

SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN CANADA

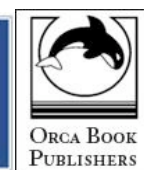
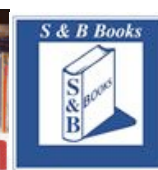
A Journal of the Canadian Association for School Libraries (CASL)

A Division of the Canadian Library Association



Central Services and Leadership for School Libraries

Volume 24 Issue 2



SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN CANADA

About SLIC

School Libraries in Canada (SLIC) Online is a journal of the **Canadian Association for School Libraries**. CASL's mission is to provide national support for the development and maintenance of excellence in Canada's school libraries, media centres, and school library personnel.

Founded in 1980 (Volume 1 Issue 1), SLIC is a national forum for teacher-librarians in Canada and promotes articles of interest on a broad range of topics from collaboration with the classroom teacher to information technology/literacy skills needed to prepare students for life-long learning.

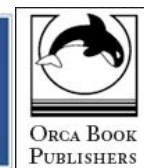
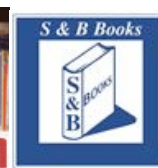
SLIC was published in print format until Volume 23 Issue 2. Since then, SLIC is published as an online journal. Older print copies are available at university libraries across Canada and recent online issues are available in our archives section.

À propos de SLIC

School Libraries in Canada (SLIC) Online est le journal professionnel du **Canadian Association for School Libraries**. La mission de CASL est de fournir un support à l'échelle nationale pour le développement et l'entretien de l'excellence dans les bibliothèques scolaires, centres médiatiques et pour le personnel travaillant dans les bibliothèques scolaires.

Fondé en 1980 (Volume 1 Édition 1), SLIC est un forum pour les professeurs bibliothécaires du Canada et publie des articles d'intérêt sur des sujets variés allant de la collaboration avec l'enseignant en classe aux compétences en alphabétisation et en technologie de l'information qui préparent les étudiants à l'apprentissage pour la durée de leur vie.

SLIC est publié en forme de magazine jusqu'au Volume 23 Édition 2. Depuis ce temps, SLIC est publié en format digital accessible sur l'Internet. De vieilles copies de SLIC sont toujours disponibles dans les bibliothèques universitaires à travers le Canada. Nos vieilles éditions de SLIC en format numériques sont accessibles en cliquant sur [Archives](#).



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Welcome!

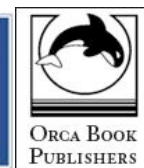
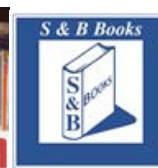
In Canada, most schools are part of a larger school board, district, or division. To help guide and coordinate the efforts of the school-based teacher-librarians, some districts employ one or more persons in positions of central leadership in school libraries. As well, some school districts have central libraries, cataloguing support, and other services to help teacher-librarians provide quality programs for students. The exact nature of these supports varies from district to district. This issue of School Libraries in Canada is devoted to exploring the topic of District-level Leadership and Services.

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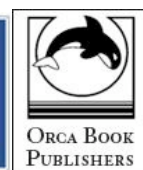
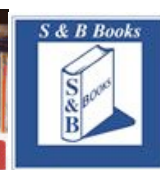
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Message from the Guest Editor

Jeanne Buckley

Jeanne Buckley is a teacher-librarian in two elementary schools in the York Catholic District School Board, north of Toronto. She is a graduate of the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning Masters Degree program at the University of Alberta.

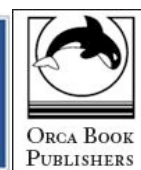
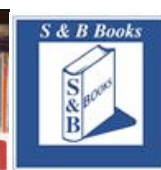
In Canada, most schools are part of a larger school board, district, or division. To help guide and coordinate the efforts of the school-based teacher-librarians, some districts employ one or more persons in positions of central leadership in school libraries. As well, some school districts have central libraries, cataloguing support, and other services to help teacher-librarians provide quality programs for students. The exact nature of these supports varies from district to district. This issue of *School Libraries in Canada* is devoted to exploring the topic of District-level Leadership and Services.

For the last few years, I have had a deep interest in district level leadership in school libraries. It is a topic that has not attracted a lot of attention in the past, particularly in Canada. Last fall, I began an inquiry into central leadership in school libraries while taking a course at the University of Alberta. This led to my being asked to be guest editor for this issue. I am currently completing a qualitative research project on central leadership in school libraries.

Through my studies, and conversations with other teacher-librarians, I have discovered that the types of services and supports provided for school libraries at the district level vary greatly across school districts in Canada and North America. Some school districts have several people employed full-time at the district level to support school libraries. They have a central library for professional resources, central cataloguing, library curriculum consultants, and a host of other services to support the teacher-librarians and library clerical staff in their districts. At the other end of the spectrum, many school districts have almost nothing. The support from the district may consist of only technical support for computers and the support gleaned by the teacher-librarians from voluntary membership in a local teacher-librarian association, if one exists.

Between both ends of this spectrum lie a large number of convoluted practices for providing support to a districts school libraries. Many districts employ consultants or coordinators who are "in charge" of school libraries. These positions may be full-time, but in many cases are part-time, with the persons in those positions having other areas of responsibility such as technology or language arts that fall under their umbrella of duties. Many districts have some sort of central library, often with video collections and professional resources for teachers – but the scope of these Central Resource Collections and responsibility for their maintenance and development can also vary greatly.

Included in this issue of *School Libraries in Canada* are: a description of the Toronto District School Board's central support for school libraries, and of the Winnipeg School Division's Library Media Services, as well as a profile of a library facilitator



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from Durham District School Board. These articles all give a picture of the kinds of central supports that exist. Karen Lindsay's article gives a different perspective. She tells the tale of a school district where financial cutbacks resulted in the loss of the position of district teacher-librarian. Sadly, her district is only one of many that have the same tale to tell.

What is leading to the elimination of these positions? Is it only financially motivated? Is the savings of one salary the true reason behind the cuts, or is the removal of the district library leadership seen as paving the way for deeper cuts at the school level? Or is it that the value of the central leadership position(s) – as measured in improved student achievement – isn't evident to the decision-makers? It is not only the leadership positions that have been threatened. Central libraries have been closed, or their budgets cut to skeletal levels. Cataloguing services have been cut back or eliminated. Movements toward automation have been stalled in their tracks.

What is the situation where you are? Do you have strong central leadership? Does your school library benefit from great central services? Or are you swimming alone?

As school-based teacher-librarians, our main purpose is to help improve student achievement. We do this in many ways. Central services are there to help us – to help us help teachers and students. Which central services (leadership, cataloguing support, computer support, professional development, coordination of efforts, mentorship, support for collection development, etc) do you see as indispensable when it comes to helping you do your job efficiently and to the best of your abilities? Imagine your job without those services. Are you going to be as effective in helping students achieve?

We often talk about our value being invisible – and how we need to advocate and market ourselves. I think that the perceived value of the services that support school libraries is only as great as the perceived value of the school libraries themselves. It's a circle. Teacher-librarians' success in helping students achieve success is dependent on the central services existence, and their existence is dependent on our success.

Jeanne Buckley



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District Library Media Centres

Gloria Hersak

Gloria Hersak Chief Librarian The Winnipeg School Division

How can a district library media centre support the educational programs and goals of schools and school divisions and the goals of the provincial curricula?

Ideally, school district library media centres contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of professionally staffed, properly equipped, and well-stocked school libraries in increasing student achievement and literacy proficiency by providing a high standard of library technical services, current and relevant professional learning resource collections, and educational leadership related to programs, materials and services.

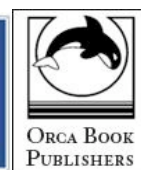
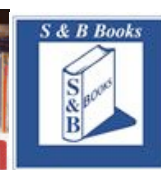
***The Crisis in Canada's School Libraries: The Case for Reform and Re-Investment* (2003) by Dr. Ken Haycock reports that, due to lack of funding, the number of qualified teacher-librarians has fallen drastically, paid clerical assistance in school libraries has been reduced or eliminated, and school library collections have stagnated or are in serious decline.**

Across the nation, qualified, paid clerical assistants are being replaced by community or parent volunteers, and qualified teacher-librarians (who have training in both education and librarianship) are being replaced by paid staff ranging from untrained clerks or teacher assistants to library technicians or classroom teachers without library qualifications.

