

District Ratios of Students & Teachers to School Librarian FTEs

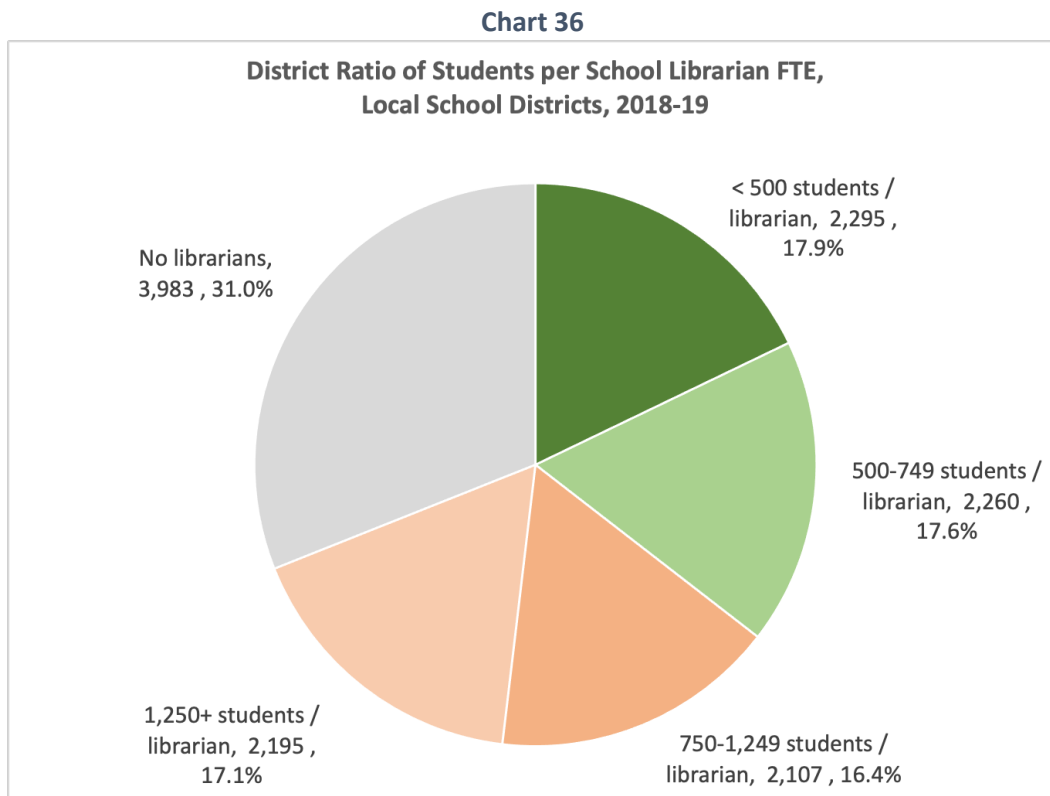
Two additional measures of school librarian employment at the district level are the number of students per librarian full-time equivalent (FTE) and the number of teachers per librarian FTE. As noted earlier, the 2018 National Standards of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) perpetuate the long-held ideals that school librarians should teach information literacy and related skills to students and collaborate on instructional design and delivery with teachers. At the district level—as at national and state levels—the numbers of students and teachers per librarian FTE make fulfilling those charges extraordinarily challenging for most districts and schools.

The wide range of these ratios can be attributed very largely to the fact that few schools are staffed with librarians on the basis of how many students or teachers they serve. Generally, individual schools have one full-time librarian, a part-time librarian (ranging from a few hours a week to something approaching full-time), or no librarian. Generally, only the very largest schools have more than one librarian FTE. Consequently, due to the range of building-level enrollments, the ratios of students and teachers per librarian FTE run the gamut.

District Ratio of Students per Librarian FTE

How did the ratio of students per librarian full-time equivalent (FTE) vary among local school districts in 2018-19?

Fewer than 1 out of 5 districts (17.9%) had fewer than 500 students per librarian FTE. Similar proportions of districts had 500 to 749 students per librarian FTE, 750 to 1,249 students per librarian FTE, and 1,250 or more students per librarian FTE. The remaining 3 out of 10 districts (31.0%) had no librarians at all. (See Chart 36.)



