to school librarians, the majority of whom work alone or with one or two other colleagues. We do not function within a larger library community as our public and academic library colleagues do, and the faculty members whose curriculum we work to support sometimes have to be convinced of our value as teaching partners. In an independent school, we have the added challenge of working within an institution whose very existence depends on it defining itself as different from all others. Such a challenge can be a great opportunity, but it also serves as an additional isolating factor.

Independent school librarians have responded to their need for professional growth in four major ways: by participating in workshops and attending conferences side-by-side

with other teachers; by joining the same school library media associations as public school librarians; by participating in national, regional, and local independent school library associations; and by taking advantage of electronic education and networking opportunities. The sidebar lists some specific examples from the survey of recent professional development activities; more details on professional development resources can be in found in essay 4.

Recent Professional Development Activity

- Regional evaluation teams (e.g., NEASC, ISACS)
- Travel grant to Denmark to research the life of Hans Christian Andersen
- Spanish immersion program in Mexico
- Workshops on learning differences, International Baccalaureate (IB), critical thinking, library leadership, and advocacy
- Oxbridge Library and the Academy Seminar in England
- Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center writing workshops
- National Educational Computing Conference (NECC)
- Gerard Manley Hopkins Poetry Festival in Ireland
- Columbia University's Institute on the Teaching of Reading
- Simmons College's National Children's Literature Conference

Clearly, the choices for professional development for independent school librarians are many, and there is not enough time or money available to take advantage of them all. We owe it to ourselves and our gardens, however, to engage in as many of these opportunities as we can. In the words of Colin S. Diver, president of Reed College, "Teachers cannot educate others without constantly educating themselves"; the same holds true for school librarians. Even a modest investment in this area pays large dividends in keeping us current, improving our skills, introducing us to colleagues in librarianship and education, and helping us avoid becoming discouraged in difficult times.

"Teachers cannot educate others without constantly educating themselves."

Prune

The final and, in many ways the most important, step in creating a successful garden is pruning to maintain shape and balance, so that no one element dominates or takes precedence over another and unwanted plants (also known as weeds) are eradicated. In the library, pruning means weeding of resources; it also means evaluation, the constant examination of our collections, programs, facilities, instructional practices and, yes,

ourselves to confirm that we are fulfilling our mission and meeting our goals, to determine what is obsolete and how we can improve. Time and the daily grind have a way of derailing us from this essential element of the growth process; there always seem to be more important things to do, and often there is no one in our schools who is encouraging us in our endeavors.

Individual evaluation in particular is an area fraught with concern for many independent school librarians. Though we work in education, the professional training for our field is unfamiliar territory for most administrators, who are often not even sure how (or even if) to evaluate us. A librarian at a coed K–8 day school in Massachusetts expressed her frustration at the fact that "I am only evaluated on my teaching with students, which is only a portion of my job" (Gray 2009). In the survey, 88 percent of respondents indicated that they are evaluated as librarians, 65 percent as teachers, and 47 percent as department heads. However, only 42 percent are evaluated every year, and 40 percent are evaluated irregularly or not at all.

Clearly, though, evaluation matters to independent school librarians. "I would welcome more feedback on a regular basis from both the administration and from the teachers I collaborate with" (Gray 2009), says a librarian at an all-boys K–8 day school in New York City, echoing the sentiments of many of her colleagues. Overwhelmingly, respondents wished that they were evaluated not only frequently and consistently, but also for all of their professional responsibilities, not just the ones, such as classroom instruction, with which administrators feel comfortable. Sometimes this requires inviting peer librarians from other schools to be part of the evaluation process, and it also places responsibility on the librarian to communicate successes and concerns to administrators even if they haven't been solicited (see essay 7).

It is not surprising that so many independent school librarians remain at their libraries for long periods of time. Cultivating a library takes time, particularly if it was in disrepair when one started tilling the soil, and as professionals we enjoy savoring the fruits of our labors. Shaping the many and varied components of a library program over the years is immensely satisfying, especially when one's efforts are validated by comments from students such as, "I feel truly blessed to have such a wonderful library available for my use and would like to thank all the librarians for their hard work and dedication to our school and library" (Helen Temple Cooke Library 2009).

Shaping the many and varied components of a library program over the years is immensely satisfying.

Mirabel Osler (1998) was mistaken when she said, "There can be no other occupation like gardening in which, if you were to creep up behind someone at their work, you would find them smiling." As we fertilize, plant, water, and prune our library gardens, and despite our occasional complaints and concerns, independent school librarians are grinning from ear to ear.

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Visit http://lu.com/excellence for supporting links and occasional updates to all essays in this book.

