The Status of PA School Librarians: IMLS Grant Findings
2021 PSLA Conference Session

Debra E. Kachel, Project Director
Keith Curry Lance, Ph.D., Principal Investigator

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SLIDE Project

• The School Librarian Investigation: Decline or Evolution?
• Funded from Sept 2020 through August 2023, for $349,000
• Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program grant
• Submitted by Antioch University Seattle
• Project Director, Deb Kachel
• Principal Investigator, Keith Curry Lance, with assistance from RSL Research Group, Colorado

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Big Picture - SLIDE Project Activities

1. Use national data to determine patterns in librarian employment, particularly as it impacts equity for students

2. Create customizable web tools for users to create tables, charts & maps representing national, state, and district data

3. Analyze emerging job titles and roles in job descriptions to determine job blending or morphing

4. Interview district decision makers about factors influencing their staffing choices
1. Perspectives on Employment of School Librarians in the U.S.
   Assess patterns in librarian employment (geography, district size & setting, race/ethnicity, poverty & per pupil $$\$\$\$$)

2. Contexts of School Librarian Employment
   Requirements for School Librarian Employment: A State-by-State Survey

3. Identify districts for interviews
   • Approx. 33 that gained librarians between 2015-16 and 2018-19
   • Approx. 33 that have reduced numbers between 2015-16 and 2018-19
   • Approx. 33 that have lost all librarians since 2015-16

4. Develop project website with interactive tools

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Years 2 & 3  Sept 2021 – Aug 2023

❖ Recruit and conduct interviews
❖ Create data tutorials and tools on website
❖ Attend and present at conferences
❖ Communicate results in articles, videos, and infographics

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Report: *Perspectives on Employment of School Librarian in the U.S.*

- In progress
- To present national, state and district school librarian employment trends 2009-10 to 2018-19
- Using [National Center for Education Statistics](https://nces.ed.gov) (NCES) data that is annually required from each school district
- Reports staff in full-time equivalents, but not necessarily certified school librarians

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Instructional coordinator - “supervises instructional programs at the school district or sub-district level...coordinators and supervisors of audiovisual services; curriculum coordinators and in-service training staff; Title I coordinators and home economics supervisors; and supervisory staff engaged in the development of computer-assisted instruction.”

Librarian – “A professional staff member or supervisor assigned specific duties and school time for professional library services activities. These include selecting, acquiring, preparing, cataloging, and circulating books and other printed materials; planning the use of the library by students, teachers, and instructional staff; and guiding individuals in the use of library books and material maintained separately or as a part of an instructional materials center.”

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Since 2009-2010...

- Instructional coordinator FTEs have increased by almost 34%.
- Librarian FTEs have decreased by almost 20%.

Most growth in Instructional Coordinators has been since 2014-15.

NOTE: LEA Administrators are building-level administrators.
# FTE School Librarian Losses

(Based on 50 states plus D.C.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Span</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Pennsylvania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Losses between 2009-10 and 2018-19</td>
<td>Average – 22.7%</td>
<td>-26.9% (ranks 19/51 for most losses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median -19.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losses between 2015-16 and 2018-19</td>
<td>Average – 3.77%</td>
<td>-7% (ranks 16/51 for most losses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median -3.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between 2009-10 and 2018-19, the U.S. lost 10,266 school librarian positions; all states lost school librarian positions except New Hampshire.

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### Ranking of the “Biggest Losers”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>-76.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>-66.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>-55.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>-49.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>-48.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>-40.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>-38.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>-37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>-35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>-34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>-33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>-30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>-30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>-30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>-29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>-27.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>-27.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>-27.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>-26.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Average</td>
<td>-22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Median</td>
<td>-19.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Librarian Ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018-2019 data FTE Librarian to:</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Pennsylvania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average FTE per School Building</td>
<td>.428 average</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.47 median</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students per 1 FTE Librarian</td>
<td>1,736 average</td>
<td>1,082 (ranking 25th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,058 median</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Teachers per 1 FTE Librarian</td>
<td>100 average</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75 median</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Equity Findings Nationwide