In 2018-19, in 1 out of 6 districts, there were 1,250 or more students for every librarian. There were fewer than 500 students per librarian in about the same proportion of districts.

As extreme as this national pattern was, however, the distribution of districts among these students per librarian FTE categories at the state level made for extraordinarily unequal access to school librarians for students. In 2018-19, districts with fewer than 500 students per librarian FTE were in the majority in only five states: Arkansas (70.8%), Vermont (61.2%), Montana (60.5%), New Hampshire (56.4%), and Nebraska (51.6%). At the other extreme, in D.C. and three states—Delaware, Florida, and Utah—there were no districts with fewer than 500 students per librarian FTE. (See Table 20.)

Conversely, in addition to Hawaii's single statewide school district, there were 1,250 or more students per librarian FTE in a majority of districts in 2 states: Utah (58.5%) and Iowa (52.4%). In D.C. and only three states—Arkansas, South Carolina, and Vermont—were there no districts (of those with librarians) that had 1,250 or more students per librarian FTE.

Plainly, the numbers of students per librarian FTE were so low in districts in some states and so high in others that student access to a librarian was highly inequitable. Further evidence of inequity of student access to a librarian was the percentage of districts in each state with no librarians at all. (Also, see Table 20.)

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Table 20. District Ratio of Students per School Librarian FTE by State, 2018-19

