

School Librarian Employment in the United States 2023–2024

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Since the conclusion of the SLIDE project's 2020–2023 Antioch University Seattle grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, SLIDE has continued at the School of Information at San José State University. The acronym, which previously stood for School Librarian Investigation—Decline to Divergence, now stands for School Librarian Investigation—Divergence & Evolution. The change indicates the leveling off of school librarian losses nationally, while state trends continue to diverge dramatically from each other based on a variety of factors. The latest data—which are for the 2023–2024 school year—underscore these national and state trends, both in comparison to the previous school year, 2022–2023, and the last school year begun before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2019–2020.

This year's update summarizes key findings from the Common Core of Data (CCD), a dataset from the National Center for Education Statistics, which reports annual district-level counts of school librarians in full-time equivalents (FTEs). CCD releases both state and district data files. The state data file is the basis for this report.

National- and State-Level Patterns, 2023–2024

The latest school year for which staffing data are available is 2023–2024. Examining these data from national, state, and district perspectives is revelatory.

National Findings

In 2023–2024, the 50 states and the District of Columbia reported 39,450 FTEs of school librarians, 99,297 schools, and 49.4 million students. Nationwide, that amounts to a librarian FTE per school of 0.40 and 1,252 students per librarian FTE. (See **Table 1**.)

As these numbers starkly illustrate, the reported number of librarian FTEs is considerably less than half the number that would be required to meet the standard specified in the American Association of School Librarians staffing position statement, which calls for a minimum of one full-time librarian in every school—traditional public, public charter, and private (American Association of School Librarians, 2019). Unsurprisingly, this deficiency means that the ratio of students to librarians—well more than 1,000—presents a daunting challenge to school librarians as teachers of information literacy and educational technology to all students and guides as well as providers of more individualized attention to students with various special needs. Yet, as ever, these national figures obscure a dramatic range of differences in the status of school librarian employment from state to state. While school librarianship is thriving in some states, it is struggling in others.

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Table 1 / Librarians in Full-Time Equivalents, Librarian FTE Per School, and Students Per Librarian FTE, 2023–2024

State	Librarians	Schools	Librarian FTE Per School	Students	Students Per Librarian FTE	Librarians Rank	Librarian FTE Per School Rank	Students Per Librarian FTE Rank
ALABAMA	1,301.55	1,524	0.85	748,650	575	11	2	5
ALASKA	128.29	494	0.26	131,243	1,023	45	37	25
ARIZONA	464.17	2,427	0.19	1,117,630	2,408	29	43	44
ARKANSAS	873.15	1,101	0.79	484,978	555	18	6	4
CALIFORNIA	644.71	10,326	0.06	5,837,338	9,054	23	51	51
COLORADO	460.84	1,908	0.24	865,661	1,878	30	39	40
CONNECTICUT	703.40	1,010	0.70	512,652	729	22	9	12
DELAWARE	107.50	234	0.46	141,842	1,319	47	24	32
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	126.11	245	0.51	92,794	736	46	17	15
FLORIDA	2,061.05	4,229	0.49	2,872,335	1,394	3	20	35
GEORGIA	2,077.30	2,327	0.89	1,749,701	842	2	1	22
HAWAII	83.50	295	0.28	169,308	2,028	49	35	41
IDAHO	87.42	801	0.11	316,414	3,619	48	49	49
ILLINOIS	1,330.09	4,400	0.30	1,846,264	1,388	9	33	33
INDIANA	263.00	1,917	0.14	1,032,723	3,927	36	46	50
IOWA	388.16	1,318	0.29	508,112	1,309	31	34	31
KANSAS	605.54	1,348	0.45	483,505	798	26	25	20

KENTUCKY	1,012.90	1,544	0.66	657,520	649	15	12	8
LOUISIANA	848.27	1,316	0.64	708,190	835	19	13	21
MAINE	186.40	593	0.31	172,545	926	40	32	24
MARYLAND	1,148.21	1,408	0.82	890,122	775	13	5	17
MASSACHUSETTS	640.23	1,832	0.35	914,958	1,429	24	29	36
MICHIGAN	516.83	3,485	0.15	1,426,491	2,760	28	45	46
MINNESOTA	377.61	2,696	0.14	869,967	2,304	32	46	42
MISSISSIPPI	722.32	1,032	0.70	436,523	604	21	9	6
MISSOURI	1,306.60	2,475	0.53	891,248	682	10	16	10
MONTANA	343.56	821	0.42	149,291	435	34	27	2
NEBRASKA	526.35	1,098	0.48	329,162	625	27	21	7
NEVADA	367.50	762	0.48	479,574	1,305	33	21	30
NEW HAMPSHIRE	319.80	507	0.63	166,594	521	35	14	3
NEW JERSEY	1,159.60	2,558	0.45	1,392,567	1,201	12	25	28
NEW MEXICO	196.43	888	0.22	311,719	1,587	39	41	38
NEW YORK	1,561.42	4,814	0.32	2,533,449	1,623	6	31	39
NORTH CAROLINA	1,951.35	2,716	0.72	1,544,289	791	4	7	19
NORTH DAKOTA	175.54	507	0.35	119,033	678	43	29	9
OHIO	620.78	3,577	0.17	1,675,300	2,699	25	44	45
OKLAHOMA	898.01	1,778	0.51	698,761	778	16	17	18
OREGON	174.84	1,296	0.13	547,424	3,131	44	48	48