Increasing erosion of school library staffing, collections and programs demands increasingly greater levels of support and guidance from the coordinator and the staff of the division library media centre to compensate for local conditions which, in a school-based decision-making environment, may vary widely from school to school.

The range of services offered by a division library media centre varies depending upon the size and the layout of the physical facility, the number and qualifications of the staff, and the size of the population being served. *The Role of School Division/District Library Media Centres in Manitoba* (1998), a publication of the School Library Administrators of Manitoba, indicates that any or all of the following types of services may be provided to and for schools: leadership; acquisition, distribution and management of learning resources; evaluation and selection of learning resources; management of the division library media centre; design and production of learning resources; information technology; physical facilities.

Under the direction of the Chief Librarian, Library Media Services of The Winnipeg School Division provides a comprehensive range of services to school division staff. A continuous improvement philosophy and a commitment to customer service have allowed the Library Media Services team of 12, comprised of professional librarians, qualified library technicians and locally trained library clerks, to achieve considerable success as a central library media service provider to 77 elementary,



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middle and secondary schools.

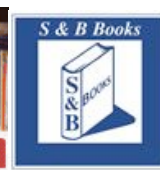
Library Media Services has taken a leadership role in providing technical, library and consultant services to The Winnipeg School Division in many endeavours:

Collection Development

- assisting school library staff with order verification by providing division-wide access to *Global Books in Print* and vendor catalogues;
- coordinating a reviewing program for teacher-librarians and publishing their reviews in a quarterly journal to assist school library staff with selection of appropriate learning resources;
- Union Catalogues
- developing and maintaining *The Winnipeg School Division Online Union Catalogue* at <http://wsdcatalogue.org> to facilitate inter-school resource-sharing and to provide access to Library Media Services professional learning resource collections;
- developing and delivering tutorials for the *Union Catalogue*;
- participating in the Manitoba Library Consortium to enlarge the collections available to division staff through inter-library loan and to provide access to consortium pricing for digital resources and supplies;
- Communication
- publishing a monthly journal and a monthly newsletter and distributing a monthly information packet to schools for communication, professional development, advocacy and awareness purposes with regard to school libraries, school library related issues, and division library media centre services;
- creating and maintaining a website at http://www.wsd1.org/PC_LMS/ to provide online access to a variety of local, national and international school library resources;

Archival Services

- maintaining and providing access to a central photographic archive and archival materials for schools that have closed;
- preserving, storing and providing access to archival student records;
- archiving monthly publications on the Library Media Services website;
- Provision and Circulation of Centralized Resources
- building and maintaining collections of current and relevant professional education resources in periodical, monograph, audio-visual, digital and online formats to support teaching and learning in the division's classrooms;
- implementing an integrated library automation system which allows advance booking of audio-visual equipment, computer peripherals, professional development publications, and classroom learning resources;
- providing access to central collections by creating pathfinders to resources and by faxing "hot" lists of new acquisitions to schools on a monthly basis;
- Cataloguing/Automation Services
- setting an acceptable division-wide standard for cataloguing records;
- collaborating with commercial cataloguing partners to implement necessary MARC record profile changes as they occur;
- maintaining a two-month cataloguing turnaround time for an average of 25,000 school library resources per year;
- providing a distribution point for school library materials within the division and to outside agencies;
- maintaining a central union cataloguing database of 500,000 unique records with multiple holdings codes;



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- managing cataloguing and library automation networks;
- maintaining school specific websites for delivery of electronic MARC records;
- providing daily communication with school library staff through an e-mail distribution list;
- assisting schools with preparation for library automation;

Services at the District Library Media Centre

- providing meeting space and coffee service within the Reference Library for groups of 8-12;
- providing a technology centre with 12 workstations for individual and group use;
- providing a casual reading lounge and individual computer workstations for client use;
- providing library service to clients two evenings per week;
- providing in-depth reference and information services;
- Professional Development
- providing orientation/training programs for teachers and for clerical staff new to school libraries;
- developing and delivering tutorials in the use of digital and online resources;
- coordinating an annual program of professional development sessions for teacher-librarian staff;
- coordinating an annual series of three meetings, each with a professional development focus, for both teacher-librarians and for paraprofessional staff in charge of school libraries;
- providing annual professional development opportunities targeted at teachers, teacher-librarians and/or school administrators;
- negotiating and delivering school-based professional development sessions upon request;
- collaborating with division consultants to deliver curriculum integration sessions for classroom teachers;
- Consultant Services
- providing school administrators with advice and recommendations for improvement of school library facilities, programs, staffing and services;
- Publishing Support Materials
- developing and regularly updating the online *Library Media Services Handbook* to assist school library staff with standard and local library practice and procedures;
- creating and distributing teaching/learning aids such as Cybersafety bookmarks and Big6 posters and bookmarks; and
- participating in the development and editing of curriculum support materials and teaching units.

Division library media centres achieve economies of scale unattainable in a decentralized school library system. Cost-effective and equitable access to professional resource collections is realized and costly duplication of effort and inconsistency in cataloguing and processing is eliminated.

Are division library media centres essential? Absolutely! Do they represent value for money? You bet!

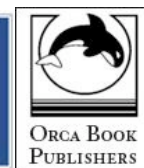
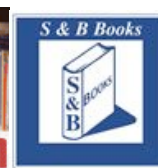


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The Role of a Library Facilitator: At the Buffet with Nancy Dalrymple

Jeanne Buckley

Jeanne Buckley is a teacher-librarian in two elementary schools in the York Catholic District School Board, north of Toronto. She is a graduate of the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning Masters Degree program at the University of Alberta

Nancy Dalrymple leads a busy life. As the mother of a precocious four-year old, and the Facilitator of Libraries for the Durham District School board, she has a lot of responsibilities on her plate, literally. (As I write this, she is sliding fresh, hot cookies onto a plate to cool, some of several dozen cookies she is baking for an event at her church tomorrow.)

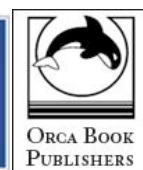
Her teacher-librarian position is unique as teacher-librarian positions go. Instead of being in a school library teaching students information literacy skills and running reading programs for her students, she works out of the board office teaching teachers (and teacher-librarians) information literacy skills, and running reading programs for the entire school board. She facilitates library programs for 105 elementary schools and 20 high schools and supports nearly that many teacher-librarians. It is a full plate.

Still, with all of her responsibilities, she generously took the time to meet with me, a stranger to her, for a two-hour buffet lunch and interview on December 4, 2003 .

Dalrymple has been in her current position as Facilitator of Libraries and Computers for 3 ½ years, having first covered the maternity leave of her predecessor, and later taking the post permanently. She brings to the position 10 years of experience as an elementary school teacher-librarian and almost as many as a teacher.

Originally, Dalrymple taught core French combined with, as she put it, "something different every year" (personal communication, Dec. 4, 2003). Eventually, she was asked to consider becoming the teacher-librarian for her dual-track French immersion school, a position that had previously belonged to two part-time teacher-librarians, one French and one English. After some consideration, Dalrymple accepted the position, and has never looked back. Since then, she has held teacher-librarian positions in several other schools. Just prior to moving into the facilitator position, Dalrymple spent close to two years in a brand new school, where she opened the library.

In her current position, Dalrymple is responsible for both libraries and computers. She feels that the library responsibility is about 60% of her time but says it is difficult for her to judge because a lot of her library-related responsibilities are also technology-related, and also because the responsibilities come in waves. Part of her computer portfolio is providing training for teacher-librarians and teachers in new software programs, but her main computer-related role is supporting the pilot Kindergarten report card. Understandably, in the weeks leading up to the three reporting periods, her time will be taken up with that responsibility. Dalrymple's other technology-related responsibilities include training primary teachers on using



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computers in their language program and helping to support the Curriculum Unit Planner software.

When she has her library hat on, Dalrymple supports the teacher-librarians, particularly the new teacher-librarians (of which there were 25 last year – nearly 1/5 of those in the board) in using the library automation software and implementing the library curriculum. She tries to visit each new teacher-librarian at least once in their first year, and will also go out to visit experienced teacher-librarians, and even teach a class or two, on an as requested basis. For example, she might demonstrate a lesson that integrates the *Information Studies* curriculum (OSLA, 1999) with the curriculum expectations of a particular grade or she might model collaborative planning with a teacher for a new teacher-librarian.