Liz Gray has attended or worked at eight independent schools in Italy, England, Switzerland, and Massachusetts. She is now Library Director at Dana Hall School (www.danahall.org) in Wellesley, Massachusetts. She has also worked in a large public library, a small academic art library, and a bookstore warehouse. Her professional interests include library space planning, memoir, documentary film, art in libraries, and international education. On the rare occasions when she is not in library land, Liz is compiling a bibliography of women's memoirs, writing her own memoir, knitting, and organizing the contents of her home.

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ESSAY 2

Where We Fit In: The Library in the Life of the School

Carolyn Hilles, The Wheeler School (Providence, RI)

Maybe it's in a small set of rooms placed strategically behind glass in the main hallway of a busy suburban classroom building, with well-placed displays to attract passing middle school students and their teachers. Perhaps it's housed in an imposing brick building near the gate of a New England boarding school, scattered with students curled up with their laptops in leather chairs and bent over homework at oak tables lit with study lamps. Or it could be a sunny floor in an informal downtown Toronto day school where a librarian is reading to a circle of kindergartners, asking them questions about each picture before he turns the page. In Houston, a history teacher may be conferring with a student over a research paper draft, while a librarian across the room is showing others in the class how to navigate through the array of databases available on the school's Web site.

Libraries in independent schools are busy places, frequently referred to by school heads as the intellectual heart of the school, or as "the center of everything" by other members of the school community, including students. The library is a place for personal intellectual growth, an extension of the classroom for research and discovery, a computer center with tech-savvy staff available for help, a comfortable spot for relaxing, a study area, a place to collaborate, and an inviting space for holding events and programs. It is not only a symbolic representation of intellectual freedom at a school—a physical place where the right of individuals to read whatever they want is encouraged, promoted, and protected—but a central place to take questions about copyright law and practice and minor's rights.

Freedom to Think and Learn

Hours typically extend before and after the school day in independent school libraries, and in some cases, particularly in boarding schools, into weekends and summers. Often libraries become a home base in a school for parent volunteers and a prized location for formal and informal tutoring. The social role libraries play in upper schools in particular cannot be ignored, along with the time-honored fact that the library can be a place to be alone to catch up on work—or not.

Who Are We? Statistics

Independent school libraries come in all sorts of sizes and styles. Some are well-funded and staffed, some do as well as they can with less. The rhythm of the school day and academic year create patterns of activity and quiet unique to each library. All share the traditional mission of supporting curriculum, connecting learners with resources, and promoting the love and appreciation of reading by creating collections and service to guide readers to as many well-written books as they can. And all do much more. This book features essays that explore in depth the issues and best practices related to independent school librarianship.

A school's library accomplishes a complex set of roles within its institution, as the scope and content of this volume attest. Although an independent school's library parallels in many important respects any library in any school, the amazing variety of setting and approach represented by the independent school world means that no two of its libraries look, feel, or work the same. Each school and its librarians create a setting and program that fit the philosophy, budget, and age group served by the institution. As one leader in the field has said, "It's not hard to think outside of the box—because there is no box!"

In the same way independence characterizes independent schools, the libraries in these educational settings operate without the restrictions—or the benefits—of the state oversight, district support, and externally provided standards of their public school peers. This independence creates many challenges, but also allows for an exciting degree of freedom. Librarians in particular have been very successful at forming consortia and professional organizations at the local, regional, and national levels that help them connect with others to keep up with trends, share resources, and establish guidelines for best practices.

We Are Not Alone

Independent schools are small, not-for-profit businesses that must decide for themselves what their mission is and how to fund, staff, and promote their distinctive offering to parents and students. Accreditation comes from peer review in regional organizations, is mission-based, and includes an evaluative review of how well the library serves the overall vision of the school. The library also participates in the promotion of the school, through a vibrant Web presence and other activities that support development; essay 18 offers a deeper look at this topic.

Navel Gazing

On a very basic level, an independent school library is an organization within an organization, with all that entails—facility and technology to plan and maintain; hours to staff; staff to supervise and evaluate; a budget to plan for, present, and keep. Depending on the size of the school and the age group served, this organizational structure can range from a modest, colorfully decorated elementary school setting to a large boarding school library that may resemble a college facility. It's difficult to generalize about the independent school world. But whatever its size or type, each school makes a decision about how the library fits into its structure organizationally; how library staff members fit into its faculty, administrative, and staff structure and how to evaluate them; and what the library's relationship is to the technology department and media services program at the school. Libraries also carry out their own action research to determine how their facility, collection, and resources are being used and determine how to better serve the community.