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Table 1 / Librarians in Full-Time Equivalents, Librarian FTE Per School, and Students Per Librarian FTE, 2023–2024 (continued)

State	Librarians	Schools	Librarian FTE Per School	Students	Students Per Librarian FTE	Librarians Rank	Librarian FTE Per School Rank	Students Per Librarian FTE Rank
PENNSYLVANIA	1,493.08	2,926	0.51	1,692,829	1,134	7	17	27
RHODE ISLAND	183.00	312	0.59	136,154	744	41	15	16
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,084.35	1,270	0.85	793,860	732	14	2	14
SOUTH DAKOTA	59.22	712	0.08	141,467	2,389	51	50	43
TENNESSEE	1,376.33	1,905	0.72	1,004,625	730	8	7	13
TEXAS	4,414.10	9,217	0.48	5,532,518	1,253	1	21	29
UTAH	232.61	1,096	0.21	689,883	2,966	37	42	47
VERMONT	204.33	306	0.67	82,455	404	38	11	1
VIRGINIA	1,775.48	2,129	0.83	1,258,852	709	5	4	11
WASHINGTON	726.50	2,553	0.28	1,093,745	1,505	20	35	37
WEST VIRGINIA	177.64	682	0.26	246,883	1,390	42	37	34
WISCONSIN	882.42	2,224	0.40	814,202	923	17	28	23
WYOMING	80.59	358	0.23	91,036	1,130	50	40	26
TOTAL	39,449.98	99,297	0.40	49,404,386	1,252			

(continued from page 1)

State Findings

By far, Texas reported the largest number of school librarian FTEs at 4,414. (See **Table 1.**) Slightly more than 2,000 FTEs each were reported by Georgia (2,077) and Florida (2,061). Other states reporting 1,000 or more school librarian FTEs were North Carolina (1,951), Virginia (1,775), New York (1,561), Pennsylvania (1,493), Tennessee (1,376), Illinois (1,330), Missouri (1,306), Alabama (1,302), New Jersey (1,160), Maryland (1,148), South Carolina (1,084), and Kentucky (1,013). States reporting fewer than 100 school librarian FTEs were Idaho (87), Hawaii (84), Wyoming (81), and South Dakota (59).

Six states come closest to achieving the ideal of a full-time librarian in every school. Each of these states had enough librarians for at least four out of five schools to have a full-time librarian or for every school to have a full-time librarian at least four days out of five. Those states were Georgia (0.89), Alabama (0.85), South Carolina (0.85), Virginia (0.83), Maryland (0.82), and Arkansas (0.79). In half of those states—Alabama, Arkansas, and South Carolina—there are state mandates for school librarians, and those mandates are enforced. In the other three states—Georgia, Maryland, and Virginia—while mandates exist, they are not enforced. Notably, as reported by Lance and Kachel (2021, pp. 30–31), higher levels of school librarian staffing tended to be reported by states that mandate school librarians, whether or not those mandates were enforced. States with the fewest librarian FTEs relative to schools were California (0.06), South Dakota (0.09), and Idaho (0.11). Ten states had fewer than 0.25 librarian FTEs per school—so few librarians that fewer than one school in four could have a full-time librarian or every school would have a librarian for fewer than ten hours per week. Those states were Oregon (0.13), Indiana (0.14), Minnesota (0.14), Michigan (0.15), Ohio (0.17), Arizona (0.19), Utah (0.21), New Mexico (0.22), Wyoming (0.23), and Colorado (0.24).

Only two states at opposite ends of the nation had fewer than 500 students per librarian FTE: Vermont (404) and Montana (435). Three other states with fewer than 600 students per librarian FTE were New Hampshire (521), Arkansas (555), and Alabama (575). At the other extreme, California had 9,054 students per librarian. Three other states with more than 3,000 students per librarian were Indiana (3,927), Idaho (3,619), and Oregon (3,131). Seven more states with more than 2,000 students per librarian were Utah (2,966), Michigan (2,760), Ohio (2,699), Arizona (2,408), South Dakota (2,389), Minnesota (2,304), and Hawaii (2,028).

National- and State-Level Patterns and Trends, 2019–2020 to 2023–2024

Even greater perspective on the changing status of school librarianship may be gained by examining how the status of the profession has changed, at both national and state levels, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019–2020 and most recently from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024.

National Findings

For 2019–2020, the 50 states and the District of Columbia reported 39,447 FTEs of school librarians. The following year, 2020–2021, which began in the midst of

Table 2 / School Librarian Employment in Full-Time Equivalents, 2019–2020 to 2022–2023

	2023–2024	2022–2023	2021–2022	2020–2021	2019–2020
Total in Full-Time Equivalents	39,449.98	39,310.60	39,339.00	39,150.00	39,981.00
Year-to-Year Numerical Change	139.38	(28.40)	189.00	(831.00)	
Year-to-Year Percent Change	0.4%	-0.1%	0.5%	-2.1%	

nationwide pre-vaccine pandemic shutdowns, 39,195 FTEs of school librarians—a decrease of 0.6 percent—were reported. Notably, however, that loss of 256 FTEs was one of the smallest in a decade-and-a-half trend of decline. (See **Table 2.**)

Intriguingly, since 2020–2021, reported librarian FTEs have risen to 39,285 for 2021–2022, 39,311 in 2022–2023, and 39,450 in 2023–2024. The national net gains of 90 FTEs in 2021–2022, 25 FTEs in 2022–2023, and 139 FTEs in 2023–2024 represent a striking change in trajectory after a decade and a half during which annual losses of 500–1,000 or more FTEs were common (Lance and Kachel, 2021, pp. 5–6). For the five latest years of data—2019–2020 to 2023–2024—employment of school librarians has leveled off at more than 39,000, even making allowances for some dubious state figures.