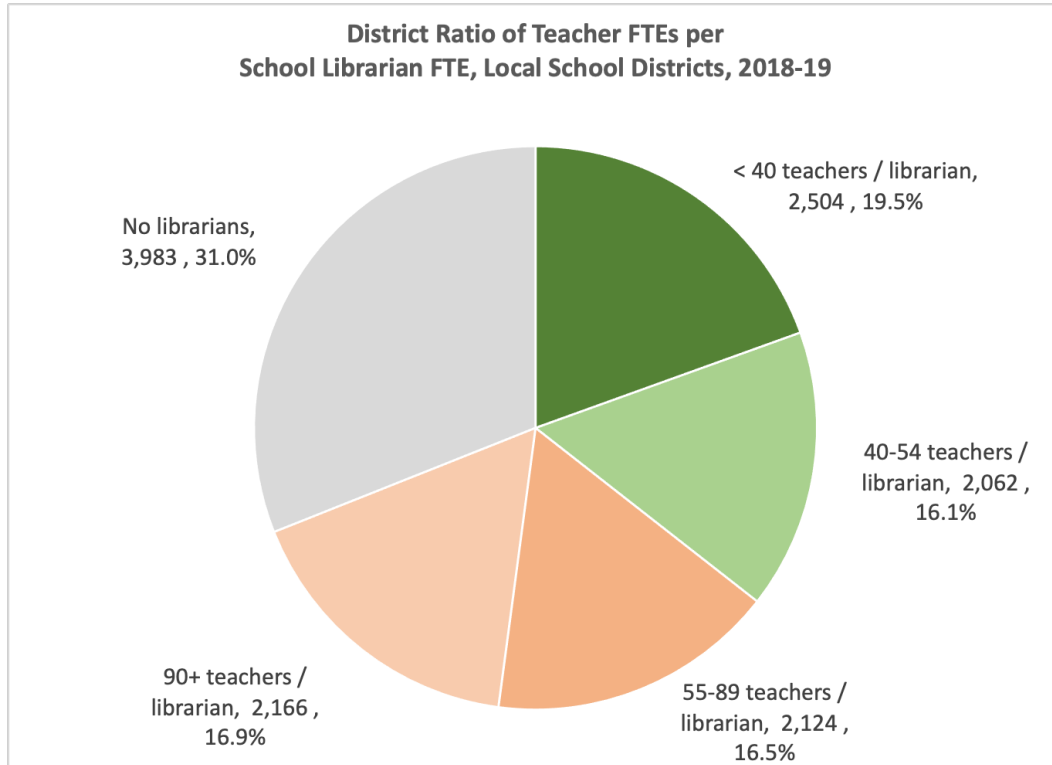
| State | Students per school librarian FTE | | | | No librarians | Total |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| | < 500 | 500-749 | 750-1,249 | 1,250+ | | |
| AK | 3.8% | 7.7% | 3.8% | 7.7% | 76.9% | 100.0% |
| AL | 43.8% | 46.7% | 8.8% | .7% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| AR | 70.8% | 25.8% | 3.0% | 0.0% | .4% | 100.0% |
| AZ | 2.3% | 3.3% | 4.2% | 21.5% | 68.7% | 100.0% |
| CA | .3% | .2% | .5% | 5.4% | 93.6% | 100.0% |
| CO | 10.1% | 6.2% | 7.3% | 20.8% | 55.6% | 100.0% |
| CT | 36.7% | 27.8% | 13.6% | 10.7% | 11.2% | 100.0% |
| DC | 0.0% | 100.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| DE | 0.0% | 21.1% | 15.8% | 47.4% | 15.8% | 100.0% |
| FL | 0.0% | 11.9% | 56.7% | 22.4% | 9.0% | 100.0% |
| GA | 6.7% | 46.7% | 40.6% | 5.6% | .6% | 100.0% |
| HI | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| IA | 7.6% | 11.2% | 26.4% | 52.4% | 2.4% | 100.0% |
| ID | 1.7% | 1.7% | 4.3% | 25.2% | 67.0% | 100.0% |
| IL | 23.2% | 21.4% | 23.2% | 31.4% | .9% | 100.0% |
| IN | 3.1% | 7.8% | 17.4% | 43.3% | 28.3% | 100.0% |
| KS | 22.0% | 16.8% | 14.0% | 8.7% | 38.5% | 100.0% |
| KY | 24.9% | 48.0% | 19.7% | 5.8% | 1.7% | 100.0% |
| LA | 19.7% | 38.0% | 14.1% | 12.7% | 15.5% | 100.0% |
| MA | 10.8% | 15.7% | 14.2% | 39.5% | 19.8% | 100.0% |
| MD | 4.2% | 62.5% | 16.7% | 12.5% | 4.2% | 100.0% |
| ME | 17.3% | 15.7% | 17.8% | 18.8% | 30.4% | 100.0% |
| MI | .7% | 1.9% | 8.0% | 21.0% | 68.3% | 100.0% |
| MN | 1.5% | 5.2% | 17.9% | 19.5% | 55.9% | 100.0% |
| MO | 42.0% | 28.2% | 13.5% | 5.0% | 11.2% | 100.0% |
| MS | 24.1% | 51.8% | 22.0% | 1.4% | .7% | 100.0% |
| MT | 60.5% | 6.3% | 2.0% | 1.5% | 29.8% | 100.0% |
| NC | 16.7% | 55.0% | 18.3% | 5.8% | 4.2% | 100.0% |
| ND | 47.1% | 21.8% | 7.1% | 5.3% | 18.8% | 100.0% |
| NE | 51.6% | 30.7% | 15.2% | 2.0% | .4% | 100.0% |
| NH | 56.4% | 23.0% | 7.3% | 1.8% | 11.5% | 100.0% |
| NJ | 13.7% | 23.6% | 23.9% | 18.0% | 20.8% | 100.0% |
| NM | 3.4% | 4.5% | 4.5% | 27.3% | 60.2% | 100.0% |
| NV | 5.9% | 5.9% | 17.6% | 41.2% | 29.4% | 100.0% |
| NY | 28.7% | 29.8% | 21.7% | 12.1% | 7.7% | 100.0% |
| OH | 3.6% | 6.2% | 15.7% | 33.1% | 41.5% | 100.0% |
| OK | 27.1% | 22.7% | 18.9% | 7.4% | 23.8% | 100.0% |
| OR | .6% | 1.1% | 6.3% | 22.2% | 69.9% | 100.0% |
| PA | 7.6% | 26.3% | 42.3% | 18.6% | 5.2% | 100.0% |
| RI | 22.2% | 50.0% | 19.4% | 5.6% | 2.8% | 100.0% |
| SC | 22.2% | 56.8% | 19.8% | 0.0% | 1.2% | 100.0% |
| SD | 13.4% | 6.7% | 7.4% | 12.8% | 59.7% | 100.0% |
| TN | 30.6% | 49.3% | 14.6% | 3.5% | 2.1% | 100.0% |
| TX | 3.6% | 7.9% | 22.5% | 23.1% | 42.9% | 100.0% |
| UT | 0.0% | 2.4% | 4.9% | 58.5% | 34.1% | 100.0% |
| VA | 19.1% | 45.0% | 20.6% | 15.3% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| VT | 61.2% | 12.9% | 5.4% | 0.0% | 20.4% | 100.0% |
| WA | .7% | 8.4% | 17.5% | 18.9% | 54.5% | 100.0% |
| WI | 18.2% | 21.5% | 27.0% | 24.2% | 9.1% | 100.0% |
| WV | 8.8% | 20.6% | 23.5% | 47.1% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| WY | 16.7% | 12.5% | 14.6% | 27.1% | 29.2% | 100.0% |
| U.S. | 17.9% | 17.6% | 16.4% | 17.1% | 31.0% | 100.0% |