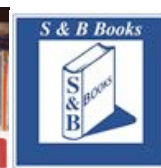
One thing Dalrymple is particularly pleased about is the implementation of a mentorship program for new teacher-librarians within the board. This is something she says would likely not have happened without someone in her position because the “average out-in-the-field teacher-librarian doesn’t have the time or the contacts to set up that sort of a program” (personal communication, Dec. 4, 2003).

Dalrymple supports the collection development responsibilities of the board’s teacher-librarians in several ways. She organizes bus trips to library suppliers, and if there is a resource that can be more cheaply obtained through bulk ordering, she facilitates that opportunity for teacher-librarians. The individual teacher-librarians make all purchasing decisions at the school library level. Dalrymple does not create recommended buying lists. She feels that the teacher-librarians support each other by going together to the suppliers. She does, however, make resource recommendations for the board’s Professional Library.

Dalrymple doesn’t work alone at the board level. There is a librarian who runs the board Professional Library which includes videos, audio-visual equipment, novels, kits, and other teacher-resources. This colleague also organizes the board courier system and looks after the contracts for library automation software and online databases. Dalrymple works closely with the professional librarian, as Dalrymple’s duties include the ongoing support of those electronic resources.

Working partnerships exist with various other facilitators on a project-by-project basis. Dalrymple and the English Facilitator prepared a professional development in-service for teacher-librarians and teachers on how to create technology-based assignments that minimize plagiarism. Dalrymple has also been part of several committees, such as one to secure funding for a ‘Books and Breakfast’ program. With another facilitator, Dalrymple created an online literature discussion forum as part of their implementation of the Ontario Library Association’s Red Maple reading program. Because the board has a lot of French Immersion schools, Dalrymple also works closely with the French consultant to support the teacher-librarians in these schools.

Dalrymple is particularly proud of the partnerships that exist in the board between the Early Literacy reading initiative and the library program. She has heard of problems in other boards, but the natural fit between these two programs is being taken advantage of in Durham District. Teacher-librarians and the itinerant Early Literacy Resource Teachers work together to support kindergarten and primary reading.



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Keeping informed on library initiatives appearing throughout the province is a personal priority of Dalrymple. She is a member of OLA (Ontario Library Association) and participates in its listservs. She is also a member of TALCO (The Association of Library Consultants and Coordinators of Ontario), which is an organization of persons in similar library leadership positions in school boards across Ontario. She brings the information she learns back to the two teacher-librarian associations she belongs to in her board, 'Four to Six', the secondary teacher-librarians group, and the Durham Elementary Teacher-Librarians Association.

While the support of teachers-librarians is an important role of Dalrymple's, she feels her most valuable role is advocacy. Her board has a strong history of providing teacher-librarians. Last year every school in her board had at least a half-time teacher-librarian, hired by the principal, with occasional interview question input from the library facilitator. Elementary schools with over 650 students qualified for a full-time teacher-librarian, and some of the largest high schools had two full time teacher-librarians and a library technician. Put that beside a local board where many schools did have a teacher-librarian at all and you can see that Durham district has a lot to potentially lose if the role is not continually advocated for.

Dalrymple produces a monthly newsletter that is sent to the board superintendents, federation officers, and teacher-librarians. She has also invited the director to teacher-librarian association meetings. She takes every opportunity to advocate for the teacher-librarian role in her daily interactions with the Administrative Officers, and the Program Superintendent she works under in the board hierarchy. But, Dalrymple stresses that hers is but one voice. Alone, one voice isn't that powerful.

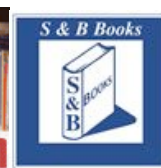
The most important thing she does as far as advocacy is to encourage the other teacher-librarians to add their own voices. And they do. Teacher-librarians in Durham board are very inspirational. They produce school and staff newsletters, organize reading programs, and speak at conferences. You can find the Durham teacher-librarians involved in many aspects of the Ontario Library Association, including at least ten who presented at the 2004 OLA Super-Conference. Because of strong teacher-librarians who support literacy initiatives, in some schools principals have chosen to increase teacher-librarian staffing above the allocated levels.

Being a leader and providing support for over one hundred such dynamic teacher-librarians would be a daunting task for anyone, but Dalrymple rises to the challenge with quiet grace. Juggling the demanding roles of supporting libraries and computers seems effortless for her. There is a buffet of possible responsibilities that someone in a district library leadership role can choose from. From consultation, to communication, to coordination, to administration, to leadership (ALA, 1998), Dalrymple samples them all. While her plate may be loaded with personal, library, and computer-related responsibilities, you can bet that Dalrymple will efficiently polish them off and go up for more.

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The Role and Value of a District-Level Coordinator of School Libraries: A Review of the Research

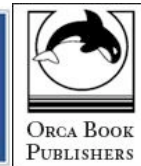
Jeanne Buckley

Jeanne Buckley is a teacher-librarian in two elementary schools in the York Catholic District School Board, north of Toronto. She is a graduate of the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning Masters Degree program at the University of Alberta.

A district-level coordinator of libraries (often referred to in the research as a district library media director) can have many definitions. A "district library media director [is] a media professional with appropriate advanced managerial, administrative, and supervisory competencies who qualifies for an administrative or supervisory position and is responsible for library media program development at the district level" (Nelson, 1988, p. 7). A "district library media director [is] the individual responsible for supervision of the elementary school media center staff and the District School Library Media Center supportive personnel [whose] primary role is to provide leadership in all aspects of the school library media program" (Eberhard, 1975, p. 7). As these two definitions show, confusion exists as to the exact nature of the position. Over the past three decades a small number of researchers have attempted to describe, define, and measure the role and value of this position.

In the field of school librarianship, the role and value of a teacher-librarian (or library media specialist) is one area where plenty of valuable research has been completed, but there hasn't been a lot of research into the role and value of a district-level coordinator of school libraries. This is somewhat understandable as there aren't that many of district-level coordinators of libraries, and those that exist are difficult to find. A study completed in 1988 identified names of only "648 district library media directors", in all of the United States (Nelson, 1988, p. 27) after employing several different strategies for discovering names including contacting state media supervisors, and presidents of state level associations (Nelson, 1988, p. 20). The lack of a standard title or role for the position from district to district or from state to state exacerbates the problem. The difficulties in conducting research into this role partially explain why this research area has largely been ignored. Regardless of the obvious difficulties, there have been individuals who have chosen topics related to the role and value of district-level coordinators of school libraries for their dissertations. This literature review will focus on these dissertations.

In 1975, Eberhard completed a comprehensive dissertation on the value of a "District School Media Director" (p. 5). The stated purpose of this study was "to examine the involvement of the District School Media Directors in the organization and development of Kansas elementary school library media centers, and ... to determine the effect of this involvement" (p. 169) on six service areas: "Educational Program Development, Administration and Supervisory, Instruction, Acquisition and Evaluation, Special Services, [and] Preparation and Production of Material" (p. 171-2). Eberhard (1975) found that media personnel in attendance centers with a district school media director were more involved in the six areas than those in centers without a district school media director (p. 172). It was also found that school libraries in centers with a district school media director, more professional contact hours were provided, but in school libraries without a district school media



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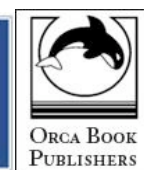
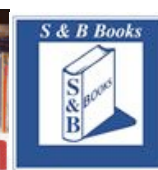
director, more clerical contact hours were provided and the library was open more hours in total (p. 176-7). Even so, the author concluded that, "the presence of a District School Media Director does appear to affect positively library media programs and services" (p. 178) and recommended that districts "seeking to develop an elementary instructional program that provides students with multi-stimuli for learning through library centers should consider these evident values of leadership and supervision to the library media program by a District School Media Director" (p. 182-3). This dissertation gives a strongly positive endorsement for the value of a district-level coordinator of school libraries; Coleman reported similar findings seven years later.

