



Delaware School Libraries Council
Annual Report 2013

Delaware School Libraries Council Members

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Delaware School Libraries Council

In September 2011 Governor Jack Markell enacted Executive Order Number Thirty *Recognizing And Reconstituting The School Libraries Council To Improve And Extend The School Library Services That Are Essential To Educational Success*

The purposes of the Council shall be to improve and extend school library services to all Delaware public and charter school students from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, to support curriculum reform efforts related to school libraries, and to prepare students to succeed in college and career readiness through enhancement of library resources.

Members were appointed and the Council began meeting in March 2012. The Council defined the mission and vision as follows:

Mission: The School Libraries Council will establish an exemplary school library program to provide equitable access to students in Delaware through funding for resources, technology, and professional development to achieve national standards and effective literacies.

Vision: An exemplary school library program is a core component providing students with comprehensive, current resources, and information literacy instruction to enhance personal growth and competitiveness in the global work force.

Council members spent the first year gathering information about Delaware's school libraries. A summary of previous efforts to improve Delaware school libraries and recommendations for next steps are included here as well.

Ideal School Library Services

► What are the elements of an ideal school library?

- **A full-time certified School Librarian** (minimum) to select and manage resources, collaborate with teachers, and provide information literacy instruction
- **Flexible scheduling** for curriculum support throughout the school day
- A robust and current **collection** (print and electronic)
- **Technologies** are state-of-the-art, sufficient to support the school population, and networked for sharing among libraries and to obtain live data
- **Integrated** in the school curriculum to support literacies and student achievement
- **Funding** sufficient to support the ideal school library

Background

The predecessor to the School Libraries Council, the Task Force on School Libraries (TFSL) was first established by Governor Carper in the 1990s in response to Delaware's *Action Agenda for Delaware Libraries* developed following the 1988 White House Conference on Library and Information Services.

"It was reported to the APC (Action Planning Committee) that several past efforts by the library community to improve school libraries have not proved successful. The APC has concluded that issues regarding Delaware school libraries need attention at the highest level of State government." (Action Agenda, 1993, p. 27)

Throughout two decades, members of the TFSL diligently advocated for improvement of Delaware's school libraries. Significant accomplishments of the TFSL include:

- An Education Associate for Library/Media/Technology position was established at the Department of Education
In recent years, the position has been redirected more and more towards other education initiatives. As this is written, the position is currently vacant and plans for next steps are unknown.
- *Standards for School Library Media Centers: Delaware Public Schools* was published in 1996 and updated in 2002.
- One time funding for school libraries was appropriated by the Delaware Legislature with support by (former) Senator Nancy Cook in 2004 (\$1 million), 2005 (\$1 million), and 2006 (\$600,000).
- The study *Student Learning Through Delaware School Libraries: Summary of Findings & Recommendations*, was conducted by Todd and Heinstrom, Rutgers University, 2006 and funded by the Delaware Department of State.

"Data collected from this study shows that 98.2% of students were helped by the school library in their learning process when the school libraries had state certified, full-time school librarians, flexible schedules, and active instructional programs for information literacy development. Students in grades 3–5 saw the school library helping strongly with their reading interests, finding stories, improving reading, and helping them enjoy reading more."

Recommendations included establishing a seamless information technology infrastructure.

As documented now in more than 19 studies nationally, including the Delaware study, strong school libraries contribute to student academic achievement.

▶ Two additional notable initiatives occurred in prior years:

- Through the leadership of Dr. Sandra Millard, Associate University Librarian, University of Delaware Library, UDLib/SEARCH Online Periodicals for Delaware K-12 Public Schools was established in 1997. UDLib/SEARCH is funded as a K-12 Pass Through in the DOE budget, the FY2013 funding is \$604,400. UDLib/SEARCH provides equitable comprehensive online periodicals and encyclopedias statewide, helping to expand local school library collections.
- In 2002, former State Representative and librarian Catherine Wojewodzki published *An Evaluation of the Combined Public/School Library at Middletown High School*.

"The union of these two libraries was originally intended to be an interim arrangement" (p. 4)

and the public library moved to a separate leased facility during FY2008. Studies of combined facilities find that a combined approach is worthwhile in small communities, but is insufficient to meet the demands in larger communities as was demonstrated here as the Middletown area population expanded.

Current State of Delaware School Libraries

Council members began by gathering information about the Delaware school library landscape through the lenses of School Librarian Staffing & Certification, Technology Infrastructure, Collections (Electronic and Print), and Library Education Services / Common Core.