In last year’s article (Lance, 2024, p. 274), speculated reasons for the change in trajectory included COVID-era federal emergency relief to schools, an increasing number of states mandating teaching media literacy, and school librarians proving their worth during the pandemic. By the 2024–2025 school year, federal COVID relief to schools was no longer a factor, although the two other factors may have been in play. Another factor that could explain school librarian gains or losses is the dramatic increase in challenges to library collections, exhibits, and programs and the associated passage of laws holding school librarians criminally responsible for providing access to information deemed “inappropriate” by some.

State Findings

The relative stability of school librarian employment nationwide during the post-pandemic era obscures some noteworthy differences between states as well as varying patterns over time among groups of states. (See **Table 3.**)

Consider changes from 2019–2020, the school year the pandemic struck, to 2023–2024, the latest school year for which data are available, and from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024, the most recent annual interval. Between 2019–2020 and 2023–2024, 12 states gained school librarians, 32 lost librarians, and seven saw little to no change (plus or minus less than 1 percent). During the latest annual interval, 2022–2023 to 2023–2024, circumstances changed substantially: 15 states (three more than between 2019–2020 and 2023–2024) gained school librarians, 19 lost librarians, and 17 saw little to no change. While there was a net loss of 531 FTEs from 2019–2020 to 2023–2024, there was a net gain of 139 FTEs from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024.

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Table 3 / Change in School Librarian FTEs from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024 and 2019–2020 to 2023–2024

School Librarians															
State	2023–2024	2022–2023	Numerical Change from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024	Percent Change from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024	Numerical Change 2022–2023 to 2023–2024	Rank	Percent Change 2022–2023 to 2023–2024	Rank	2019–2020	Numerical Change from 2019–2020 to 2023–2024	Percent Change from 2019–2020 to 2023–2024	Numerical Change 2019–2020 to 2023–2024	Rank	Percent Change 2019–2020 to 2023–2024	Rank
ALABAMA	1,301.55	1,305.95	(4.40)	-0.3%	32	27	1,305.29	(3.74)	22	17					
ALASKA	128.29	126.74	1.55	1.2%	21	13	134.54	(6.25)	23	35					
ARIZONA	464.17	451.17	13.00	2.9%	9	8	419.34	44.83	5	6					
ARKANSAS	873.15	909.43	(36.28)	-4.0%	46	44	923.81	(50.66)	39	37					
CALIFORNIA	644.71	637.97	6.74	1.1%	16	15	620.94	23.77	8	8					
COLORADO	460.84	452.94	7.90	1.7%	13	11	511.99	(51.15)	40	43					
CONNECTICUT	703.40	711.85	(8.45)	-1.2%	38	35	729.65	(26.25)	32	31					
DELAWARE	107.50	108.30	(0.80)	-0.7%	25	30	109.00	(1.50)	18	22					
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	126.11	115.39	10.72	9.3%	11	4	109.50	16.61	9	5					
FLORIDA	2,061.05	2,042.42	18.63	0.9%	4	16	1,991.14	69.91	3	9					
GEORGIA	2,077.30	2,066.30	11.00	0.5%	10	18	2,061.20	16.10	10	14					
HAWAII	83.50	88.50	(5.00)	-5.6%	33	48	125.50	(42.00)	38	50					
IDAHO	87.42	33.87	53.55	158.1%	2	1	34.34	53.08	4	2					
ILLINOIS	1,330.09	1,336.22	(6.13)	-0.5%	35	28	1,399.96	(69.87)	41	36					
INDIANA	263.00	256.00	7.00	2.7%	14	9	596.54	(333.54)	51	51					

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Table 3 / Change in School Librarian FTEs from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024 and 2019–2020 to 2023–2024 (continued)

School Librarians											
State	2023–2024	2022–2023	Numerical Change from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024	Percent Change from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024	Numerical Change 2022–2023 to 2023–2024 Rank	Percent Change 2022–2023 to 2023–2024 Rank	Numerical Change from 2019–2020 to 2023–2024	Percent Change from 2019–2020 to 2023–2024	Numerical Change 2019–2020 to 2023–2024 Rank	Percent Change 2019–2020 to 2023–2024 Rank	Percent Change 2019–2020 to 2023–2024 Rank
IOWA	388.16	383.40	4.76	1.2%	17	13	379.81	8.35	11	2.2%	10
KANSAS	605.54	575.00	30.54	5.3%	3	6	618.14	(12.60)	27	-2.0%	25
KENTUCKY	1,012.90	1,015.38	(2.48)	-0.2%	29	26	1,023.54	(10.64)	26	-1.0%	20
LOUISIANA	848.27	892.29	(44.02)	-4.9%	48	46	956.95	(108.68)	46	-11.4%	44
MAINE	186.40	188.40	(2.00)	-1.1%	28	34	186.70	(0.30)	15	-0.2%	16
MARYLAND	1,148.21	1,138.96	9.25	0.8%	12	17	1,149.83	(1.62)	19	-0.1%	15
MASSACHUSETTS	640.23	636.88	3.35	0.5%	19	18	616.11	24.12	6	3.9%	7
MICHIGAN	516.83	515.00	1.83	0.4%	20	21	509.44	7.39	13	1.5%	12
MINNESOTA	377.61	381.18	(3.57)	-0.9%	31	32	482.77	(105.16)	45	-21.8%	48
MISSISSIPPI	722.32	740.59	(18.27)	-2.5%	40	38	744.18	(21.86)	31	-2.9%	29
MISSOURI	1,306.60	1,299.76	6.84	0.5%	15	18	1,333.84	(27.24)	33	-2.0%	25
MONTANA	343.56	363.32	(19.76)	-5.4%	41	47	372.71	(29.15)	34	-7.8%	41
NEBRASKA	526.35	512.28	14.07	2.7%	7	9	535.21	(8.86)	24	-1.7%	24
NEVADA	367.50	366.50	1.00	0.3%	23	23	278.00	89.50	2	32.2%	3
NEW HAMPSHIRE	319.80	318.60	1.20	0.4%	22	21	333.10	(13.30)	28	-4.0%	34