In his dissertation, Coleman (1982) looked at building-level school library professionals' perceptions of the guiding principles of media programs. He found that, "those library media professionals who reported the existence of a district-level administrator responsible for library media programs had significantly higher implementation ratings for eight component areas: personnel, budget, purchasing, production, access and delivery systems, program evaluation, collections, and facilities." (Coleman, 1982)

Andwood's (1984) dissertation on the leadership role of a library media director is not as useful to those interested in school librarianship as those previously mentioned. It is designed to add "to the knowledge about leadership" (Andwood, 1984, p. 19), rather than to the knowledge about librarianship. The contents of the literature review section supports this, as only the third of the "three aspects investigated", "1) Trends in leadership theory; 2) the applicable measuring instrument;" and "3) investigation of the leadership role" (p. 21), relates to librarianship. The study compares the perceptions and expectations of library media directors and their school library media specialists on the role of the director. Andwood concluded that for both the library media directors, and the library media specialists, perceptions of the actual duties carried out are lower than expectations of the ideal duties to be carried out by the library media directors in several areas of leadership (p. 112-3). In general, this study has questionable usefulness in the current North American context as the sexist nature of the instrument, which uses "male pronouns throughout" (p. 115), and the sexist nature of the method, which compares perceptions of male library media directors with perceptions of female library media directors do not conform to current attitudes or hiring practices.

Krentz's (1986) Wisconsin-based study of the perceptions of library media director's, principal's, and school library media specialist's perceptions of the competencies of library media directors found some surprising results. This survey found that all three groups were in agreement as to the competencies. The researcher expected that there would be differences and that these differences would help the state's two school library professional organizations re-examine goals and provide feedback as to the performance and non-performance of the defined competencies for the position. Instead, the surprising agreement of all three groups on many different competencies was attributed to "an information campaign on library media programs and services for the various professional school administrator organizations" (p. 167) that was waged by the Wisconsin School Library Media Association in the years prior to the completion of the study.

The study pointed out that, "If there is a breakdown in communications among the library media director, principal, and library media specialist, ... full implementation of the library media program is hampered" (p. 11) and that, "by examining the perceptions of [the three groups], ... there may be indications of where the misunderstandings or misconceptions occur." (p. 11). This did not happen in this study.



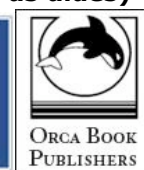
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While this study did show some positive results as to the agreement of three stakeholder groups as to the competencies (role) of the Library Media Director, it also inadvertently pointed out some jurisdictional differences as to the perceived value of the position, as during the preparations for the study, "it was learned [that] several full-time library media directors retired or resigned and those school districts decided not to refill the position" (Krentz, 1986, p. 177). The author suggested that research as to why some school districts did not feel the position of library media director was "crucial to implementing their library media program" (p. 177) would be interesting to the library media community.

Zsiray's (1986) study on elementary school library staffing patterns revealed some related disturbing conclusions. This study compared the professional activities in school library media centers with four different staffing models. It was found that "district-level library media specialist support for building-level library media specialists did not contribute to higher levels of professional performance" (p. x) and that, "the contributions made by certified building-level elementary school library media specialists were only marginally different in most cases from programs offered by elementary school library media aides" (p. 136). It was not discussed in this study that the results found might be due to understaffing of libraries (in this case, staffed with either a library media specialists or a library media aide, but not both), which might cause persons in either position to be consumed with duties related to the basic operation and circulation of the library and to be unable to carry out specific duties related to their position which differentiate it from the other. This understaffing would also minimize the effect a district-level media specialist could have on the quality of the programs as the building-level staff are unable to do more than the minimum to keep the library operating. As such, its findings are somewhat unable to be generalized to school library situations in which both professional and clerical positions are assigned, as is recommended by current Canadian standards (Asselin, Branch, & Oberg, 2003, p. 19).

Nelson's (1988) dissertation similarly has discouraging findings for the position of district-level coordinator of school libraries. It also has some design problems. This study was a survey of "district library media directors and their superintendents in 48 states and the District of Columbia" (p. 23). While the stated purposes of this study are "(a) to determine the number of district library media directors in the United States, (b) to identify and describe the services and tasks that were actually performed by district library media directors and (c) to determine how influential district library media directors were judged to be by school superintendents in building quality library media programs" (p. 5) the actual hypotheses relate to comparing the influence of trained library media directors with untrained, or comparing the influence of library media directors who supervise professional staff with those who only supervise aides (p. 5-6). The hypotheses of this study fail to relate to the state purposes. In addition, the data analysis failed to reject any of the null hypotheses.

However, some small evidence for the value of a district-level coordinator of school libraries can be gleaned. Nelson's (1988) detailed analysis showed, "at the .05 level of significance" (p. 48) (or higher), that "district library media directors rated their influence" (p. 48) on "program planning, maintenance, public information, program evaluation and production" (p. 48) "higher than did their respective superintendents" (p. 48). It also showed that for the district library media director, having library media training had a significantly positive effect on their perceived influence on some program areas (but not on their overall perceived influence) (p. 50-2, 56-7) and likewise that supervising professional staff (as well as aides)



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correlated with higher perceived influence on some program areas than just supervising aides. (p. 52-5, 60-1). It is not, however, evident from this research whether district-level coordinators of school libraries are valuable enough to justify paying the salary of the position.

The main additions of Nelson's (1988) work to knowledge in the field were the descriptive statistics, which gave a good picture of the typical district library media director in the United States. The data showed that "the majority of media directors were females who served an average of 38 schools" had "a Master's Degree in Instructional Media or Library Science and ... 5 years of experience as a classroom teacher, 6 years experience as a building level library media specialist, and 10 years experience as a district library media director" (p. 45). About role of the position, "the data also indicated that the district library media director's position was not a full-time media-related position ... and ... in the overall administrative hierarchy, district library media directors generally occupied subordinate, non-administrative positions" (p. 45-6). This was supported by written comments of 35 of the participants, which "indicated that their role was not supervisory in the sense of evaluating or having direct authority over building-level library media personnel ... [it] was one of consultant and advisor and that ... principals were responsible for program and personnel evaluations" (p. 42-3). These statistics give a good picture of the role of the district library media director in 1998 in the United States. It gives a good basis against which to measure changes to the role over time.

Coulter (1990) has also added to the picture of the role of the district-level coordinators of libraries. This study looked at the reported duties of 217 district library media directors in 8 states and compared them to the "duties ascribed to them by the 1988 national library Guidelines, Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs" (p. viii). The study found that of the five functions outlined in the guidelines, "the greatest area of participation on the part of the responding district library media directors was in the area of consultation followed closely by leadership" (p. 26). The least involvement was in the area of "coordination" (p. 29). In general the study reported that, "more than half of the district media directors in the eight states reported their participation in these duties" (p. 30), but "further research is needed to determine what other duties the district library media directors are performing that are not attributed to them in the Guidelines" (p. 31).

While most of the pieces of research located on this topic for this paper were dissertations, one other piece was obtained. Miller and Moran (1983) included the employment of a "district media coordinator" (Miller & Moran, 1983, p. 107) in their questionnaire on library expenditures, but "respondents were not asked to describe district-level resources and services" (p. 110). Their study did not clearly demonstrate advantages to a school media program of a district media coordinator (p. 110) as results showed that "schools without district coordinators [had] more money per pupil to spend on resources" (p. 110). Positive results for the value of district media coordinators included a "larger AV collection" (p. 111), "slightly more" AV purchases (p. 111), higher clerical assistance (p. 110), and higher salaries for school media specialists (p. 110) in schools with district media coordinators.

In general, the design of this survey was inappropriate for assessing the value of a district media coordinator to a school library program, even in the narrow area of expenditures, as the survey did not collect information on the existence, collection size, or expenditures of a central library in the district. Theoretically, diversion of funds from schools to a central library collection might explain why expenditures in these schools were lower. However, having a central library means access to more resources for the students and staff in a school.



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The overall conclusion to be drawn from the research reviewed above is that a definitive role or answer as to the value of a district-level coordinator of libraries has not been reached. The conclusions drawn in the research above are contradictory and are based on data that does not show an obvious trend. This may be due to the fact that the research has been carried out in climates of inconsistent staffing at both the district and building levels. It may be true that in order for district-level coordinators to be able to properly support the school library programs, building level staffing of both professional (qualified teacher-librarian) and clerical (qualified administrative) staff members needs to be sufficient for persons in both roles to be able to carry out all of the duties assigned to them, and not just be able to do the minimum to keep the library running. Perhaps further research should be carried out in areas where higher levels of staffing are provided in the school libraries.