District Ratio of Teacher FTEs per Librarian FTE

How did the ratio of teachers per librarian full-time equivalent (FTE) vary among local school districts in 2018-19?

Teacher access to school librarians—and librarian access to teachers—varied across the almost 13,000 local districts for which data were available. Only 1 out of 5 districts (19.5%) had fewer than 40 teachers per librarian. About 1 out of 6 districts (16.1% to 16.9%) had, for each librarian, 40 to 54 teachers, 55 to 89 teachers, or 90 or more teachers. (See Chart 37.)

Chart 37



As for the students per librarian ratio, the district ratio of teachers per librarian FTE ran the gamut among the states. In the best scenario, there were fewer than 40 teachers per librarian FTE in a majority of districts in 7 states—Alabama (89.1% of districts), Arkansas (62.2%), Vermont (58.5%), Kentucky (58.4%), Montana (58.0%), Tennessee (56.9%), and Louisiana (53.5%). D.C. and Delaware were the only jurisdictions reporting no districts with this most desirable ratio. Conversely, states with the most districts with the least desirable ratio—90 or more teachers per librarian FTE—included Hawaii (100.0%), Iowa (54.2%), Utah (46.3%), Massachusetts (42.9%), and West Virginia (41.2%). Alabama, Arkansas, D.C., and South Carolina reported no districts in which the teachers per librarian ratio was this least desirable one. (See Table 21.)

In 2018-19, school librarians in 1 out of 6 districts worked with 90 or more teachers. Librarians in 1 out of 5 districts worked with 40 or fewer teachers.

Clearly, some school librarians face far greater numerical challenges than others when they seek to collaborate with teachers on instructional design and delivery. Some librarians—those serving fewer than 40 teachers—may find it realistic to collaborate with teachers individually. Other librarians—those who have 90 or more teachers to serve—must be far more strategic and efficient for their collaboration with teachers to have

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schoolwide impact. This suggests that working with their teacher colleagues in groups by grade level, subject area, or special project may be more effective.