NEW JERSEY	1,159.60	1,184.74	(25.14)	-2.1%	43	37	1,255.43	(95.83)	-7.6%	44	40
NEW MEXICO	196.43	208.56	(12.13)	-5.8%	39	49	211.35	(14.92)	-7.1%	29	39
NEW YORK	1,561.42	1,080.25	481.17	44.5%	1	2	539.15	1,022.27	189.6%	1	1
NORTH CAROLINA	1,951.35	1,983.09	(31.74)	-1.6%	44	36	2,024.77	(73.42)	-3.6%	42	31
NORTH DAKOTA	175.54	177.31	(1.77)	-1.0%	27	33	177.48	(1.94)	-1.1%	21	21
OHIO	620.78	684.32	(63.54)	-9.3%	50	50	803.17	(182.39)	-22.7%	50	49
OKLAHOMA	898.01	883.97	14.04	1.6%	8	12	890.08	7.93	0.9%	12	13
OREGON	174.84	159.89	14.95	9.4%	6	3	150.90	23.94	15.9%	7	4
PENNSYLVANIA	1,493.08	1,494.84	(1.76)	-0.1%	26	25	1,588.63	(95.55)	-6.0%	43	38
RHODE ISLAND	183.00	168.01	14.99	8.9%	5	5	183.50	(0.50)	-0.3%	16	17
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,084.35	1,089.65	(5.30)	-0.5%	34	28	1,099.40	(15.05)	-1.4%	30	22
SOUTH DAKOTA	59.22	61.70	(2.48)	-4.0%	29	44	69.65	(10.43)	-15.0%	25	47
TENNESSEE	1,376.33	1,413.26	(36.93)	-2.6%	47	39	1,525.70	(149.37)	-9.8%	49	42
TEXAS	4,414.10	4,447.04	(32.94)	-0.7%	45	30	4,563.06	(148.96)	-3.3%	48	30
UTAH	232.61	239.22	(6.61)	-2.8%	37	41	228.48	4.13	1.8%	14	11
VERMONT	204.33	203.86	0.47	0.2%	24	24	205.43	(1.10)	-0.5%	17	19
VIRGINIA	1,775.48	1,837.75	(62.27)	-3.4%	49	42	1,814.44	(38.96)	-2.1%	37	27
WASHINGTON	726.50	854.53	(128.03)	-15.0%	51	51	848.97	(122.47)	-14.4%	47	45
WEST VIRGINIA	177.64	184.14	(6.50)	-3.5%	36	43	208.69	(31.05)	-14.9%	35	46
WISCONSIN	882.42	907.13	(24.71)	-2.7%	42	40	917.44	(35.02)	-3.8%	36	33
WYOMING	80.59	76.75	3.84	5.0%	18	7	82.51	(1.92)	-2.3%	20	28
TOTAL	39,449.98	39,310.60	139.38	0.4%			39,981.30	(531.32)	-1.3%		

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From 2019–2020 to 2023–2024, New York state reported a numerical gain in school librarian FTEs of 1,022. This is an extreme outlier, which raises suspicions about the comparability of the state's data in recent years. A specific, legitimate contributor to that gain, however, has been happening in New York City since 2019. The Teacher 2 Librarian program—a joint effort of the New York City School Library System, St. John Fisher University, and Syracuse University—has been responsible for recruiting and funding education for 90 classroom teachers to retrain as school librarians in the New York City area alone (M. Jacobs, personal communication, April 8, 2025).

For the same interval, double-digit numerical gains in school librarian FTEs were reported by eight states and the District of Columbia: Nevada (90), Florida (70), Idaho (53), Arizona (45), California (24), Massachusetts (24), Oregon (24), the District of Columbia (17), and Georgia (16). Also, between 2019–2020 and 2023–2024, triple- or double-digit percentage increases in school librarian FTEs were reported by five states and the District of Columbia: New York (190 percent), Idaho (155 percent), Nevada (32 percent), Oregon (16 percent), the District of Columbia (15 percent), and Arizona (11 percent).

Notably, as reported last year, most of Nevada's impressive gains can be attributed to the Clark County School District of the growing Las Vegas area and its leadership's resolve to hire more school librarians. Similarly, Idaho's equally impressive numerical and percentage gains are associated with the rapidly growing state capital of Boise and the neighboring community of Meridian.