The Bigger Picture
Advocacy Through Assessment
Don't Lose It All

What Does It Cost?
Balancing the Budget

Any school library is, by definition, a teaching environment. This may seem obvious, but school librarians often find that they need to explain the nature of their curriculum and instruction—what it is that they "do" with the students they serve. As teachers and sometimes advisors, librarians in schools establish relationships with students that sometimes span many years, particularly in multidivisional schools. Librarians often seek purchasing recommendations from students, and constantly learn from knowing and observing them as well. And, as in any library, there is an important public service component in the mission of a school library that extends beyond building student skills, helping them research, or providing them with traditional reading materials. The school's library is a direct resource for faculty, staff, parents, and others in the school community. When an administrator needs a booklist for a Parents' Night program, or a dean wants a set of articles available for teachers to prepare for an all-faculty program, she knows to ask the librarian. When librarians promote their services well enough, they find that not only do more teachers want to work with them on behalf of student learning, but more and more members of the school community come to them for personal recommendations and research help, and they are approached with increasing frequency by administrators to give presentations and teach the adults in the community as well as the students. They are also less likely to find that their budgets suffer in times when administrators need to look for places in the school's finances to make cuts.

To Collaborate or Not to Collaborate
Are They Ready for the Next Step?
Choices, Choices

The Many Faces of Advocacy

What Else Can We Do?

Events and special programs that extend beyond the basics of instruction usually punctuate and highlight the library's school year—speakers, contests, poetry slams, book groups, author readings, even art and music programs. The school's library provides leadership about the ever-changing world of information technology and how those changes need to be planned for and implemented in the library and schoolwide.

Faster Than a Speeding Bullet
Sea Changes
Looking Back to the Future

The school's library staff members not only work with other technology leaders on campus to bring the most recent digital tools to the community, but often play a role in maintaining the school's history and creating traditions of their own. Most schools keep a collection of alumni authors in their library. Sometimes the archives are part of the library's domain. Alumni of Exeter Academy keep the Senior Bookmarks they designed—with lists of their favorite books on them—for the rest of their lives.

The library is invariably among the most attractively furnished public spaces on campus and, for this reason, frequently serves as a public "face" of the school, a natural spot for a televised interview to be set up, for example, or for a fund-raising reception event. Independent schools sometimes opt to make bold statements with their libraries by empowering an adventurous architect or integrating the information technology department with the library, creating an information commons or even installing cafes.

Some types of schools are common in the independent arena but rare in the public sector, creating the demand for libraries tailored to their chosen profile. K–12 schools provide one example. Combined elementary and middle schools, or middle and upper schools, are also common in the independent school world, and boarding schools present a set of

If You Build It: Library Facilities
What's in a Name? Information Commons

opportunities and qualities that set them entirely apart from the day school world. The following section discusses some of the characteristics and issues particular to different age-group library settings and devotes a subsection to the unique role of the boarding school's library in the life of its community.

The Library and the Culture of the School

Any visitor to a school will usually see congruence between the library and the culture of its school. A girls' school library will usually look and feel unmistakably different than the library in a boys' school and will have different collection emphases. A religious school's faith will typically be recognizable in the library's collection and in the symbols and framed items on the walls. A progressive school and a very traditional school will each have libraries that reflect those philosophies in decor and tone.

Libraries, like their schools, not only lead and teach children, but "meet them where they are" developmentally, intellectually, and emotionally. Libraries for different age groups have an appropriately different décor, layout, program and service style, and ambience.

Libraries, like their schools, not only lead and teach children, but "meet them where they are" developmentally, intellectually, and emotionally.

The lower school's library is typically very integrated into the school or grades it serves. In many instances every class will have an assigned time in the library each week, especially in the earliest grades. As are music, physical education, and art in many schools, these sessions may be designated as "specials," serving to provide release preparation time for classroom teachers while engaging the children in specialized curricular program activities. A school's choice regarding fixed versus flexible scheduling has a large impact on the way the lower school library in particular operates, determining if a class comes weekly or only when some curricular or other need will be met by scheduling a class.

As a result of the relatively steady level of scheduling, lower school teacher-librarians come to know the children they serve very well, seeing them grow over grade school years from preliteracy to independent reading and the beginnings of learning about the research process. Many children start their day by stopping in the library with a parent while being dropped off at school. "I'm struck by how much a part of their day the Library is," a primary grades librarian who had moved from a public library setting notes. The "captive audience" concept is often a draw to librarians who move from working with children and young adults in public libraries.

Frequently, lower school libraries create distinct areas for the primary grades (preschool through grades 1 or 2), and a more "middle grades" approach to the higher elementary grades. These library settings, and certainly those for the middle and upper school, include more technology than the early primary grades, whose schools may choose to keep technology, with the exception of circulation, out of the area.