► School Library Staffing & Certification:

According to DOE data, in 2012 there were 131,514 students, 248 schools and 132 school librarians. An informal survey of school librarians indicates that the actual number of school librarians may be less, and may be dropping further for the 2013/2014 school year. School Librarians are considered a “Special” and are funded out of the unit count, in competition with the classroom. In some cases librarians may be shared among more than one school. However the number of school librarians is drastically less than the recommendation of a minimum of 1 certified librarian per school in *Standards for School Library Media Centers: Delaware Public Schools*. Teachers and students are not receiving the professional benefits that they could be, when school librarians’ time and focus are divided among multiple schools.

The University of Delaware College of Education & Human Development offers a Librarian certification program for candidates who are certified classroom teachers and already possess a master’s degree. Other candidates are required by the Department of Education to complete an ALA/NCATE accredited program, which is not currently offered in Delaware.

Current professional development opportunities specifically for school librarians, if available, are provided at the District level. Some school librarians seek out professional development on their own and personally incur the costs. Professional development for school librarians should be provided by the Department of Education and be more strategic, consistent, and frequent.

► Library Education Services /Common Core:

School librarians facilitate student learning in key components of the Common Core emphasizing the discovery of informational text. The state approved Common Core curriculum requires research specific standards across all content areas and grade levels, culminating in these examples for grades 11-12:

CC W.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CC W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

School libraries in Delaware are administered at the school level and the oversight and budget decisions are the responsibility of the school principal. School librarians reported to the Council that school library spaces and computers are being used increasingly for online state required testing. This shift in the use of library space has led to school libraries being closed for substantial amounts of time during the school year. The School Librarian has fewer school days available to provide instruction, and students and teachers are unable to use the library to receive assistance or access materials during testing.

► Technology Infrastructure:

All 19 school districts use various versions of Follett Destiny software for their library catalogs. The school libraries within each district are networked in one district catalog. Follett representatives have determined that Delaware is not benefiting from discounts available if the districts collaborated statewide. By centralizing through a vendor-hosted Software as a Service (SaaS) solution there could be additional cost/staff savings at the local district level.

School librarians report the need for faster network speeds and additional and updated computer equipment. Most schools have 10MB connections, a few have 100 Mb. The Department of Technology and Information has acknowledged the need for bandwidth increases at many schools but does not currently have the funding to do so.

It is essential that school libraries consider the needs of 21st century learners by developing a technology plan that identifies the crucial resources needed by today’s students to compete at a global level. For the plan to be successful, it must include funding allocations for increased bandwidth demands, new hardware and an increasing demand for online content.

Current State of Delaware School Libraries

► Collections (Electronic and Print):

The Council worked with Follett, the library catalog vendor, to assist in the analysis of school library print collections, as there is no existing mechanism for reporting on school library collections. Council members contacted a representative in each district and requested that data be gathered and provided to Follett. Follett compiled the data and conducted the analysis. The data represents the participation of 167 schools..

Print Collection Analysis		Average Age
Participating schools	167	
Total number of items	2,154,929	1994
Nonfiction	1,080,508	1993
Fiction	1,074,421	1994

The Council asked Follett to further analyze books with call numbers in the areas of 500s and 600s. These call numbers represent books related to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). It is recommended that books in the STEM areas be no more than 5 years old. Some areas of the collection, such as the 500s and 600s, are time sensitive and should be weeded on a timely basis to prevent misinformation. Out of 299,169 total STEM items (500s and 600s), 269,171 items are out of date and should be weeded, leaving 29,998 current STEM items in the 167 participating schools.