Throughout the introductions, purposes, and literature reviews of the research pieces discussed above, the lack of research in this area was lamented. In addition, a notable lack of Canadian research into the role and value of the district-level coordinator of libraries exists. Certainly there is a great need for some Canadian research on the topic.

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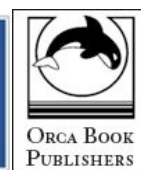
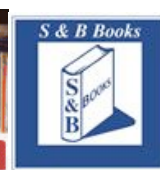
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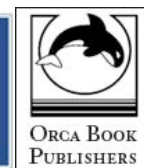
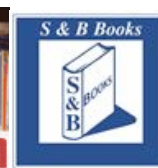
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The Role and Value of a District-Level Coordinator of School Libraries: A Review of the Literature

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District Library Coordinator, Library Consultant, Library Coordinator, Regional School Library Media Specialist, District Head of Library: whatever you call it, whatever title you give it, this role has been nearly completely absent from school library literature for more than 15 years. Whether it is because the role is diminishing, the number of district-level library leaders is too small to constitute an audience, or for some other reason, is unknown. Nevertheless, discussion of the role, responsibilities, and value of a district level coordinator has been ignored by most journals and publications.

Lack of Publication in this Area

An exhaustive search of many indexes and databases will turn up relatively few pertinent articles on the topic. Limiting searches to recent years turns up only a handful. For some reason, articles on this topic have been few and far between. A possible reason might be the challenges to research in this field.

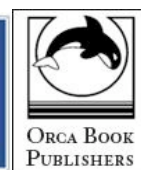
Inconsistent Terminology in Previous Publications

A challenge to defining the role and value of a district-level coordinator of school libraries is the ambiguity and inconsistency of terminology and job-titles related to the position.

The following titles for a person in a district leadership role over libraries are used in publications referenced in this article: "Coordinator of Library Services" (Williams & Buddy, 2001), "Coordinator in the Department of Educational Media" (Williams & Buddy, 2001), "District Area Curriculum Specialist" (Doiron & Davies, 1998), "District Library Coordinator" (Asselin, Branch and Oberg, 2003), and "Coordinator for the District Library" (Asselin et al., 2003). Even within a single article or publication, multiple titles may be used.

The use of a consistent term for this role is complicated by the fact that titles for the role vary from district to district. The library leadership role may be combined with other responsibilities into one position and a new title created to reflect the combined duties.

One more complicating factor is the terms used to refer to the school-based professional staff in the library. The terms 'teacher-librarian' and 'school library media specialist' are common in most parts of North America, but some use the term "school library media coordinator" or "library media coordinator" (Fowler, 1992) to refer to these school based professionals.



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This confusion is not limited to the North American context. Alasdair Campbell (1989) comments on a similar nomenclature-confusion in Britain . Unless a small number of titles for this position come into popular use, research into District-Level Coordinators of School Libraries, will continue to be hampered by the fact that the position has to be defined by its responsibilities, rather than by its title.

Difficult Identification of Individuals as Research Subjects

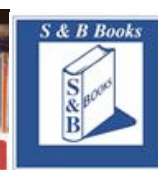
The lack of consistency in job-title, as well as the combining of different responsibilities within one role could make it difficult to determine who exactly in a particular district is in charge of libraries. As well, since decisions determining what district-level positions exist (and which responsibilities each position entails), are made by individual districts, responsibilities over library aspects may be divided over several different people. A computer technology consultant may be responsible for library automation, a curriculum consultant may be responsible for the instructional program, and a third consultant may be responsible for collection development initiatives. To further complicate matters, duties and responsibilities may be shuffled from year-to-year, or when retirements and staffing changes occur. Titles change from district-to-district and from year-to-year, and the collection of responsibilities carried out by such a person do as well. These staffing realities would make research data collection challenging, as it would be difficult to keep track of an individual (or individuals) to participate in a study or survey. Nevertheless, there are some people commenting and making suggestions as to the roles, responsibilities and values of having a person (or persons) in district leadership positions for school libraries, as will be discussed below.

Roles and Responsibilities

An examination of the available literature on District-Level Coordinators of School Libraries reveals a strong list of recommended responsibilities listed by Asselin, Branch and Oberg (2003) who state that a District Library Coordinator should act "as an advocate for information literacy and instructional technologies", help "coordinate the integration of information literacy outcomes", and "may also be involved in developing and maintaining a district resource collection that supports teaching a learning"(2003, p. 54).

This is by far the most comprehensive source for responsibilities of this role. A more detailed list on the following page has 12 other listed responsibilities (Asselin, et al., 2003, p. 55). These are summarized (for brevity) below and numbers have been added for comparison:

1. Administering board-wide library budget
2. Keeping current with standards
3. Helping administers select, supervise, and evaluate library staff
4. Helping teacher-librarians develop successful library programs
5. Supervising central purchasing and cataloging of resources
6. Serving on curriculum and technology committees
7. Reporting to senior administration on library matters
8. Assisting with professional development related to information literacy and communication technologies
9. Participating in professional organizations and continuing education
10. Serving as school library liaison in the community
11. Educating parents and others about the information literacy program
12. Helping to plan construction and renovation of library facilities
13. (Asselin, et al., 2003, p. 55)



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One other source referenced in this article provides a detailed description of the role of a District-Level Coordinator for School Libraries. This 40-year-old publication of the Saskatchewan Association of School Librarians (SASL, 1964) uses the term "supervisor of school libraries" (SASL, 1964, p. 21). 12 roles of this supervisor, as described in the document are summarized below (numbers are added for comparison with Asselin, et al., 2003).

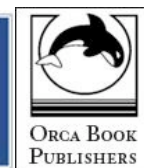
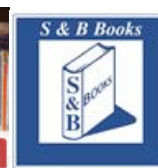
- Work with the provincial department of education to ensure adequate financing (1)
- Sets up standards common to all schools (2)
- Evaluate the library program and report to senior administrators (3, 7)
- Providing democratic leadership and guidance (4)
- Helping schools organize services that meet the needs of the curriculum (4)
- Make frequent contact with individual schools (4)
- Shares responsibility for the total educational program (6)
- Provides in-service for untrained teacher-librarians (8)
- Support the school library association (9)
- Maintain good relationships with community library services (10)
- Interprets the role of the library to administrators (11)
- Promote the library program to the general public (11)

A comparison of the two lists, one recent, and one old, show that responsibilities for cataloguing, and opening of new facilities are included in the newer list (Asselin, et al. 2003). Other articles add a little to the roles set out by the two above.

Doiron and Davies mention a "district area curriculum specialist" (1998, p. 4), but do not give specific responsibilities for that role. Instead they define a role for the "district area curriculum specialist" and the "school administrator" together to support the "new partnership" between teacher-librarian and classroom teacher (1998, p. 4) by "providing curriculum leadership, supplying adequate budgets, establishing timetables that encourage the collaborative process and actively monitoring the planning, implementation, and evaluation components of the program" (1998, p. 5).

Williams and Buddy (2001) outline clearly that coordinators need to "nurture new library media specialists" in order to retain them and to assist them in "their support of and implementation of the goals of the school system" in an article that describes a program designed to do so. They also mention that coordinators "find it helpful to complement the orientation and mentorship programs with visits to local schools where new library media specialists are assigned".

The School Library Administrators of Manitoba (2000), in an interesting perspective, outline the role of the division library media centres and their staffs, rather than the role of a school library coordinator. One of the roles of the centre is "educational leadership" (p. 10) which "is provided by the Division Library Media Centre Coordinator and staff" (p. 10). Specific duties related to educational leadership include: determining selection policies, serving on curriculum committees, promoting division and province-wide policies and initiatives, organizing staff development workshops, and facilitating resource sharing (p. 10). Other roles attributed to the division library media centre (and presumably it's staff) are providing "cost effective ways to acquire learning resources", reinforcing "the concept of equitable access", providing a "union catalogue", and designing and



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producing learning resources (p. 11). As well the "centre personnel promote the use of educational technology and investigate new resources involving educational technology" (p. 12) by promoting "integration of information literacy skills with information technology skills" (p. 12), promoting library automation, and providing "support and training to schools" (p. 12). In this document, while the focus seems to be on the institutions rather than the persons, clearly the personnel of the institutions are the ones carrying out much of the role as defined. However, the article does not state what kind of staff are in place in such centres, except to use the term, "coordinator". There is no mention of the kinds of qualifications a coordinator or other staff would have.