Lower school libraries are generally colorfully decorated, featuring story room areas, numerous bright posters and displays, and small-scale furniture. They are lively places, with storytelling and sometimes music, drama, or craft activities accompanying the textual presentations. The library may offer a rich variety of activities promoting reading, such as

contests, games, and clubs. Parents often spend time in the lower school library volunteering, selecting books for younger children at home, and supplementing their lower school students' reading.

[Middle school] libraries . . . represent a blending or cross-section of elementary and upper school library environments, features, and programs.

The middle school years (here defined as some configuration of grades 5 or 6 through 8 or sometimes 9) are a transitional period from elementary school into the high school years. These libraries therefore represent a blending or cross-section of elementary and upper school library environments, features, and programs.

Younger students, even first graders, are learning the basic elements of research. By middle school, students should have learned the basic research skills and be ready to be more independent in this area; the library program in middle school becomes progressively geared toward projects while continuing to maintain a heavy promotion of reading for the joy of it. In these grades, the children are led to more independence in choosing their reading. As in the lower school, the library often offers book groups, reading contests, and opportunities for students to share with others about their reading. One librarian who directs a blended lower-middle school library describes the transition as moving from the process of helping children learn to locate books and then finding similar ones, to moving in the middle school years "towards a lot more individual reader's advisory" to help students find what they want, similar to what they will find in upper school and beyond.

In some schools, children in these grades are able to go to the library on their own during recess, during lunch, after school, or possibly during a study hall. This transitional quality between the elementary grades and the high school means that the library serving these grades frequently has the decorative look and feel of a library for elementary school students, but with more young adult-styled furnishings and layout. These libraries, like any lower school and some upper school settings, are also rarely quiet places.

In schools that include both a middle and upper division, the decision is frequently made to serve both divisions in one library facility. Although this option allows for a less fragmented staffing plan and permits the sharing of many resources that would otherwise need to be duplicated, it offers its own challenges as well. How does the library provide an environment that is suitable to both age groups' needs? Does the library combine the various collections or break them out? Does it create a designated space for younger students or incorporate this wide developmental range throughout the library? The successful blending usually requires some compromise and accommodations on everyone's part.

One of the advantages of a blended collection is that it allows students to "find their own level" with more privacy. International students, or students whose reading level or sophistication is out of synch with their peers, appreciate being able to browse a collection and find what they want without the perceived stigma of using a collection designated for younger readers. Students who need to move themselves beyond young adult texts and approaches, however, can be enabled by this setup. In my own urban middle/upper school library, for example, upper school students persisted in using the citation and note-taking sheets used in middle school classes, rather than making the effort to learn the upper school's approach to note taking and citation, designed to prepare them for college research. It was easier doing it that way, they were comfortable with it, and they managed to find the forms even when we hid them. Only

One of the advantages of a blended collection is that it allows students to "find their own level" with more privacy.

the changeover to electronic citation and note taking facilitated their necessary growth and change.

Independent upper schools are usually college preparatory. Teachers and librarians acknowledge that their ninth graders are still emerging from late childhood, whereas their seniors are on the brink of the independence of university life, which means that the school's program and approach need to accommodate that growth in independence and sophistication.

In upper school libraries, this transition plays out in a curriculum of increasing complexity and expectation of independence in research learning. Independent school librarians in college preparatory schools agree that the academic demands of these years take a toll on student leisure reading. Their collections invariably support those students who will always find the time to read, but there is of necessity much less emphasis on actively promoting reading for fun than there is in the lower grades. In many upper schools, the majority of leisure reading checkouts are by faculty and staff rather than students. As someone who works in a blended middle and upper school library, it is painful to see the drop-off of reading in even the most enthusiastic young borrowers once they get past the first weeks of ninth grade.

The curriculum in academically demanding schools usually includes honors and AP courses and electives that extend into areas of study found in the first years of college, and the collection and projects supported by the library reflect those expectations. Teachers in these courses expect that there will be databases, print materials, and audiovisual resources to meet the needs of these more advanced subject areas—that the library will serve as a resource to them as well as to the students.

The atmosphere and layout in upper school libraries reflect the social and academic needs of this age group. Students usually have freedom to spend at least some of their unscheduled periods as they wish, and the library fills the need of offering a place to study alone, perhaps in study carrels similar to those found in college libraries. The increasing emphasis on collaborative work is reflected in the places made available for small groups doing assignments or for group study. Libraries balance these needs typically by designating different areas of the facility for different purposes—for example, quiet reading zones, teaching, and collaborative study areas. Study halls or proctored makeup tests are sometimes held in libraries throughout the day and in the evening, adding to the mix of academic activity.