As impressive as these post-pandemic gains are, however, more states lost than gained school librarian FTEs between 2019–2020 and 2023–2024. During that interval, 37 states reported losses of librarian FTEs. Double- or triple-digit *numerical* losses were reported by 22 of those states: Indiana (334), Ohio (182), Tennessee (149), Texas (149), Washington (122), Louisiana (108), Colorado (51), Arkansas (51), Hawaii (42), Virginia (39), Wisconsin (35), West Virginia (31), Montana (29), Missouri (27), Connecticut (26), Mississippi (22), South Carolina (15), New Mexico (15), New Hampshire (13), Kansas (13), Kentucky (11), and South Dakota (10).

Double-digit *percentage* losses were experienced by nine of the 37 states that lost school librarians: Indiana (56 percent), Hawaii (34 percent), Ohio (23 percent), Minnesota (22 percent), South Dakota (15 percent), West Virginia (15 percent), Washington (14 percent), Louisiana (11 percent), and Colorado (10 percent).

The percentage change in the number of school librarians was negligible (i.e., less than plus or minus 1 percent) for seven states: Vermont, Alabama, Rhode Island, Maine, Maryland, Georgia, and Oklahoma.

State-Level Patterns and Trends, 2022–2023 to 2023–2024

From 2022–2023 to 2023–2024, 18 states and the District of Columbia reported increases in school librarian FTEs. Double- or triple-digit *numerical* gains in school librarian FTEs were reported by 11 states and the District of Columbia: New York (481), Idaho (54), Kansas (31), Florida (19), Oregon (15), Rhode Island (15), Nebraska (14), Oklahoma (14), Arizona (13), Georgia (11), and the District of Columbia (11). During the same one-year period, *percentage* gains in school

librarian FTEs beyond single digits were reported only by Idaho (158 percent) and New York (45 percent).

Still, despite the national total of school librarian FTEs rising slightly between 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 (a net gain of 139 FTEs nationwide), 27 states experienced declines in librarian FTEs. Double- or triple-digit *numerical* losses were experienced by 13 states: Washington (128), Ohio (64), Virginia (62), Louisiana (44), Tennessee (37), Arkansas (36), Texas (33), North Carolina (32), New Jersey (25), Wisconsin (25), Montana (20), Mississippi (18), and New Mexico (12). Only for Washington state did the latest annual loss reach a double-digit percentage, 15 percent.

From 2022–2023 to 2023–2024, the remaining states were relatively stable. Twelve states experienced gains of between one and nine FTEs, two states experienced negligible changes (less than plus or minus 1 percent), and 13 states experienced losses of between one and nine FTEs. For the same interval, 17 states experienced *percentage* gains or losses of between 1 and 9 percent. (See **Table 3.**)

District-Level Patterns by State, 2023–2024

The status of school librarian employment diverges dramatically from state to state. (See **Table 4.**) Nationwide, more than 8,200 local school districts—62 percent of all responding local districts—reported having any school librarians (minimally, at least one full- or part-time librarian for the district, ranging up to a full-time librarian in every school in the district). Almost 5,000 local districts—37 percent, or almost two out of five—reported having no librarians at all. As of 2023–2024, just more than 150 districts—only a bit over 1 percent nationwide—failed to report librarian FTEs. The thought that almost two out of five local districts across the nation no longer have any school librarians will be a shocking one to many. Fortunately, it is also somewhat misleading, as the variation from state to state is quite extreme in both directions.

Besides the single-district jurisdictions of the District of Columbia and Hawaii, the states of Kentucky and Rhode Island also reported that 100 percent of their districts had at least some school librarians in 2023–2024. Notably, though, the presence of school librarians in districts did not necessarily mean there was a full- or part-time librarian in every school.

Between nine out of 10 and 99 out of 100 local districts reported having some level of school librarian staffing in 11 additional states: Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and Nebraska (99 percent of districts each); Arkansas and Tennessee (98 percent each); Iowa (97 percent); Maryland and South Carolina (96 percent each); Florida (93 percent); and North Carolina (91 percent).

At the opposite extreme, fewer than one in three local districts reported having school librarians in eight states: Arizona, Michigan, and Minnesota (32 percent of districts each); Oregon (29 percent); South Dakota (28 percent); Idaho (26 percent); California (21 percent); and Alaska (19 percent).

The nine states closest to the 50–50 tipping point—ones with between two and three out of five districts reporting librarians—were Utah (56 percent), West Virginia (55 percent), Texas (53 percent), Kansas (50 percent), Illinois (49 percent), Indiana (47 percent), Maine (45 percent), Colorado (44 percent), and Ohio (44 percent).

(text continues on page 16)

Table 4 / Reporting on School Librarians by District by State, 2023–2024

State		Any School Librarians (Full- or Part-Time)	Zero School Librarians	No Data on School Librarians	Total
ALASKA	# of districts	10	43	0	53
	Percent	18.9%	81.1%	0.0%	100.0%
ALABAMA	# of districts	138	1	1	140
	Percent	98.6%	0.7%	0.7%	100.0%
ARIZONA	# of districts	73	129	24	226
	Percent	32.3%	57.1%	10.6%	100.0%
ARKANSAS	# of districts	229	4	0	233
	Percent	98.3%	1.7%	0.0%	100.0%
CALIFORNIA	# of districts	209	780	0	989
	Percent	21.1%	78.9%	0.0%	100.0%
COLORADO	# of districts	78	100	0	178
	Percent	43.8%	56.2%	0.0%	100.0%
CONNECTICUT	# of districts	147	22	1	170
	Percent	86.5%	12.9%	0.6%	100.0%
DELAWARE	# of districts	16	3	0	19
	Percent	84.2%	15.8%	0.0%	100.0%
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	# of districts	1	0	0	1
	Percent	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
FLORIDA	# of districts	62	5	0	67
	Percent	92.5%	7.5%	0.0%	100.0%
GEORGIA	# of districts	178	2	0	180
	Percent	98.9%	1.1%	0.0%	100.0%
HAWAII	# of districts	1	0	0	1
	Percent	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Table 4 / Reporting on School Librarians by District by State, 2023–2024