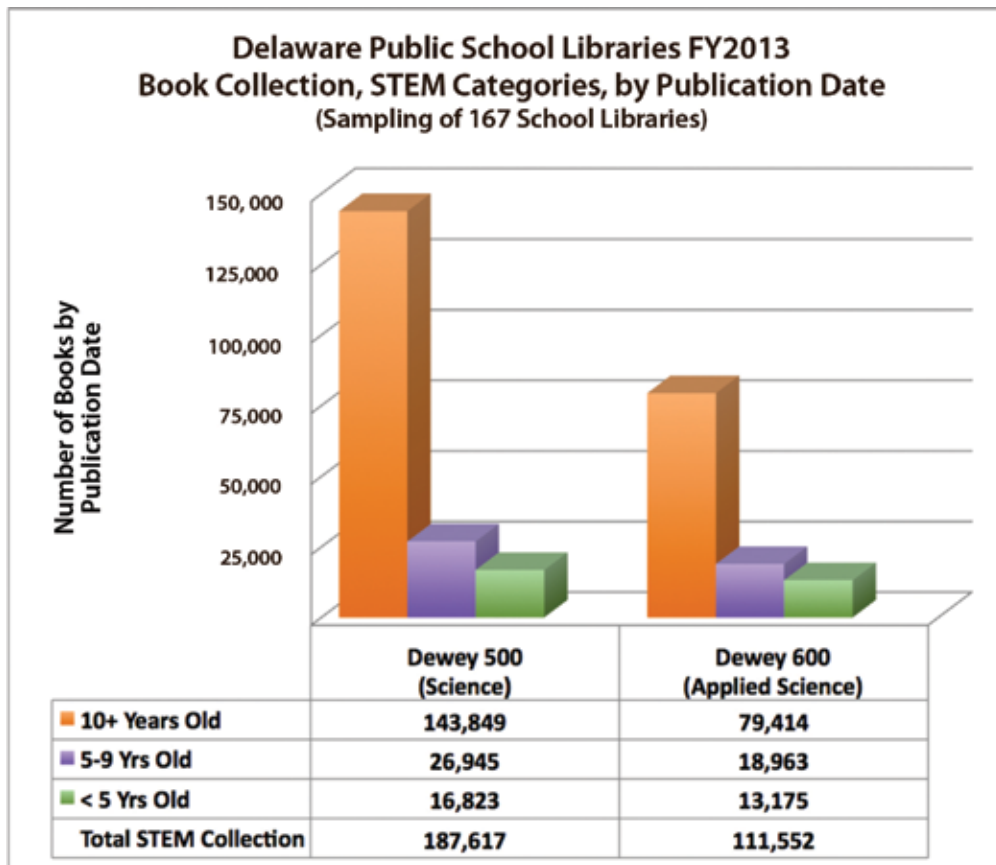


Figure 1: Follett study data on age by publication date of public school library book collections within STEM category.

The lack of access to live data prevents the Council from performing additional analysis on the print collections.

Fortunately, UDLib/SEARCH continues to provide remote access to current electronic periodicals and newspapers. Follett reports that 39 schools license a total of 2073 ebooks (subjects unknown) through Follett. There may be opportunities for cost savings and to expand access to ebooks by centralizing licensing.

Summary & Recommendations

Although the current economic environment is challenging, improving Education is seen as a solution to improve the economy and so has received significant funding support. However, the sense of the Council is that despite the best efforts of Delaware school librarians, the overall status of school library services continues to deteriorate. Surveys and studies conducted nationally by library researchers, Pew Internet, and others demonstrate that libraries are an American and community value that contributes to student literacy and academic achievement. Publications by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and others list elements of a successful school library (see reference list). A big picture perspective, however, is missing and appears to be at the root of our challenges – what is the approach to governance, infrastructure, and funding that would work in Delaware to deliver and support quality school library services?

From the beginning, and confirmed throughout the first year, the Council found that the lack of a mechanism for statewide coordination of school library services is a critical challenge. In an era of data driven decision making, minimal data is available or obtainable about school libraries. There is insufficient data available to demonstrate to stakeholders how school libraries contribute. And, there is lack of agreement on how best to approach or coordinate school library services in order to improve them. The Council concluded it is necessary to experiment with new approaches to improve school libraries.

► Governance:

The governance and coordination of school library services rose to the top as areas requiring further study. Better coordination of school libraries could resolve the need for live data, for sharing of resources, and may help address staffing.

In the *Delaware Code*, no mention of school libraries was found under the Department of Education. Although an Education Associate for Library/Media/Technology position was established at DOE in the 1990s, that approach alone has been insufficient to establish a more robust development and coordination of school library services. However the *Delaware Code* states “the Division of Libraries shall exercise general direction and control over the furnishing of library services within this State” (Title 29, Chapter 8731). This traditionally has been interpreted as pertaining to public libraries, and the Division of Libraries coordinates library services among a potpourri of public library governance – municipal, county, and independent.

In the library profession, it is understood that libraries get their strength by sharing resources as no one library can afford to purchase all the variety and depth needed to support the curriculum or the community. UDLib/SEARCH has served that role statewide since the 1990s for electronic periodicals and newspapers. The statewide Delaware Library Catalog (delawarelibraries.org) is a collaborative effort to share collections among all public libraries and several academic and special libraries. These shared library services serve as models for other potential school library collaborative efforts, to ensure support for education and maximize funding investments.

► How many books and what technology do Delaware students need to succeed?