It is difficult to overstate the social importance of libraries in school settings, particularly those with limited gathering space elsewhere. Common areas in schools, including the library, become places "to see and be seen." Groups of friends stake out favorite tables during commonly free periods. Socializing with books open on library tables is a way of life for many kids. Graduates often say that studying in the library during the school day helped them learn how to work effectively in the presence of others without being distracted, an important life skill.

For students of all ages, a library can also be a place of refuge. The relative freedom of upper school students means that students who need this kind of social alternative will often seek it in the private spaces created in libraries. In a school setting, the library is likely to be the only socially acceptable, "safe," or "okay" place to be seen alone, as independent study and reading are expected and supported there.

For students of all ages, a library can be a place of refuge.

The Library in the Life of the Boarding School—A Unique Mission and Role

The library in a boarding school goes beyond the day school's roles and serves a very different additional purpose—as the "living room of the school," in the words of an experienced boarding school library director. For students whose dormitory room is everything, the library is an additional important getaway space. As a result, these libraries invariably have more upholstered, comfortable seating areas available, and one or several spaces will have a living room feel—possibly including a working fireplace with overstuffed chairs, floor lamps, and sometimes a piano nearby. To the astonishment of those unused to boarding school life, there may even be a staff member's dog lying about to dote on! The library will also offer a variety and depth of recreational materials beyond those that a day school would likely offer, including some representing the browsing interests of the international student body. Most boarding schools also build far larger and more comprehensive collections of audiovisual materials and sound recordings than do day schools, whose students have access to family recreation rooms.

By being equally available to every student on campus, libraries support the boarding school's efforts to integrate day students successfully into the life of the school. Some libraries go further, designating a section of the library for day student use. In these areas, students can park their book bags for the day and sometimes have a carrel they can decorate and "own" as a personal home base on campus.

The library remains a place where a student can go alone in the fishbowl adolescent atmosphere without feeling stigmatized.

The library sometimes serves as the public library for the faculty and their families, especially in boarding schools set in the countryside, which is reflected in both the collection and library planning. "Many families stop by after dinner in the dining hall," one boarding school library director says, "and the new children's room I've installed has been a huge hit—the most popular thing I've done in 39 years!"

There is an evening and weekend life in a boarding school library that exists in no other school setting. The "safe place to be" aspect of a library in a school is intensified in a boarding environment, where there is no escape to home at the end of a school day, and the common rooms or the snack bar may be informally claimed by groups of which one is not a member. The library remains a place where a student can go alone in the fishbowl adolescent atmosphere without feeling stigmatized. A huge part of after-hours usage in a coeducational school's library is a direct result of the fact that it is often the most acceptable and sometimes only place for boys and girls to spend time together. When your parents ask you where you've been all evening, it's always okay to say you were at the library.

Libraries inevitably reflect the mission and culture of the schools they serve, but it is ultimately the librarians, with their varying personalities and experiences, who create the collection, program, and pervading atmosphere in an independent school library. "Without a gardener, there is no garden," I once heard, and that is no less true of independent school librarians and their libraries. The librarian is the gardener, but the structure of the library garden is complex, requiring the many kinds of expertise discussed in the remaining essays in this book.

Visit http://lu.com/excellence for supporting links and occasional updates to all essays in this book.

*Carolyn Hilles was a college and university librarian for nine years before shifting her professional focus to the independent school world in 1984. As the Assistant Director for Technical Services at The Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, Connecticut, she participated in the full range of boarding school life, serving in the dormitory with her husband, coaching, and teaching English. She spent a term in 2004–2005 at St. Andrews University in Scotland, having been awarded their Schoolteacher Fellowship—the only librarian ever to receive the award. She began working at The Wheeler School (www.wheelerschool.org/), a nursery–12 day school in Providence, Rhode Island, on the day of the school's groundbreaking ceremony for i*ts new library building in 1988. *She is the Upper School Librarian and Program Head and has also taught English, served as department head, and briefly been the librarian for the middle school.*

ESSAY 3

Who Are We? The Independent School Library: A Statistical Profile

Susan Williamson, retired, Albuquerque Academy (Albuquerque, NM)

For a library, Simms Library is unusually bustling. It's not overly loud, but it's always moving, especially since it is the one space shared by our entire school. Sixth-graders weave through the stacks on some sort of scavenger hunt, and term-paper-writing seniors sit in the middle of the reference stacks, totally engrossed in their reading and totally unaware that they are blocking traffic. The collection is small enough to navigate as a sixth-grader, unfamiliar with basic research methods but large enough to sustain serious research for all seven years. Even on the rare occasions when I've needed to explore other libraries in the city, the training I've received here has ensured that I can find the information I need quickly.

As I worked on historical research (which was eventually published in the Concord Review) I used our own library resources as a jumping off point, a place to begin my research and gain the background needed to go further afield. Working in this library was essential to that research.