The Saskatchewan Association of School Librarians document is the only one reviewed in this paper that sets out qualifications desired in a "supervisor of school libraries". It suggests that a good supervisor has "professional library training, but also professional teacher preparation and actual experience as a school librarian". These qualifications are stated as necessary to "help the supervisor develop good rapport with the librarians and administrators" (SASL, 1964, p. 21). However, Christine McIntosh (1987) sets out qualifications for a "computer/media coordinator in a public school system" (p. 16), a position she describes as "critical to the successful implementation of computer education", as "a person who has a background as a media specialist/librarian and as a computer education instructor" (p. 17). While the responsibilities of the position she describes are more related to computers and software than school libraries in general, she does feel that a ramification of having such a media coordinator is "a renaissance of the library as the academic hub of the school" (p.18).

Value

Several publications stress the value of having school district leadership. In *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada*, Marlene Asselin, Jennifer L. Branch and Dianne Oberg (2003) state that "a collaborative team of educators", including "a qualified teacher-librarian, classroom teachers, the school administrator, *curriculum consultants, a coordinator for the district library, and the superintendent of the school district*" [italics added], "is required to achieve information literacy and successful school library programs and services".

Doiron and Davies state that a more positive student performance on "outcome measures of literacy, information handling and use, and mastery of subject content" is only possible "when there is recognition that the library program is a partnership ... of the teacher-librarian and the classroom teacher, supported by school district leadership". (1998, p. ix) They also state the "district area curriculum specialist" and the principal play "critical" (1998, p. 4) support roles to the teachers and teacher librarians by creating an environment where "professional collaboration is allowed to flourish" (1998, p.5).

In Britain, while the overall framework for school library provision appears quite different from North America, a similar need for leadership positions is expressed by Campbell (1989) who states that the designation of "specialist posts of Adviser and Inspector for school libraries and school library services" is "one of the most likely roads to improvement in the provision of school libraries".

The Saskatchewan Association of School Librarians says that "competent supervision helps the school organize services that meet the particular needs of its curriculum and its students", facilitates a "more even development" for "all schools"



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and reinforces "every individual or local effort to provide better library programmes in the school" (SASL, 1964, p. 21).

None of the professional references reviewed here give conclusive evidence for the value of having a district-level coordinator of school libraries, but instead express an unsupported "need" and give examples of the benefits a person in such a role can provide. These examples of benefits primarily manifest themselves in "assistance": Assistance for teacher-librarians with their responsibilities and assistance for administration with theirs.

With so many of the described roles of such a position being helping or shared responsibilities, able to be carried out by someone in another position, be it teacher-librarian, school-based administrator, or senior administrator, it is not surprising that the role and value of the position is difficult to determine, and varies so much from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. It is also not surprising that many jurisdictions are eliminating or collapsing positions of leadership in school libraries. A biennial survey of school library funding, with more than 637 participants from across the United States, found that "more than half of the districts surveyed have no district-level director of library media centers" (Miller and Shontz, 2001, p.51).

People holding these positions, and those trying to establish them within a school board, might be better to look for responsibilities that could only be carried out by a person in the role of District Level Coordinator of School Libraries and to emphasize these responsibilities (and their financial benefits) to the board. As well, the value of these responsibilities in supporting student achievement should be stressed. This may aid in the justification and establishment of a position that many in the school library field see as beneficial.

Certainly, more research and publication needs to be done in this area. Research needs to be done to determine what current models of library-related leadership staffing at the district level exist, and to compare effectiveness of these models in supporting strong school library programs.

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Mourning the Loss of the District Teacher-Librarian

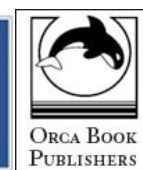
Karen Lindsay

Karen Lindsay is the teacher-librarian at Reynolds Secondary School in Victoria, BC. She has a Masters in Teacher-librarianship from the University of Alberta's Distance Learning program and is out-going vice-president of the Greater Victoria Teacher Librarians' Association. In January 2006, Karen and her daughter will be embarking on a one-year exchange with the teacher-librarian of Narooma High School in NSW, Australia.

In June, 2002, School District 61, Victoria, opted to eliminate the position of District Teacher-Librarian as a cost-saving measure. Government cuts were deep, and the District was making an effort to meet budgetary restrictions while having as little impact on students as possible. In their terms, that meant cutting non-classroom, rather than classroom positions. However, as events have unfolded, the elimination of our District Teacher-Librarian has proved to be a false economy, one whose impact on student learning may be felt for many years to come.

In the late nineties, as a result of pressure from the British Columbia Teacher-Librarian Association and Pacific Instructional Media Association, the BC Ministry of Education made new monies available in order to staff school libraries across the province at reasonable and consistent levels. Some districts, where teacher-librarians had been maintained, received very little new cash. Others, like Victoria, where particularly at the elementary level library staffing had been slashed, received lots of new dollars. At the same time, John Caldwell of Cowichan School District and Don Hamilton of the University of Victoria had collaborated in researching and writing a report (1998) for the Victoria School District in support of its District Resource Centre that was under threat of closure. (I remember the period in question well; teachers were invited to come to the District Resource Centre and take whatever they liked from the collection, and they did. It was a disaster.) In their article, they mentioned a need for district leadership, not only for the DRC but for teacher-librarians as well. The combination of provincial money and the report motivated the District to hire a District Teacher-Librarian to train the sudden influx of new teacher-librarians, fill the knowledge gap at the district level about the role of teacher-librarians, and advocate for excellence in school libraries. With some hesitation, John Caldwell left Cowichan and accepted the position in Victoria.

The greatest need was for training, so John got to work. He got University of Victoria to offer courses in teacher-librarianship, offered extensive training in co-operative planning to new T-Ls, gave practical workshops on running school libraries and motivational workshops for tLs, teachers and principals. District Curriculum Co-ordinators really appreciated his work because of the support he was able to offer their curricula through libraries. Trustees became a little more knowledgeable about school libraries and teacher-librarians. Principals began to understand that real support for their schools was available through the District Teacher-Librarian. Tens of thousands of dollars a year were saved as a result of bulk buying initiatives.



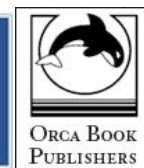
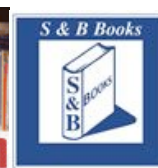
SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN CANADA

After 18 months, John was promoted to Co-ordinator of Elementary Instruction and Judith Reid became our District Teacher-Librarian. Alas, what could have been a golden era for school libraries was to be shortlived. Two years later, both positions were axed. John Caldwell took an earlier retirement, whereupon Cowichan District snatched him up again as a consultant, and Judith Reid became vice-principal in an inner-city school. She is now responsible for the Home Learners' Link. Because of her devotion to her previous duties, she continues to be responsible for the selection and acquisition of resources for the District Resource Centre, is the District Contact for video purchases through Educational Resource Acquisition Consortium and serves on the District Literacy Committee. All of these are voluntary contributions of her time and expertise.

Sadly, I can't tell you how having a District Teacher-Librarian has supported me, because the position was cut two months before I started my first job as a teacher-librarian. I can tell you that her absence made my initiation into the mystery of the school library a harsh one. And I can share my experience and that of my t-l colleagues since then.

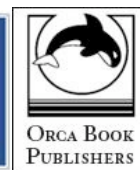
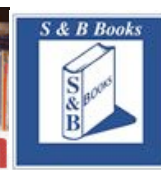
Here, then, is the list of losses we have experienced. Many of the headings come from the District's own job posting for the position. In the absence of a District Teacher-Librarian, there is no one responsible for:

- Leadership and support for the implementation of long-term goals for the development of school library programs in the District. Our local teacher-librarians are a highly collaborative group, but there is only so much we can do for each other. I know that there is much rediscovering of the wheel going on in terms of library programs, and that we miss that central, authoritative co-ordination. Effective school library programs are vital, and yet our long-term goals have been reduced to survival.
- Providing in-service on emerging technologies. In the past, the District Teacher-Librarian provided inservice not just to teacher-librarians, but to entire staffs on what were then new skills such as using an OPAC, using PowerPoint, and searching the Internet effectively. Now there are new technologies emerging, such as streaming video, and no one to provide leadership in their use.
- Providing disaster relief, such as when a local secondary school lost its server and backup and had to re-catalogue its entire collection from the books themselves. A District Teacher-Librarian would have been invaluable in this instance. Alas, there was none.
- Maintenance of the District Resource Collection. In the first year following Judith's departure, the District made the decision to allocate no funds at all to the District collection. This resulted in unnecessary duplication of resources as individual schools bought resources that would have been more appropriately centralized. Funding has since been restored, but is not adequate to the needs of a district of this size. We have a wonderful clerk circulating the collection, but no professional teacher or librarian to develop it.
- Negotiating with our circulation software provider. Judith spent an incalculable number of hours negotiating a three-year technical support package based on a per-student cost. This arrangement allowed all schools, including the smallest, an affordable and more equitable means of support. Such arrangements are extremely rare. This agreement has now expired leaving local teacher-librarians trying to sort out a new one. This item alone has virtually taken over our LSA agenda, leaving little time for mentorship and professional development.