Table 21. District Ratio of Teacher FTEs per Librarian FTE by State, 2018-19

| State | Teacher FTEs per school librarian FTE | | | | No school librarians | Total |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|
| | < 40 | 40-54 | 55-89 | 90+ | | |
| AK | 7.7% | 7.7% | 1.9% | 5.8% | 76.9% | 100.0% |
| AL | 89.1% | 8.8% | 2.2% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| AR | 62.2% | 31.8% | 5.6% | 0.0% | .4% | 100.0% |
| AZ | 5.1% | 2.3% | 7.5% | 16.4% | 68.7% | 100.0% |
| CA | .5% | .3% | .6% | 5.0% | 93.6% | 100.0% |
| CO | 10.7% | 5.6% | 9.6% | 18.5% | 55.6% | 100.0% |
| CT | 29.6% | 31.4% | 15.4% | 12.4% | 11.2% | 100.0% |
| DC | 0.0% | 100.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| DE | 0.0% | 21.1% | 26.3% | 36.8% | 15.8% | 100.0% |
| FL | 7.5% | 32.8% | 35.8% | 14.9% | 9.0% | 100.0% |
| GA | 17.2% | 47.8% | 29.4% | 5.0% | .6% | 100.0% |
| HI | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| IA | 8.5% | 10.6% | 24.2% | 54.2% | 2.4% | 100.0% |
| ID | 3.5% | 1.7% | 4.3% | 23.5% | 67.0% | 100.0% |
| IL | 24.9% | 20.3% | 25.8% | 28.1% | .9% | 100.0% |
| IN | 5.8% | 10.6% | 16.4% | 38.9% | 28.3% | 100.0% |
| KS | 22.4% | 15.7% | 14.0% | 9.4% | 38.5% | 100.0% |
| KY | 58.4% | 25.4% | 9.2% | 5.2% | 1.7% | 100.0% |
| LA | 53.5% | 12.7% | 7.0% | 11.3% | 15.5% | 100.0% |
| MA | 10.2% | 9.6% | 17.6% | 42.9% | 19.8% | 100.0% |
| MD | 8.3% | 58.3% | 20.8% | 8.3% | 4.2% | 100.0% |
| ME | 11.5% | 16.8% | 17.3% | 24.1% | 30.4% | 100.0% |
| MI | 1.1% | 5.6% | 5.8% | 19.2% | 68.3% | 100.0% |
| MN | 2.1% | 7.3% | 17.9% | 16.7% | 55.9% | 100.0% |
| MO | 38.5% | 24.6% | 19.3% | 6.4% | 11.2% | 100.0% |
| MS | 42.6% | 40.4% | 14.9% | 1.4% | .7% | 100.0% |
| MT | 58.0% | 4.8% | 3.3% | 4.3% | 29.8% | 100.0% |
| NC | 42.5% | 35.8% | 10.8% | 6.7% | 4.2% | 100.0% |
| ND | 39.4% | 18.2% | 14.1% | 9.4% | 18.8% | 100.0% |
| NE | 38.5% | 37.3% | 19.3% | 4.5% | .4% | 100.0% |
| NH | 49.1% | 24.2% | 10.9% | 4.2% | 11.5% | 100.0% |
| NJ | 9.1% | 16.9% | 29.3% | 23.9% | 20.8% | 100.0% |
| NM | 3.4% | 5.7% | 3.4% | 27.3% | 60.2% | 100.0% |
| NV | 5.9% | 5.9% | 23.5% | 35.3% | 29.4% | 100.0% |
| NY | 19.4% | 26.2% | 30.4% | 16.4% | 7.7% | 100.0% |
| OH | 7.0% | 7.6% | 17.3% | 26.6% | 41.5% | 100.0% |
| OK | 36.1% | 19.5% | 13.7% | 6.8% | 23.8% | 100.0% |
| OR | 2.3% | 4.5% | 4.0% | 19.3% | 69.9% | 100.0% |
| PA | 9.6% | 29.3% | 38.5% | 17.4% | 5.2% | 100.0% |
| RI | 25.0% | 30.6% | 33.3% | 8.3% | 2.8% | 100.0% |
| SC | 45.7% | 39.5% | 13.6% | 0.0% | 1.2% | 100.0% |
| SD | 12.1% | 5.4% | 10.7% | 12.1% | 59.7% | 100.0% |
| TN | 56.9% | 31.3% | 6.9% | 2.8% | 2.1% | 100.0% |
| TX | 2.9% | 10.1% | 21.1% | 23.0% | 42.9% | 100.0% |
| UT | 2.4% | 4.9% | 12.2% | 46.3% | 34.1% | 100.0% |
| VA | 29.0% | 42.0% | 14.5% | 14.5% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| VT | 58.5% | 10.9% | 7.5% | 2.7% | 20.4% | 100.0% |
| WA | 7.7% | 11.1% | 13.1% | 13.5% | 54.5% | 100.0% |
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| WY | 16.7% | 6.3% | 20.8% | 27.1% | 29.2% | 100.0% |
| U.S. | 19.5% | 16.1% | 16.5% | 16.9% | 31.0% | 100.0% |