The *Standards for School Library Media Centers: Delaware Public Schools* recommends a minimum of 15 currently useful volumes per student. This number becomes more critical depending upon the level of access to resources that the student has elsewhere. Does the student have a device and internet access? Does the student have books at home? Does the student have access to a public library? At a minimum, libraries are necessary to provide the basic foundational tools for literacy and curriculum content. To obtain high educational achievement, strong school libraries with excellent school librarians are essential. Students’ context – home, classroom, school library, public library -- needs to be examined holistically to ensure a seamless infrastructure with access to sufficient current resources, technologies, and knowledgeable assistance to support student literacy and academic achievement.

A 2013 study, *Delaware Libraries Governance and Funding*, was conducted by the University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration for the Delaware Division of Libraries. In the report, former Secretary of State, Edward Freel states,

“...we have reached an important point for Delaware’s community to take a critical view of how library services are delivered in the state. This review should include school and academic libraries as well as public libraries and be based on hard data and bring together key stakeholders across the state, including business leaders, educators, and community leaders. Strong, vibrant libraries are critical to the quality of life in Delaware.” (p. 33)

Summary & Recommendations

▶ Recommendations:

The major recommendation from the Council is for the state to commission a *Statewide Master Plan for Delaware School Libraries*. This plan would be modeled after the *2005 Statewide Master Plan for Library Services and Construction* for public libraries by the Delaware Division of Libraries which established a roadmap for library development. A *Statewide Master Plan for Delaware School Libraries* might include an operational mechanism between the Department of Education and the Department of State to coordinate library services, for instance. The Council developed the proposed Scope of Services for A *Statewide Master Plan for Delaware School Libraries*.

Proposed Scope of Services

▶ Statewide Master Plan for Delaware School Libraries

The School Libraries Council solicits an in depth strategic plan to develop a statewide infrastructure for Delaware school libraries. The objectives include addressing operational and capacity needs, staffing, streamlining technology, reducing unintentional duplication, aligning with Common Core Standards, and addressing and incorporating the diverse governance issues. The overall goal is to develop a plan that incorporates best practices and configurations for library services, manages costs, equalizes ongoing library development, and provides seamless integrated and equal access to school library resources and services for all Delaware students and teachers.

▶ The Statewide Master Plan for Delaware School Libraries (Master Plan) will have a 20-year scope.

- The Master Plan Consultant (consultant) will make use of Delaware's most current census information and other resources to determine best estimate population projections, educational and economic indicators and demographic predictions throughout the 20-year period.
- The consultant will address the array of governing authorities and governance issues, and alignment with the Delaware Libraries consortium.
- The consultant will address evidenced based practice in Education and School Libraries, and align with Common Core Standards.
- The consultant will address future trends in Education, technology and the library profession.

▶ The Master Plan will:

- Build a statewide, integrated framework for school library services, assimilating state and local governance, creating a common language and definition of terms including library services, funding, staffing, operating costs, maintenance, measures, performance indicators, combined facilities, policies, collections and content.
- Make recommendations regarding:
 - For each level of school:
 - Library services
 - Funding, operating costs
 - Staffing schemes, numbers, certification and educational level
 - Collection development and procurement, size, composition, and turnover rate
 - Hours/days per week, and accessibility
 - Number of computers, technology infrastructure, and support
 - System and linkages of library services and technology infrastructure throughout the schools and statewide framework.
 - Cost effectiveness and efficiency for the system of provision of services, such as one single point of access, countywide, or statewide.
 - Implementation of the Master Plan including a transition plan, an annual threshold of local support required, and recommended revisions to the *Delaware Code*.

Proposed Scope of Services

- Address the professional, financial, service, and policy relationships between libraries and schools/other social service outlets. The consultant will reference the *Standards for School Library Media Centers*.
- Address coordination of library services with public libraries to address education support and out of school learning
- Develop outcome measures and performance indicators for the Master Plan, and for services within the Master Plan.
- Provide the process and timeline for updating the Master Plan.
- Conduct a series of meetings, surveys, and/or focus groups with key library leaders and educators, and provide feedback as the process progresses:
 - School Libraries Council and Council On Libraries
 - Delaware Association of School Librarians
 - Governing officials & Legislators
 - University of Delaware, administrators of UDLib/SEARCH
 - Department of Education
 - Department of State / Division of Libraries
 - District Administrators / School Administrators
 - Teachers
 - Parents

▶ The deliverables provided by the consultant will include:

- Conduct a presentation to the School Libraries Council on the final draft plan and the findings.
- Publish the Statewide Master Plan for School Library Services document containing the items outlined in this Scope of Services document.
- Conduct a one full-day statewide workshop for the library community to outline the Master Plan, its purpose and anticipated progress.
- Conduct one session in each of the three counties for the public to outline the Master Plan, its purpose, and anticipated progress.