❖ More structural support in East (esp. SE) than West
  ▪ Mandates for school librarians
  ▪ Number of higher ed institutions preparing school librarians

❖ Higher librarian FTE/school ratio associated with:
  ▪ Higher enrollment
  ▪ Suburbs & towns (vs. cities & rural)
  ▪ Majority white, non-Hispanic
  ▪ Less poverty, higher school spending
  ▪ Fewer English language learners
  ▪ Fewer disabled

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- All 50 states and D.C. surveyed
- To determine state support of school libraries
- Included
  - standards and guidelines
  - certification and staffing requirements
  - direct funding and provision of state-funded e-resources
  - plus “pipeline“ questions on availability of librarians and training programs

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Results of the State Survey - How does Pennsylvania compare?

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States That Require Librarians

YES, AND ENFORCED - 10 states plus DC (22%) have legal, enforced requirements for school librarians in their public schools – AL, AR, KY, MS, MT, NE, ND, OK, SC, WI, and District of Columbia

YES, BUT NOT ENFORCED - 16 states (31%) have legal requirements, but not enforced – CA, GA, IN, IA, LA, ME, MD, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OR, TN, VT, VA, WA

NO REQUIREMENT - 24 states (47%) have no legal requirements – AK, AZ, CO, CT, DE, FL, HI, ID, IL, KS, MA, MI, MN, MO, NV, NC, OH, PA, RI, SD, TX, UT, WV, WY

Source: *Contexts of School Librarian Employment*
State Government Employee Assigned Specifically To Work With School Libraries

- None in 17 states (33%)
- Full time in 13 states (26%)
- Part time in 21 states (41%)

PA = part-time

Source: Contexts of School Librarian Employment
State Agency/Organization That Regularly Collects District/School Data About School Librarian Employment

- 34 states collect data (67%)
- 17 states do not collect data (33%)

PDE does not collect any data on school libraries

Source: *Contexts of School Librarian Employment*
Direct Funding to School Libraries (Any Purpose)

- States with direct funding: AL, AR, CO, DC, FL, IL, NE, NM, NY, OK, TN, WA, UT, WV, WI
- Does not include provision of free e-resources, like POWER Library

Examples:
- AL - $96.14 per “unit”
- CO - $3500 or $4000 per school district
- WA - $20 per student
- WI - $36.99 per student
- IL - $.75 per student

Source: Contexts of School Librarian Employment
# Institutions of Higher Education
Preparing School Librarians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># Institutions</th>
<th># States</th>
<th>States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>AL NY TN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>IL NC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>CA GA KY LA MD OK WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>AR KS MA MN MO NJ VA WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>CO CT FL ID IA MT NE ND PA SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>DC DE HI IN ME MI MS NV NH OH RI SC UT VT WV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>AK AZ NM OR WY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [Contexts of School Librarian Employment](#)
### States Reporting Shortages of Certified School Librarians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th># States</th>
<th>States Reporting Shortages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>6 (12%)</td>
<td>AK DC NM TX UT WY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>35 (69%)</td>
<td>AZ AR CA CO DE HI IL IN IA KS KT LA ME MD MI MN MT NE NV NH NJ NY NC ND OH OK OR PA RI SC SD VT VA WV WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DON’T KNOW</td>
<td>10 (20%)</td>
<td>AL CT FL GA ID MA MS MO TN WA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [Contexts of School Librarian Employment](http://example.com/contextsofschoollibrarianemployment)
PSLA 2020-21 Staffing Survey Results
IUs with School Districts Without Any School Librarians

Districts without librarians occur in 45% of our counties and 2/3rds of the Intermediate Units.

Red = 5 districts
Orange = 4 districts
Pink = 3 districts
Green = 2 districts
Tan = 1 district
The School Librarian Job Description – Changing or Morphing?

Questions for audience input:

1. Has the role of the school librarian changed? How?

2. What new duties are school librarians responsible for?

3. Are new job titles being used in your districts, what if any different qualifications are required?

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Stay Tuned for More

Web tools being developed now at https://libSLIDE.org
  • Will include state and school district views

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