Perhaps most importantly, the Simms Library staff makes a continual effort to teach effective online research techniques. The extensive databases make it easy to move beyond Google. Even in an age when many students rely on simple search engines, Academy students have learned to analyze online information critically. I've always been attached to the print media I can hold in my hand, and much of that appreciation comes from the hours I've spent here, researching, reading or just wandering the stacks. I'm not one of

> *those people who think books will go away. With enough children exposed to libraries like these, print media will have the wherewithal to remain alive and well.*
>
> —Sarah Zager, Albuquerque Academy class of 2009

Introduction

As independent school librarians, we can wish that all of our students will have the kind of library experience exemplified in Sarah Zager's statement and that they will pursue research with the same rigor and success. In contrast to many of my colleagues, my career as a librarian has not always been in independent schools; because of my earlier positions, I can readily argue that Sarah, as an independent school student, has been well prepared for her future college or university experience.

I began my career as a librarian in a college library, then moved to a university setting, and expanded my experiences in libraries at Albuquerque Academy in New Mexico. What I originally knew about independent schools was very limited. Having come from a public school background in Seattle, I shared some of the stereotypes about private schools circulating in public schools; that is, that the students were from wealthy families, were likely to be elitist, and had an advantage because their education gave them a better chance of getting into the "good' colleges and universities. In my freshman year as an undergraduate student at Occidental College, I experienced my first brush with a private school student. This student became a leader in our freshman class by giving a riveting speech to the class. He was confident, articulate, and polished, able to capture the attention of his audience with ease. Word went around that he came from a prestigious private high school back east. I wondered what kind of education he had received that put him way above the average public school students I knew.

My only other experience with a private school student happened when I was considering applying for the library director's position at Albuquerque Academy. I had hired an undergraduate student who, by sheer coincidence, had graduated from the Academy. I asked her a flurry of questions, many of them about the library. She told me the school's library was the largest day school library in the country. She was proud of the library and had used it extensively. The fact that she knew enough about it to compare it to other school libraries impressed me. I later discovered that she had won the prestigious National Forensic League Championship Award in Original Oratory. Another stellar student! My interest in the relationship between what libraries in independent schools offered students and the students' excellence and achievement in academia was aroused.

When I became the new director of this large day school library, I joined the Independent School Section of AASL to become part of a network of independent school librarians and to familiarize myself with this universe. Independent schools offer choices to parents seeking excellent education for their children. Prospective families can be influenced to select one school over another through awareness of library program strengths offered to students at the various schools. A strong library program would include an adequate collection of current materials covering the curriculum, librarians who can teach students library skills and encourage lifelong learning, and up-to-date technology to facilitate that learning. How does a parent know how many resources would be typical to

cover a school's curriculum? How does a school administration decide how much access to technology is appropriate, how many computers to make available, how much remote access to provide? How does a librarian discover what other schools consider adequate staffing or how many hours after school to be open? Administrators and library directors would like to compare library details with other similar schools regionally and nationally as a method of determining effective and reasonable levels of service and funding. But information needed to make these comparisons has not been easily available and is inconsistently updated.

The independent school world includes a variety of school types. Comparison is difficult because schools differ in location (e.g., all schools within a geographic region, such as the Northeast), grade level (elementary, middle school, high school, or combinations thereof), governance (elected boards versus religious boards), religious status (denominational versus secular), enrollment size, coed versus single gender, rural versus urban, gifted versus special needs, day versus boarding or combined day and boarding, etc.

School Categories

Independent schools

Independent religious schools: *Independent religious schools differ from religious schools in that their governance is controlled by an elected board rather than a religious board.*

Religious schools, including both parochial schools and schools tied to specific denominations

Military schools

Alternative schools (including Montessori, Waldorf, and other schools with specific educational philosophies)

Independent schools educate approximately 10 percent of the school-going population in the United States (USDoE/NCES 2002a). According to the most recent National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report, there are 33,740 independent schools in the United States (USDoE/NCES 2009). Not all independent schools in the United States have libraries; some 74 percent of private schools in 2007–2008 reported having a library/media center (USDoE/NCES 2009). Those that do have libraries provide valuable services and materials to the communities they serve.