The proposal should include samples of previous statewide plans produced.

The proposal should provide cost estimates and time estimates by phases, for multiple year phased in implementation.



References

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American Association of School Librarians. (2011). *Aasl learning standards & common core state standards crosswalk*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/aasl/standards-guidelines/crosswalk>

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Governor's Task Force on School Libraries. (2002). *Standards for School Library Media Centers: Delaware Public Schools* (2nd ed. Publication No. 20-08/2002/01/01). Dover, DE.

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Todd, R & Heinstrom, J. (2006). *Delaware school library survey: Student learning through Delaware school libraries. Phase 2 report*.

Wojewodzki, C. (2002). *An Evaluation of the Combined Public/School Library at Middletown High School*. Newark, DE.

Additional Resources:

- American Association of School Librarians - <http://www.ala.org/aasl/>
- Delaware Association of School Librarians, Division of the Delaware Library Association - <http://www2.lib.udel.edu/dla/exboard.htm>
- Delaware Library Catalog - <http://delawarelibraries.org>
- School Libraries Council - <http://www2.lib.udel.edu/slc/>
- School Libraries Work! - http://www.scholastic.com/content/collateral_resources/pdf/s/slw3_2008.pdf
- UDLib/SEARCH - <http://udlibsearch.lib.udel.edu/>
- University of Delaware College of Education & Human Development, Alternative Routes to Certification - <http://www.artc.udel.edu/school-library-media-certification/>



Number of Delaware School Librarians

**Number of Delaware Public School Librarians
by District 2002 & 2012 Comparison**

Retrieved from http://www.doe.k.12.de.us/reports_data/Ed_Pers_Reports/default.shtml

State County District	2002 # of Public Schools	2012 # of Public Schools	2002-2003 Librarian Count	2011-2012 Librarian Count
Statewide Totals	213	224	124	130
Kent Co. Totals	48	54	26	32
Caesar Rodney	14	15	10	11
Capital	10	14	6	10
Lake Forest	8	7	2	1
Milford	7	7	4	4
Polytech	1	1	1	1
Smyrna	8	10	3	5
New Castle Co. Totals	113	119	80	82
Appoquinimink	11	14	6	9
Brandywine	19	20	14	14
Christina	30	31	27	26
Colonial	20	19	11	10
NCC VoTech	4	5	3	4
Red Clay	29	30	19	19
Sussex County Totals	52	51	18	16
Cape Henlopen	9	9	3	1
Delmar	4	4	1	1
Indian River	21	18	8	6
Laurel	8	7	2	1
Seaford	6	7	2	3
Sussex Technical	1	1	1	1
Woodbridge	3	5	1	3

**Number of Delaware Charter School Librarians
by District 2002 & 2012 Comparison**

Retrieved from http://www.doe.k.12.de.us/reports_data/Ed_Pers_Reports/default.shtml

State County District	2002 # of Charter Schools	2012 # of Charter Schools	2002-2003 Librarian Count	2011-2012 Librarian Count
Annual Statewide Totals	24	25	1	1
Kent Co. Totals	4	4	0	1
Academy of Dover	1	1	-	-
Campus Comm	1	1	-	-
Positive Outcomes	1	1	-	-
Providence Creek	1	1	-	1
New Castle Co. Totals	18	19	1	1
Aspira Academy	1	1	-	-
Chrt. Sch. Wilm	1	1	-	-
DAPI	1	1	-	-
Del Acad Public Safety	1	1	-	-
Delaware Military Acad.	1	1	-	-
East Side	1	1	-	-
Family Foundation	1	1	-	-
Gateway Charter	1	1	-	-
Kuumba	1	1	-	-
Marion T. Academy	1	1	-	-
MOT	1	1	-	-
Moyer Academy	1	1	-	-
Newark Charter	0	1	-	1
Odyssey Charter	1	1	-	-
Pencader Charter High	1	1	-	-
Prestige Academy	1	1	-	-
Reach Academy	1	1	-	-
Thomas Edison	1	1	1	-
Sussex County Totals	2	2	0	0
Georgetown Charter	1	1	-	-
Sussex Academy	1	1	-	-



Vision:

An exemplary school library program is a core component providing students with comprehensive, current resources, and information literacy instruction to enhance personal growth and competitiveness in the global work force.

Mission:

The School Libraries Council will establish an exemplary school library program to provide equitable access to students in Delaware through funding for resources, technology, and professional development to achieve national standards and effective literacies.