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- Co-ordination of special programs such as piloting of video streaming, and Web Awareness.
- Keeping the lines of communication open with the Ministry of Education. Since there is no teacher-librarian presence in the BC Ministry of Education, this is particularly important. Otherwise, our issues do not have a voice, nor are our skills called upon for resource selection.
- Agregating orders for subscriptions to major databases. Teacher-librarians were once continually pestered by various database providers. Judith negotiated a price of \$1 per student with one such provider, and they continue to honour that price. I have since been solicited on numerous occasions by another provider, but they can't come close to matching this price. This is the power of central negotiation. Judith continues to co-ordinate Educational Resource Acquisitions Consortium (which does central ordering of videos and software) for the District, but she is doing this "off the side of her desk".
- Organization of Professional Development Days. When Judith was District Teacher-Librarian, Victoria hosted the BCTLA annual conference. The Conference was a two-day affair, beginning with a wine and cheese and a huge publishers display on the Thursday evening, and followed by thirty-five workshops by the likes of Gail de Vos, and Ted Harrison. The feedback was wonderful and generated enough money to provide for the professional development of teacher-librarians in Greater Victoria. On other occasions, Judith organized workshops with Ken Haycock and Roland Case. As you can imagine, nothing of this magnitude has occurred since.
- Advocating with school and central administration on behalf of school libraries and teacher-librarians. Having a District Teacher-Libraian in central office means the voice of teacher-librarians gets heard where the decisions are made. Judith once brought in Ken Haycock to speak at a monthly principal's meeting, bringing them the research on the impact of effective school library programs has on student achievement.
- Supervision of the movement of resources necessitated by the reconfiguration of schools. In the fall of 2001, Victoria District began the process of moving to a middle school model. The impact on libraries and teacher-librarians has been monumental. Teacher-librarians must examine their entire collections and decide whether each resource should go or stay as his or her school's grade-configuration changes. The receiving school may get five copies of some resources and none of others, depending on what was held in the collection of its feeder schools. As each school "family" goes through this, the lessons learned don't necessarily get passed along to the next family of schools because the teacher-librarians are still up to their waists in unpacked boxes of books. Having someone co-ordinating and guiding our efforts would have helped this process immensely.
- Assistance with school closures. Along with reconfiguration of schools have come school closures. Who gets what books from which closed libraries, using what criterion? No extra clerical or teacher-librarian time was allocated to this task.
- Assistance with collection maintenance at elementary schools. Our elementary schools always seem to pay the price when money gets tight. Ten years ago, their teacher-librarians were eliminated altogether. After about five years, they were reinstated to half time. Two years ago, at the same time as the District Teacher-Librarian position was eliminated, they were cut to .2 or .25 positions. Such piecemeal jobs are not very attractive, and there is no security. As a result, few elementary teacher-librarians are fully-trained probably because many are unwilling to invest too deeply in training for a position that may or may not exist by the time they complete the training. The District Teacher-Librarian used to be able to lend his/her expertise and authority to support untrained teacher-librarians' work. No more.



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- Providing leadership with policies and procedures. Victoria does not have a current, complete district policy and procedures manual for libraries. Initially, the District Teacher-Librarians spent a great deal of time developing policies and procedures during their short tenure. Documents were created on the role of the school library and the teacher-librarian, collection renewal (weeding), indicators for principals on effective school library programs, and issues surrounding automation. Copies are no longer available. No one is promoting or updating them. This makes being a new teacher-librarian in our district especially difficult.
- Exemplary practice poster presentations. Our Local Specialist Association (of Teacher-Librarians) is going to try to put one together, but it will have to be an extra-curricular effort, and may lack authority in the end.
- Providing leadership for initiatives such as centralized ordering, processing and cataloguing. Our purchasing clerk estimates that this alone saved the district between \$45,000 and \$50,000 a year.
- Providing a district-wide year-end report. The District Teacher-Librarian made sure that the Superintendent know all the statistics, and exactly what teacher-librarians have accomplished for students, teachers and administrators during the year. There is no better advocacy than data.

Another unfortunate side effect of the loss of our District Teacher-Librarian is that our Local Specialist Association meetings are now mostly taken up with trying to accomplish what the District Teacher-Librarian used to do, with the result that there is very little professional development left in them. We would love to be sharing tips, questions and experiences, supporting each other through frustrations, and cheering one another's successes. Instead, we are almost entirely occupied by administrative emergencies.

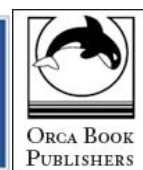
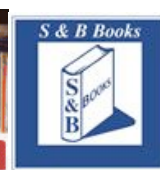
Sadly, we are not alone. On the whole of Vancouver Island there is only one District Teacher-Librarian, a half-time position in Sooke. All other Districts have their own sad tale to tell. Even in a decentralized district such as ours, there needs to be some leadership at central office or else frightful inefficiencies occur. In the case of school libraries, this is highly and sadly evident.

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Those interested in reading further about the role of District Resource Centres and of District Teacher-Librarians are invited to go to

http://www.sd79.bc.ca/district_resources/DRC/DRCRole.pdf_or
<http://tinyurl.com/3sygg>



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Supporting School Libraries: The Toronto District School Board Recipe

Esther Rosenfeld, Peggy Thomas, and Lisa Teodosio

Esther Rosenfeld is District-Wide Coordinator of Library and Learning Resources for the Toronto District School Board. She is a past president of the Ontario School Library Association. Peggy Thomas and Lisa Teodosio are centrally assigned teacher-librarians with the Toronto District School Board. They support teacher-librarians in program and collection development.

In the beginning, there were six of everything. Six school boards with six different cultures, priorities, and needs. And then they became one: The Toronto District School Board. Following the 1998 amalgamation of 6 school boards and over 500 schools, the department of Library and Learning Resources was developed to meet the needs of the school library program, support professional development, and improve student achievement across the curriculum.

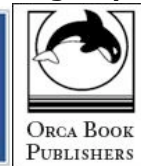
Instructional Support

Under the direction of a District Wide Coordinator, Library and Learning Resources provides instructional support for teacher-librarians in particular and for teachers in general. School Library Program support is offered at several levels. Four Instructional Leaders are based regionally to support the program needs of both the elementary and secondary Teacher-Librarians. In addition, two Centrally Assigned Teacher-Librarians support new Teacher-Librarians and coordinate collection development. Together, these six individuals meet one-on-one with Teacher-Librarians (as needed) as well as provide inservice workshops to assist Teacher-Librarians in delivering effective School Library Information Centre Programs. Teacher-Librarians have many opportunities for professional development delivered by our Instructional Staff, including:

- Workshops for new Teacher-Librarians
- Summer institutes focusing on technology and literacy
- Curriculum and project design
- Information literacy and integrating technology
- Teaching effective online resource search skills
- Current research on school libraries and its implications
- Ministry and TDSB literacy programs and initiatives
- Effective leadership
- Assessment and evaluation
- Collection development to support literacy and curriculum

In addition to these workshops, Library and Learning Resources provides system-wide professional development for all teachers in the TDSB, taking the lead in some system priorities such as the Curriculum Planner and Interdisciplinary Studies.

An electronic teacher-librarian conference provides teacher-librarians with an online message board, listserv, and information links to support and direct networking in what is otherwise a solitary position within the school. It has created a strong virtual learning community among committed professionals, which is balanced by the face-to-face area meetings held in each Family of Schools (regional groups of



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between 20 to 30 schools).