One source for this statistical profile of independent school libraries is a survey conducted during 2004–2005 by the Independent School Section (ISS) of ALA/AASL. In 2002 a group of ISS librarians recognized that there were no real benchmarks available for independent school librarians to use, no statistical way to compare their school libraries with similar libraries across the country. The only data on independent school libraries came from NCES, were out of date, and did not contain the kinds of information needed to make peer comparisons. ISS formed a Data Committee to create an online survey to reach out to membership and beyond for data that would quantify our variety and quality. The ALA Information Technology (IT) Department supported development of a survey that asked for information about the budgets, staffing, hours, collections, facilities, computer access, and Web presence of independent school libraries. The survey was disseminated

through ALA and other listservs for only independent school librarians; ALA/ISS membership was not a requirement because we wanted as many responses as possible from as wide a variety of school types as possible. The survey was open from May to September 2005. The respondents' school names were later compared with the ISS membership list, revealing that roughly half of the respondents were from nonmember schools, suggesting that our outreach efforts were reasonably successful.

Historical Surveys

There have been a few earlier surveys of independent schools and libraries. The earliest published data collected on independent schools are from NCES. Intermittent surveys were conducted from 1890 through 1989, at which point NCES began conducting them on a biennial basis. These reports are based on statistically randomized samples and provide estimates of school types by school levels and orientation, school enrollments, faculty sizes, pupil/teacher ratios, distribution of students by ethnic and racial background, and high school graduation rates.

Data Categories

The school library surveys provide data in four main categories:

- the presence of libraries in the schools,
- library staffing characteristics (professional vs. volunteer staffing),
- expenditures on library materials, size of collection holdings, and
- access policies (scheduled classes vs. independent, unscheduled use of the library, and borrowing privileges).

Holton et al., *The Status of Public and Private School Library Media Centers in the United States: 1999–2000* (2004).

Since 1987–1988, NCES has also conducted a series of surveys targeting school libraries in both public and private schools (independent schools are named "private schools" in all government reports). The most recent comprehensive report is *The Status of Public and Private School Library Media Centers in the United States: 1999–2000* (USDoE/NCES 2004). Although these data are valuable for a nationwide "large picture" of differences between public and private schools and their libraries, they do not provide in-depth comparisons of other kinds of variables that contribute to the resources students may have available to them. NCES didn't ask for specific information about the number of online databases and remote access to them, remote access to the library's catalog, the number of periodical subscriptions, the size of the library facilities, computer access, etc.

A 2002 study by NCES, published in 2005, presents more detailed data on public and private school libraries; 198 of the 752 total schools responding were private schools (USDoE/NCES/IES 2005). This report focuses only on those schools with tenth-grade students. These students are to be followed every two years to allow for longitudinal

comparisons of the effect of school variables on educational outcomes. This survey comes closest to replicating the variables studied in the ISS survey, because it includes data on facility size, collections, computer resources, and staffing in private school libraries. It also includes valuable data on student opinions and types of library usage, discussed below.

The ISS survey of 2004–2005 is complemented by an annual ongoing survey of public and private school libraries by AASL, which began in 2007. This survey represents a large sample of public and private schools in the United States. The sample of 2008 consists of some 5,000 public and 250 private school libraries. The AASL survey will continue to be conducted on a yearly basis, with results reported online. An interactive feature has been added to the survey allowing users to make comparisons based on their regional or state groupings, type of school, etc. The results of the AASL and NCES longitudinal surveys and the ISS survey are compared below.

The results of these surveys are reported online on the AASL Web site at www.ala.org/mgrps/divs/aasl/schlibrariesandyou/slcsurvey.cfm.

The Independent School Section Survey: General Data

Many of the results of the ISS survey have been reported in an article published online in *School Library Media Research Journal* volume 11, at www.ala.org/ala/mgrpa/divs/aaslpubsandjournals/slmrb/slmrcontents/volume11/cahoy_williamson.

The sample from the ISS survey was not collected as a statistically random or representative sample. The survey focused on the Independent School Section members and the larger community of schools not administered by the public school systems. Several of us are accredited under the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) umbrella, but many more are accredited by a variety of other organizations and agencies. The 420 schools responding included independent, alternative, military, religious, and independent religious schools from forty-three states and several other countries. Independent religious schools differ from religious schools in that their governance is controlled by an elected board rather than a religious board. The survey included libraries from day, boarding, and combined day and boarding schools. Because the numbers of alternative and military schools were much smaller relative to the other three categories (alternative N = 5, military N = 3), the study focused on a comparison of the three primary groups (independent N = 235, independent religious N = 45, religious N = 71). The survey was missing group category information for thirty-six schools because their librarians did not reveal their school names, and they could not be coded for school group. See table 3.1.

Data Coding

Survey respondents were coded by geographic region and city size.

Geographic regions were determined by the categories provided by the U.S. Bureau of the Center (2000).

City size was determined by using NCES locale codes:

Central city = population of 250,000 or more

Midsize city/Urban fringe/Large town = population of less than 250,000 but greater than 25,000

Rural area = population of less than 25,000 (USDoE/NCES 2002b)

The largest number of responses came from

California (11 percent),

Texas (10 percent),

Massachusetts (8 percent), and

New York (7 percent).