State		Any School Librarians (Full- or Part-Time)	Zero School Librarians	No Data on School Librarians	Total
IDAHO	# of districts	30	85	0	115
	Percent	26.1%	73.9%	0.0%	100.0%
ILLINOIS	# of districts	421	432	3	856
	Percent	49.2%	50.5%	0.4%	100.0%
INDIANA	# of districts	136	154	1	291
	Percent	46.7%	52.9%	0.3%	100.0%
IOWA	# of districts	314	11	0	325
	Percent	96.6%	3.4%	0.0%	100.0%
KANSAS	# of districts	142	144	0	286
	Percent	49.7%	50.3%	0.0%	100.0%
KENTUCKY	# of districts	171	0	0	171
	Percent	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
LOUISIANA	# of districts	55	14	0	69
	Percent	79.7%	20.3%	0.0%	100.0%
MAINE	# of districts	115	140	1	256
	Percent	44.9%	54.7%	0.4%	100.0%
MARYLAND	# of districts	23	1	0	24
	Percent	95.8%	4.2%	0.0%	100.0%
MASSACHUSETTS	# of districts	241	82	0	323
	Percent	74.6%	25.4%	0.0%	100.0%
MICHIGAN	# of districts	170	367	2	539
	Percent	31.5%	68.1%	0.4%	100.0%
MINNESOTA	# of districts	105	224	0	329
	Percent	31.9%	68.1%	0.0%	100.0%

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Table 4 / Reporting on School Librarians by District by State, 2023–2024 *(continued)*

State		Any School Librarians (Full- or Part-Time)	Zero School Librarians	No Data on School Librarians	Total
MISSISSIPPI	# of districts	137	0	1	138
	Percent	99.3%	0.0%	0.7%	100.0%
MISSOURI	# of districts	413	105	0	518
	Percent	79.7%	20.3%	0.0%	100.0%
MONTANA	# of districts	243	152	1	396
	Percent	61.4%	38.4%	0.3%	100.0%
NEBRASKA	# of districts	242	2	0	244
	Percent	99.2%	0.8%	0.0%	100.0%
NEVADA	# of districts	10	8	0	18
	Percent	55.6%	44.4%	0.0%	100.0%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	# of districts	142	22	16	180
	Percent	78.9%	12.2%	8.9%	100.0%
NEW JERSEY	# of districts	420	142	0	562
	Percent	74.7%	25.3%	0.0%	100.0%
NEW MEXICO	# of districts	31	0	58	89
	Percent	34.8%	0.0%	65.2%	100.0%
NEW YORK	# of districts	525	193	6	724
	Percent	72.5%	26.7%	0.8%	100.0%
NORTH CAROLINA	# of districts	112	11	0	123
	Percent	91.1%	8.9%	0.0%	100.0%
NORTH DAKOTA	# of districts	117	54	0	171
	Percent	68.4%	31.6%	0.0%	100.0%
OHIO	# of districts	273	346	0	619
	Percent	44.1%	55.9%	0.0%	100.0%

Table 4 / Reporting on School Librarians by District by State, 2023–2024

State		Any School Librarians (Full- or Part-Time)	Zero School Librarians	No Data on School Librarians	Total
OKLAHOMA	# of districts	352	155	0	507
	Percent	69.4%	30.6%	0.0%	100.0%
OREGON	# of districts	50	120	2	172
	Percent	29.1%	69.8%	1.2%	100.0%
PENNSYLVANIA	# of districts	443	56	1	500
	Percent	88.6%	11.2%	0.2%	100.0%
RHODE ISLAND	# of districts	36	0	0	36
	Percent	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
SOUTH CAROLINA	# of districts	73	2	1	76
	Percent	96.1%	2.6%	1.3%	100.0%
SOUTH DAKOTA	# of districts	42	106	0	148
	Percent	28.4%	71.6%	0.0%	100.0%
TENNESSEE	# of districts	137	3	0	140
	Percent	97.9%	2.1%	0.0%	100.0%
TEXAS	# of districts	539	483	1	1023
	Percent	52.7%	47.2%	0.1%	100.0%
UTAH	# of districts	23	18	0	41
	Percent	56.1%	43.9%	0.0%	100.0%
VERMONT	# of districts	93	26	11	130
	Percent	71.5%	20.0%	8.5%	100.0%
VIRGINIA	# of districts	129	2	0	131
	Percent	98.5%	1.5%	0.0%	100.0%
WASHINGTON	# of districts	113	185	0	298
	Percent	37.9%	62.1%	0.0%	100.0%

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Table 4 / Reporting on School Librarians by District by State, 2023–2024 *(continued)*

State		Any School Librarians (Full- or Part-Time)	Zero School Librarians	No Data on School Librarians	Total
WEST VIRGINIA	# of districts	30	0	25	55
	Percent	54.5%	0.0%	45.5%	100.0%
WISCONSIN	# of districts	391	29	0	420
	Percent	93.1%	6.9%	0.0%	100.0%
WYOMING	# of districts	32	16	0	48
	Percent	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	100.0%
TOTAL	# of districts	8,213	4,979	156	13,348
	Percent	61.5%	37.3%	1.2%	100.0%

(continued from page 11)

Notably, the states of New Mexico and West Virginia reported no districts with zero school librarians, but large percentages of districts that simply did not report on librarians (65 percent for New Mexico and 46 percent for West Virginia). That no districts in those states acknowledged not having school librarians makes the sizable numbers of missing-data districts suspicious. If the numbers of districts not reporting on school librarians (58 for New Mexico, 25 for West Virginia) were added to the 4,979 districts that did acknowledge the absence of school librarians—on the assumption they should have been in the zero librarians column—that column’s total would rise to 5,062, and the percentage of districts nationwide without librarians would rise from 37 to 38 percent.