Over the past few years, special projects have been initiated to make the role of the TL more manageable and effective. A School Library Information Centre Handbook was written in 2000 and is updated annually, outlining and supporting the role of the TL. It is divided into three areas, management, instruction and leadership.

A Library Mission Statement and Goals were developed to align with the TDSB mission statement and give structure to the school library program. More recently a secondary Student Research Guide was published. It is designed for student use in collaboration with the teacher and teacher-librarian.

Every school has a Library Web site, centrally maintained and vetted to provide a careful selection of quality web links to support learning and teaching (<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/libraries/Links.asp?schoolNo=10>). The site contains links to centrally purchased online databases; quality web links to curricular subject areas, and school library catalogues. This summer the department developed a picture pac (visual search catalogue) in order to facilitate the use of the online catalogue for younger students and second language learners. This, along with the more traditional online text catalogue, is now available in all schools.

The Middle Years project supports the Middle Schools and Junior High Schools (grades 6-9) in creating vital functioning programs and preparing students for the rigours of high school. From this project, "Improving Student Achievement @ your library, A School Library Handbook for Administrators" has been developed and is nearing printing stage.

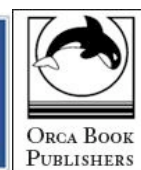
Central Resources for Teachers and Students Technical Support for School Libraries

Several departments of Library and Learning Resources provide support for teachers and administration (as well as teacher-librarians). This creates a great profile of Library and Learning resources within the Toronto District School Board. All schools benefit from centrally purchased online information products. These include an online encyclopedia, magazines, journals, newspapers and reference sources. Because these resources are purchased centrally for the entire TDSB from the Library and Learning Resources budget, all schools have equal access. These products are also available for TDSB students and teachers from home computers through the School Library Website.

The Professional Library supports the learning and professional development of the teaching and administrative staff of the TDSB by providing specialized print educational resources, electronic journals, and database and Internet searching. Print resources can be borrowed by telephone, email, fax or in person. The Professional Library staff also provides a reference and search service to assist TDSB staff in the location of information on specific topics.

A large circulating library of educational videos and kits is available through

Library Media Resources. The department previews and selects materials (videos, DVDs, novel sets and social studies) to support teachers and students in a broad spectrum of subjects to meet special needs and diverse learning styles across the grades. Titles are searchable and accessed on the Internet from home and school.



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Library Technical Services offers professional and consistent cataloguing of materials for all schools centrally, returning the books and materials to the schools shelf-ready. This allows teacher-librarians to pursue their main role of instruction and collaboration. In addition, technical support is offered for the Horizon circulation system from 8:30 to 5:00 daily.

Research has shown that a library program becomes dynamic when informed and qualified Teacher-Librarians are involved in running a full-time program within the school. Library and Learning Resources at the TDSB is trying to offer the central services that make achieving these goals a reality.



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Letter from the Managing Editor

Jennifer L. Branch

Dr. Jennifer Branch is the Coordinator of the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning program. She took up the position in July of 2001 after a year in the School of Information Science and Policy at SUNY Albany and after completing her PhD at the University of Alberta in the School of Library and Information Studies. Jennifer's areas of research are information-seeking processes, information literacy education, electronic reference sources, and teacher-librarian education. Jennifer and her husband Dr. Martin Mueller are expecting their first child in November.

I am delighted to bring to you this issue of SLIC Online. Jeanne Buckley, the guest editor, gathers together interesting information about district-level leadership for school libraries. It is a topic that should be of concern for all of us – those who are teachers or teacher-librarians, those who work in public libraries, and those, like me, who are teacher-librarian educators. School library coordinators are key people in our advocacy work and are leaders we look to for vision. In fact, some of my favourite people have worked as school library coordinators at the district level – people like Lois Barranoik, Teddy Moline, Maureen Pelensky, and Glen Huser in the Edmonton area.

I would like to express my appreciation to Jeanne Buckley for her work on this issue and the next. Jeanne is one of my students in the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning program. Many of the students in our program are already taking on leadership positions and are tireless advocates for school libraries. Working with these students helps me stay positive about the future of school libraries and teacher-librarians.

Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season and best wishes for a healthy new year!



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Message from the Co-Presidents

Marlene Asselin

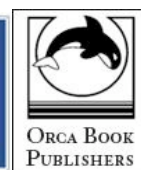
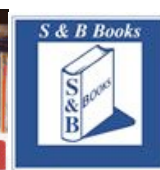
Co-President, Canadian Association for School Libraries. She can be reached at phone: 604-822-5733; web: <http://www.lled.educ.ubc.ca>; email: marlene.asselin@ubc.ca

The year is racing forward and the CASL executive has several developments to share with you – the constitution of our executive, highlights of our first full executive meeting, National School Library Day, and new national data on school libraries.

We are delighted to inform you that Marlene Turkington, Learning Coordinator for the Thames Valley District School Board, has been chosen by our membership as President-Elect for 2004/05. Marlene will serve as President Elect until June 2006 at which time she will step into the Presidency position at the CASL AGM which takes place during CLA Annual Conference in Calgary (June 18 – 21). The CASL executive is now complete for this year and we can't believe that only a few months ago we were still in the process of forming the new national association. Already, however, we will be seeking nominations for election to several positions for 2005-2006: Councillor (2 year term), President Elect (1 year term followed by President and Past President of 1 year each), and Secretary-Treasurer (2 year term). Information about the nomination procedure will be posted at www.caslibraries.ca and at the CLA website by January 2005 so start now to think of nominations for these important leadership positions.

The new executive met in Edmonton on October 16 for a productive day. Among the major tasks we worked on were a strategic plan for 2005 which focused on setting a course for the future in three areas: (1) public image and advocacy, (2) transform CASL into a member-driven association, and (3) a membership growth strategy. We are particularly excited about our new membership materials coming out in the new year, a new website, closer and more productive relationships with provinces and territories through our Provincial Association Council (PAC), and implementation of the membership recruitment grant funded by CLA. For example, CASL will be represented at each provincial and territorial association conference, host bi-annual teleconferences and one face to face meetings with association presidents at CLA, promote sharing of resources across the country, and support provincial associations with matters and issues for which a national presence would be beneficial.

National School Library was a big success this year building on the experiences and efforts of last year. Two Ministers of Education declared October 25 Provincial School Library Day and numerous events from receptions to radio interviews and celebrations in school libraries took place across the country. A big thank you to Councillor Rick Mulholland for his outstanding work in creating a resource of information about and ideas and materials to use to promote school libraries (<http://www.nslid.ca/>). Rick began constructing this website just a few months before the big day and it will be a work in progress. Be sure to add your ideas and successes so that school libraries will be even more fully recognized next year.

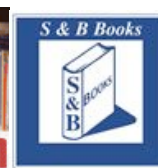


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We are also pleased that CASL is working with Statistics Canada as they analyze data from the *Information and Communications Technologies in Schools Survey* that was sent to principals of all schools in the country in fall 2003. Guided by advice from several school library leaders in the country when the survey was being developed, four questions were included pertaining to the existence of a school library in each school, staffing, collections, and funding sources.

Just around the corner is news about the Calgary conference, a summer 2005 institute, and nominations for our three awards and one grant. Developments are a constant at CASL so please keep in touch through our website at www.schoollibraries.ca

Enjoy the holidays and return refreshed for the New Year.



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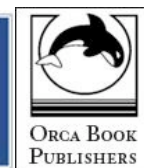
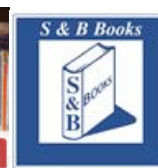
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Faire de la publicité sur SLIC

La revue SLIC est la revue officielle de CASL. C'est une revue professionnelle publiée 4 fois par année ayant comme objectif la publications d'articles spécialisés destinés aux professeurs bibliothécaires et au personnel travaillant dans les bibliothèques scolaires. Dans la plus récente édition, nous avons eu 57,512 visiteurs résultant en plus de 400,000 pages visitées. Le site hypertoile de SLIC a un classement de 5 sur Google.

Nous sommes à la recherche de publicité pour continuer de produire SLIC sur Internet pour les professeurs bibliothécaires à travers le Canada et autour du monde. Les individus, associations ou organisations désirant faire de la publicité sont priés de nous contacter pour plus d'informations.

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