All other states had a response rate of 6 percent or less.

Ten international schools responded to the survey.

Table 3.1. Survey Sample

Type of School	Percent
Day	80
Boarding	2
Combined	14
School Group	
Independent	67
Independent Religious	13
Religious	20
Gender	
Coed	70
Single (Boys)	9
Single (Girls)	8
Geographic Region	
Northeast	29
South	36
West	20
Midwest	14
Grade Levels	
6th–12th	53

PK–6th	26
1st–12th	19
Missing info	2
Faculty Size	
25 or fewer	15
25–50	38
50–75	19
75 or more	26

Staffing and Hours

One measure of staffing in a school library is the ratio of students to degreed (usually an MLS) library professionals or to total library staff including paraprofessionals. In this sample, a majority of respondents reported a ratio of 300–400 students per degreed library professional. The ratio of students to total library staff was most often reported as 101–200 students per library staff member.

The mean number of hours the library was reported open for use each week during the school year was 49.3, with 44 percent open 40–50 hours per week. As tables 3.2a and b indicate, boarding schools reported more hours open per week than combined schools or day schools, and their total staffing was also the highest reported.

Table 3.2a. Staffing

Type of School	Staff per Student
Day	1.90
Boarding	3.60
Combined	3.00
School Group	
Independent	2.30
Independent Religious	1.01
Religious	1.73
Geographic Region	
Northeast	2.36
Midwest	1.91
West	1.86
South	1.86
City Size	
Central City	2.12
Mid-sized	1.94
Rural	1.93

Table 3.2b. Hours	
Type of School	**Open Hours per Week**
Day	41.5
Boarding	79.5
Combined	57
School Group	
Independent	47
Independent Religious	45
Religious	41
Geographic Region	
Northeast	48
Midwest	48
West	42
South	46
City Size	
Central City	41.5
Mid-sized	46
Rural	52

Library Budget

School librarians were asked to provide the approximate dollar amount spent per student on library collections and to define the library budget as a percentage of the total operating budget of the school. The latter question received a much lower response rate (81 total responses) on the survey. The mean amount spent per student on library materials was $69. The mean for the library budget as a percentage of the total school's operating budget (both without salaries) was 1.5 percent.

As table 3.3 indicates, boarding schools and rural schools spend significantly more per student for library collections. Day schools and boarding schools both devoted approximately 1.7 percent of the total school's operating budget to library expenditures, whereas combined schools allocated only 0.6 percent.

Table 3.3. Library Budget	
Type of School	**Dollars Spent per Student**
Day	$ 56
Boarding	$146
Combined	$ 85
School Group	
Independent	$ 77
Independent Religious	$ 55
Religious	$ 29
Geographic Region	
Northeast	$ 69
Midwest	$ 65
West	$ 63
South	$ 47
City Size	
Central City	$ 57
Mid-sized	$ 53
Rural	$ 74

Collections

The survey also explored the details of print and nonprint collections in independent school libraries. Collections predominantly ranged between 6,000 and 20,000 items, with the largest percentage (24 percent) housing 10,000 to 15,000 items, including books, periodicals, and audiovisual materials. More than 44 percent of libraries indicated that they house an average of 25–50 collection items per student. Nonprint items (audiovisual media, equipment, etc.) were not heavily collected by responding libraries: 29 percent reported 0–200 nonprint items in their collections. Print periodical subscriptions followed a similar pattern: 38 percent of libraries had 0–25 subscriptions. Boarding and combined schools had markedly more print periodical subscriptions than responding day schools. Only combined schools boasted a higher number of nonprint items in the collection (see tables 3.4a–d).

Information about the age of collections was not gathered. While publication date or copyright year is an important marker of collection quality, issues of quality are difficult to measure and would have required more questions than ALA allowed.

Table 3.4a. Collection: Total Items	
Type of School	**Number of Items**
Day	16,936
Boarding	34,065
Combined	26,293
School Group	
Independent	20,972
Independent Religious	16,922
Religious	14,037
Geographic Region	
Northeast	19,544
Midwest	15,938
West	16,019
South	19,918
City Size	
Central City	20,253
Mid-sized	17,493
Rural	18,567

Table 3.4b. Collection: Items per Student	
Type of School	**Number of Items**
Day	1,795
Boarding	*(data corrupt)*
Combined	3,715
School Group	
Independent	2,126
Independent Religious	1,126
Religious	2,094
Geographic Region	
Northeast	2,543
Midwest	1,712
West	1,563
South	2,112
City Size	
Central City	2,086
Mid-sized	1,286
Rural	2,717