District-Level Trends, 2022–2023 to 2023–2024

Between 2022–2023 and 2023–2024, nationwide, 1,971 local districts—15 percent of the total—reported gains in school librarian FTEs, 8,887 districts—69 percent—retained the same number of librarian FTEs, and 2,031—16 percent—reported losing librarian FTEs. With seven out of ten districts sustaining existing school librarian FTEs and the remainder split almost equally between districts that gained and lost librarian FTEs, the status of school librarian employment nationwide appears to be reasonably steady. Just as staffing levels varied from state to state in 2023–2024, however, the year-to-year trend from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024 also varied dramatically state by state. (See **Table 5**.)

Single-district District of Columbia gained school librarians between 2022–2023 and 2023–2024. Five states in which 30 percent or more of districts gained school librarians during that one-year interval were Rhode Island (44 percent), New York (41 percent), Mississippi (35 percent), Florida (31 percent), and North Carolina (30 percent).

(text continues on page 20)

Table 5 / Change in School Librarians by District
and State from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024

State		Gained	Same	Lost	Total
ALABAMA	# of districts	16	105	18	139
	Percent	11.5%	75.5%	12.9%	100.0%
ALASKA	# of districts	4	48	1	53
	Percent	7.5%	90.6%	1.9%	100.0%
ARIZONA	# of districts	27	142	22	191
	Percent	14.1%	74.3%	11.5%	100.0%
ARKANSAS	# of districts	21	165	47	233
	Percent	9.0%	70.8%	20.2%	100.0%
CALIFORNIA	# of districts	65	861	61	987
	Percent	6.6%	87.2%	6.2%	100.0%
COLORADO	# of districts	27	125	26	178
	Percent	15.2%	70.2%	14.6%	100.0%
CONNECTICUT	# of districts	22	97	31	150
	Percent	14.7%	64.7%	20.7%	100.0%
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	# of districts	1	0	0	1
	Percent	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
DELAWARE	# of districts	2	14	3	19
	Percent	10.5%	73.7%	15.8%	100.0%
FLORIDA	# of districts	21	26	20	67
	Percent	31.3%	38.8%	29.9%	100.0%
GEORGIA	# of districts	46	93	41	180
	Percent	25.6%	51.7%	22.8%	100.0%
HAWAII	# of districts	0	0	1	1
	Percent	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
IDAHO	# of districts	25	87	3	115
	Percent	21.7%	75.7%	2.6%	100.0%
ILLINOIS	# of districts	79	685	88	852
	Percent	9.3%	80.4%	10.3%	100.0%
INDIANA	# of districts	28	237	24	289
	Percent	9.7%	82.0%	8.3%	100.0%
IOWA	# of districts	75	186	64	325
	Percent	23.1%	57.2%	19.7%	100.0%

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**Table 5 / Change in School Librarians by District
and State from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024** *(continued)*

State		Gained	Same	Lost	Total
KANSAS	# of districts	21	99	20	140
	Percent	15.0%	70.7%	14.3%	100.0%
KENTUCKY	# of districts	16	136	19	171
	Percent	9.4%	79.5%	11.1%	100.0%
LOUISIANA	# of districts	15	30	24	69
	Percent	21.7%	43.5%	34.8%	100.0%
MAINE	# of districts	18	217	18	253
	Percent	7.1%	85.8%	7.1%	100.0%
MARYLAND	# of districts	7	11	6	24
	Percent	29.2%	45.8%	25.0%	100.0%
MASSACHUSETTS	# of districts	44	142	63	249
	Percent	17.7%	57.0%	25.3%	100.0%
MICHIGAN	# of districts	47	444	45	536
	Percent	8.8%	82.8%	8.4%	100.0%
MINNESOTA	# of districts	26	270	33	329
	Percent	7.9%	82.1%	10.0%	100.0%
MISSISSIPPI	# of districts	48	30	59	137
	Percent	35.0%	21.9%	43.1%	100.0%
MISSOURI	# of districts	123	261	133	517
	Percent	23.8%	50.5%	25.7%	100.0%
MONTANA	# of districts	66	235	94	395
	Percent	16.7%	59.5%	23.8%	100.0%
NEBRASKA	# of districts	37	183	22	242
	Percent	15.3%	75.6%	9.1%	100.0%
NEVADA	# of districts	2	15	1	18
	Percent	11.1%	83.3%	5.6%	100.0%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	# of districts	24	121	18	163
	Percent	14.7%	74.2%	11.0%	100.0%
NEW JERSEY	# of districts	59	424	79	562
	Percent	10.5%	75.4%	14.1%	100.0%
NEW MEXICO	# of districts	3	19	9	31
	Percent	9.7%	61.3%	29.0%	100.0%

Table 5 / Change in School Librarians by District and State from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024

