



LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTRE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE for ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: *How does your library “stack up?”*

Do you know how your child's school library compares to others? And more important, does it meet the Standards for School Library Programs set by the Canadian Association for School Libraries? This questionnaire was designed to help you find out. It is a condensed version of information found in the publication, *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada*. For further information on this and other documents related to school libraries, please go to www.ontarioschoollibraries.ca



You may need to get input from your school principal or teacher-librarian in order to fill in this form accurately and completely. For each question, mark the appropriate column. Then add up the total number of points scored to compute your school library's overall rating.

Date: _____

SCHOOL NAME _____

STAFFING

The school library program depends first and foremost on the leadership of a qualified teacher-librarian and the support of trained clerical/technical staff.

Please refer to the table below. It details the recommended number of teacher-librarians and clerical staff for schools of different sizes. Then put a check mark in the appropriate columns.

Number of Students	TEACHER –LIBRARIANS			CLERICAL/TECHNICAL STAFF		
	Below Standard	Acceptable	Exemplary	Below Standard	Acceptable	Exemplary
0-299	< .6	.6+	1.5+	<.5	.5+	1+
300-499	< 1	1+	1.5+	<1	1+	1.5+
500-699	< 1	1+	1.5+	<1	1+	1.5+
700-999	< 1.5	1.5+	2+	<1.5	1.5+	2+
1000-1499	< 2	2+	2.5+	<2	2+	2.5+

	<i>Below Standard</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>
1. The school staffing level for school teacher-librarians is....			
2. The school staffing level for library clerical/technical staff is...			

COLLECTIONS

An effective school library provides intellectual and physical access to a wide variety of materials and services to meet learning needs, both within and beyond the school. Mark the category that best applies to your school.

Types of Resources	<i>Below Standard</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>
3. Access to magazines and periodicals (print & electronic)	Few – print only	15 – 20 Print 1 full-text electronic journals database	20 – 30 Print 2 or more full-text electronic journals databases
4. Access to print and electronic newspapers	None or limited	Print: 1 local, 1 provincial, 1 national; 1 full text news database	Multiple print newspapers; 2 full-text electronic newspapers & 1 historical collection
5. Non-print resources: music CDs, posters, charts, art prints, study prints, games, etc. – percent of collection	<1%	About 1%	> 1%
6. Other digital resources/software	Word processing, 1 reference database, 5 curriculum specific programs	All of the previous plus presentation and database software, Internet access	The foregoing plus library web page with links to support curriculum Specialized electronic sources & range of tool software
7. Videos and DVDs	< 100 titles	100-400 titles	400+ titles
8. Size of Book Collection (Note: There should be approximately 65-75% non-fiction or reference works. Reference materials such as encyclopedias, almanacs, atlases, etc., should be no older than five years.)			
0-299 students	<4500	4500+	5000+
300-499 students	<10,000	10,000+	15,000+
500-999 students	<15,000	15,000+	25,000+
1000-1499 students	<30,000	30,000+	40,000+

ACCESSIBILITY

An effective school library provides access to materials for all students. There should be no barriers to information access due to social, economic, physical or personal factors. The community at large should also have access to the library after school hours. Remote accessibility via networking from classrooms or via the Internet at home is also desirable. Accessibility also implies current, quality materials that are easy to locate and use.

	<i>Below Standard</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>
9. Barrier-free physical access	Library on more than one level with no elevator	Library with various levels with some ramp access	Totally barrier-free access
10. Time and quality of access	Library in use for classes or locked for most of day – no independent access	Open for independent use for some time each day with teacher-librarian available to help	Library open all day plus before and after school and at lunch time. Teacher-librarian has a flexible schedule to meet needs of classes & independent users.
11. Currency of collection	50% or less of the materials have copyright dates within the last 10 years	50% -70% have copyright dates within the last 10 years	80% or more have copyright dates within the last 10 years
12. Collection maintenance	Significant number of worn, damaged or missing materials	Most items are complete/ in good repair	Materials are complete and in good repair
13. Library Catalogue	Not automated	Automated; available through a Wide Area Network	Automated, available on WWW linked to surrounding public library catalogues

FUNDING

An effective school library has adequate funding to purchase print, non-print, electronic and digital resources. These figures do not include capital funding projects such as refurbishment of the facilities, but rather reflects basic on-going maintenance and upgrading of the collection.