State		Gained	Same	Lost	Total
NEW YORK	# of districts	297	301	120	718
	Percent	41.4%	41.9%	16.7%	100.0%
NORTH CAROLINA	# of districts	37	46	40	123
	Percent	30.1%	37.4%	32.5%	100.0%
NORTH DAKOTA	# of districts	18	118	34	170
	Percent	10.6%	69.4%	20.0%	100.0%
OHIO	# of districts	21	492	75	588
	Percent	3.6%	83.7%	12.8%	100.0%
OKLAHOMA	# of districts	98	314	95	507
	Percent	19.3%	61.9%	18.7%	100.0%
OREGON	# of districts	11	148	10	169
	Percent	6.5%	87.6%	5.9%	100.0%
PENNSYLVANIA	# of districts	56	368	74	498
	Percent	11.2%	73.9%	14.9%	100.0%
RHODE ISLAND	# of districts	16	18	2	36
	Percent	44.4%	50.0%	5.6%	100.0%
SOUTH CAROLINA	# of districts	20	33	22	75
	Percent	26.7%	44.0%	29.3%	100.0%
SOUTH DAKOTA	# of districts	9	129	9	147
	Percent	6.1%	87.8%	6.1%	100.0%
TENNESSEE	# of districts	36	64	40	140
	Percent	25.7%	45.7%	28.6%	100.0%
TEXAS	# of districts	190	601	231	1022
	Percent	18.6%	58.8%	22.6%	100.0%
UTAH	# of districts	6	30	5	41
	Percent	14.6%	73.2%	12.2%	100.0%
VIRGINIA	# of districts	24	74	30	128
	Percent	18.8%	57.8%	23.4%	100.0%
VERMONT	# of districts	25	72	20	117
	Percent	21.4%	61.5%	17.1%	100.0%
WASHINGTON	# of districts	30	224	44	298
	Percent	10.1%	75.2%	14.8%	100.0%

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**Table 5 / Change in School Librarians by District
and State from 2022–2023 to 2023–2024** *(continued)*

State		Gained	Same	Lost	Total
WEST VIRGINIA	# of districts	3	19	6	28
	Percent	10.7%	67.9%	21.4%	100.0%
WISCONSIN	# of districts	53	289	78	420
	Percent	12.6%	68.8%	18.6%	100.0%
WYOMING	# of districts	6	39	3	48
	Percent	12.5%	81.3%	6.3%	100.0%
TOTAL	# of districts	1,971	8,887	2,031	12,889
	Percent	15.3%	69.0%	15.8%	100.0%

(continued from page 16)

Twenty-four states in which 70 percent or more of districts retained the same number of school librarians in 2023–2024 as they had in 2022–2023 were Alaska and Arkansas (91 percent each); Oregon and South Dakota (88 percent each); Maine (86 percent); Ohio (84 percent); Michigan and Nevada (83 percent each); Indiana and Minnesota (82 percent each); Wyoming (81 percent); Illinois and Kentucky (80 percent each); Alabama, Idaho, and Nebraska (76 percent each); New Jersey and Washington (75 percent each); Delaware, New Hampshire, and Pennsylvania (74 percent each); Utah (73 percent); Kansas (71 percent); and Colorado (70 percent).

Besides single-district Hawaii, the four states in which 30 percent or more of local districts lost school librarians were Mississippi (43 percent), Louisiana (35 percent), North Carolina (33 percent), and Florida (30 percent).

Despite variation among the states, these patterns echo the national one, with almost half of the states having a high percentage of districts maintaining librarians and only a handful of states having substantial minorities of districts losing librarians.

Ongoing SLIDE Research

Since 2024 SLIDE’s work has been sponsored by the School of Information at San José State University, including the March 2025 updating of the libSLIDE.org website’s interactive data tools with 2023–2024 data. With the upheaval in Washington, D.C., including the shutdown of the U.S. Department of Education and the National Center for Education Statistics, it is likely that this data series will be interrupted for some period, if not discontinued entirely. This makes it more important and urgent than ever that state library agencies and associations—whichever is more appropriate in a given state—take up the important task of collecting and reporting key data about school libraries and librarians. On the SLIDE website, there is a page of links to state sources of data on school libraries and librarians as well as the survey instruments used to collect those data and any reports published about the data.

Future research associated with the SLIDE project will focus on deeper examination of state data sources about school libraries and librarians, particularly

in California and, as possible, other states served by San José State University's School of Information. For example, SLIDE's California work during 2025 included an analysis of the California Department of Education's annual school library evaluation data, assessing how the presence or absence of credentialed teacher librarians shaped school library programs and their use (Lance and Harlan, 2025).

In addition, in late 2024 and early 2025 SLIDE's continuing national research also resulted in a *Kappan* article featuring comments by decision-makers about school librarian employment (Lance, Kachel, and Gerrity, 2024) and a *Learning Hub* article analyzing National Teacher and Principal Survey data to assess the prevalence of librarians in schools without other instructional specialists and the leadership opportunities that presents (Lance and Gerrity, 2025). Both of these articles are reprinted in this edition of the *Library and Book Trade Almanac*.

For complete information about the SLIDE study, visit its website—libSLIDE.org—which provides access to its reports and infographics, videos and PowerPoint files for conference and workshop presentations, external links to news articles and editorials citing the study and its data, and a powerful set of interactive data tools offering on-demand access to user-selected data about school librarian employment from 2009–2010 to 2023–2024. Embedded, step-by-step tutorials make it possible to use these tools quickly and easily. The author may be reached via e-mail at keithlance@comcast.net.

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