14. Funding per student	<\$25	\$26-\$35	>\$36
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FACILITIES

An effective school library is centrally located for full access by teachers, students and the public. The teacher-librarian's office should have full view of the facility and include a separate workroom. There should be at least one dedicated computer workstation for catalogue access, a designated circulation area, instructional space for at least one class in the main area plus an additional classroom, both with flexible furniture arrangements. It meets all safety standards, such as for emergency exits, as required by law.

	<i>Below Standard</i>	<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>
15. Individual study space	None	For <1% of students or 50% of a class	For >1% of student body or one class
16. Large Group Instruction Seating	< one class	>10% of students or one class	>12% of the student body or two classes
17. Shelving and specialized furniture	Inadequate	Adequate; some special furniture	Appropriate, specialized shelving and furniture
18. Atmosphere	Dingy, cold, or "dated" appearance	Clean and comfortable	Warm, welcoming, enticing and vibrant
19. Informal reading area	None	Relaxed setting	Relaxed setting with display of reading materials, headphones, etc.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (I.C.T.)

An effective school library provides open and ready access to a wide range of ICT resources for students and staff. It is fully integrated with the school curriculum and provides two way access, from classrooms or from home.

20. Computer workstations	None or few, older, not networked	Various configurations, for 15-30 students	For 30+ students, in stand-alones, small pods and large pods
21. Internet Access	Slow, from 1 or more work stations in library	Reasonably fast from most work stations	Fast from all library work stations
22. Printers and Peripherals	Not networked, no access to scanners etc.	Networked, access to basic scanners etc.	Ready access to wide variety of printers and peripherals
23. Listening/Viewing Centres Audio, video and computer presentation equipment.	None/no data projector	For 8-15 students; Large screen TV with data projector	15+ students; equipment for presentations w/ access to school network/internet.

Instructions for Scoring:

Tally the number of responses you made for each column.

Give yourself 1 point for each answer in column A (Below Standard), 2 points for each answer in column B (Acceptable) and 3 points for each answer in column C (Exemplary). Add the three figures together. Refer to the chart below to see how your school library stacks up.

23-43 Your school library is performing at a less than acceptable level. Student achievement will likely be affected.

44-56 Your school library is performing within acceptable levels, but significant improvements can be made that will enhance student achievement.

57+ Congratulations! Your school library is enhancing the learning environment for the students in the school.

What next?

Are you disappointed with how *your* school library stacks up?

Don't be too surprised. According to research conducted by *People for Education*, school libraries in Ontario are suffering. Consider the following statistics:

Since 1997/1998, the number of elementary schools with full time teacher librarians has declined 80%

According to the current funding model, less than 2% of Ontario's elementary school's can even *qualify* for a fully funded school librarian.

Students at Ontario schools without trained library staff have lower achievement levels on the grade 3 and 6 EQAO reading tests than their counterparts at schools with trained staff.

School libraries are chronically underfunded since Ministry funding allocated for purchasing new materials is frequently used to make up funding shortfalls in other program areas.

The Ministry document covering school library policy has not been updated since 1982.

YOU can make a difference. Here's how:

Get the information. Contact the OCSL on-line at www.ontarioschoollibraries.ca for a downloadable package of facts and statistics that explain how school libraries affect student achievement.

Get the condition of the school library on your next parent council's agenda.

Participate in the Adopt-a-Teacher-Librarian program!

Get in touch with the Minister of Education, Ms. Sandra Pupotello, and express your dismay.

Urge her to put school libraries back on the government's priority list. Send your letters to:

The Honourable Sandra Pupatello, Minister of Education, Mowat Block, 900 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2. or via email at:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/tools/eduminister/eng/index.html

Get the word out! Talk to your neighbours, school principal, trustee, superintendent, and MPP. Let them know the state of your school library, and demand action now!