
Facilities and Standards

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WHERE DOES THE LIBRARY END and where does the rest of the school begin? It is hard to say, and it is getting more difficult as time goes by. That is not bad; on the contrary, that is the way it should be. The library should pervade the entire school; no part of the school should escape its influence. It cannot be confined to the limits of a room. In fact, a library is much more than a place: a good library is a service which may have a number of places as its base.

What is it? Shall we call it a library, or an instructional materials center, a learning center, a learning resources center, a learning media center, or any of the multitude of complex terms that have been devised, invented, and concocted in recent years to express this expanded function? It first became complicated by arranging, or forcing, a union between book-type libraries, some equipped with book-type librarians, and audiovisual services, some complete with gadget-oriented audiovisualists. Now we add radio, television, and computers. How can a librarian cope with all that?

In the remainder of this article the word "library" will generally be used. It is a good word, but we have to assume that it will mean more than a place where books are kept. Can we not assign a broader meaning for the word library? Ralph Ellsworth says this, "Fortunately, this question was resolved in the early 1960's and school libraries began to be thought of as the place where all the carriers of information were collected, stored, and used. To express this concept, it was sometimes necessary to use various forms of jargon such as *materials center*, *resources center*, *instructional media center*, and so on, but soon these long and clumsy terms were replaced again by the simple, short, well-understood, and dignified word *library*."¹ But if the word library gets in the way of accepting the broader concept, then some-

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day the word may have to go, to be replaced by a more comprehensive term.

What is the nature and character of the facilities for such a comprehensive library? Let us look at what the professionals in the school library and audiovisual field are thinking. In 1960, the American Library Association published *Standards for School Library Programs*.² This book was prepared by the American Association of School Librarians, a Division of the American Library Association, in cooperation with almost a score of other organizations and associations interested in the quality of school libraries. The preface of this book states that the previous standards had been published fifteen years earlier in 1945, in *School Libraries for Today and Tomorrow*. Now, in 1969, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the Department of Audiovisual Instruction (DAVI) of the National Education Association are issuing a new publication on standards for school media programs. It is significant to note that the DAVI is an equal partner with the AASL in this new book; in 1960 the DAVI was one of the groups represented on the standards committee. Also, the proposed book deals with "school media programs," not "school library programs."

Comparing the 1960 standards with the 1969 publication reveals the changes in recommendations and suggestions for library facilities—buildings, equipment, and furnishings. These recommendations reflect and shape the type and extent of programs which can be contained therein and served thereby.

It is not surprising that the 1960 and 1969 versions are similar. After all, in education ideas and concepts are slow to change, and practices in library services have not really been revolutionized in nine years. And it is to the credit of those who prepared the 1960 standards that they anticipated trends and innovative possibilities.

With regard to the types of media, the 1969 publication adds specific reference to closed-circuit television, computer-assisted instruction, and dial access information services. The 1960 standards already referred to the potential of television and also to "technical, electronic, and machine devices."³ The new version refers to media specialists instead of librarians, and the chief in charge of a media center is called the "head of the media center," and is not necessarily assumed to be a librarian. In the section on personnel, the new book refers to aides, which include clerks, typists, etc., and then also to a variety of

technicians, such as a graphics technician, a photographic technician, an electronic technician, and a TV technician.

The list of materials and devices that will be housed, used, and serviced in the media center is much longer and more extensive in the 1969 version than in the earlier book; the new list includes by name such items as globes, maps, catalogs, microform, transparencies, kits, art objects, videotape records, and dial access materials.

It follows naturally that the materials to be housed and utilized and the staff to be accommodated for efficient and agreeable service will affect the kinds, quantities and sizes of spaces to be built. The new book calls for rooms and spaces not specifically recommended in the 1960 book; it adds such accommodations as a production laboratory for media, a photographic dark room, and space for maintenance and repair services. The 1969 book elaborates on the special needs for films, filmstrips, recordings, kits, and audiovisual devices; it suggests extensive electronics communications services, requiring production and control rooms for radio and television production and distribution; and, it proposes a computerized learning laboratory.

The *Standards* published nine years ago included recommendations which it called "policies and specifications for library quarters and equipment for schools having 200 or more students."⁴ These recommendations are detailed in an appendix, although general statements about quarters are made in the body of the book. The 1969 volume includes these specifics "on a basis of 1,000 students or fewer," and contains them as an integral part of the book. The newer volume also recognizes more strongly the likelihood of including several media centers in one school, and points out appropriately that such a divided library or media center will present special staffing and management problems.

The new *Standards* recommends larger libraries; it suggests accommodations for at least fifteen percent of the enrollment, whereas the 1960 book says at least ten percent. The 1969 book also encourages more room per student: forty square feet instead of thirty to thirty-five square feet in the 1960 standard. The number of books, the quantities of titles of periodicals and of other materials have all been boosted to higher levels in the new standards.

The new book is quite specific about room areas, giving number of square feet for most of the rooms which are considered necessary. This may offend some architects, and other school planners too, since they tend to believe, with much justification, that such specifics

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should grow out of the educational program for each individual school project. If it is made clear to the readers that these "specifications" are guides and recommendations, and subject to individual differences, no crises are likely to arise. And does this concept of the large library space accommodate the views of J. Lloyd Trump as he expresses them in such statements as appeared in the January 1966 issue of the *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals*?⁵

The new standards volume does not quibble about air conditioning; it says do it. Sound conditioning is mandatory, with carpeted floors getting high marks. Good lighting is declared essential, as indeed it is. The book shows good sense by not recommending minimum "foot-candle" lighting levels; this is a complexity that had better be left to competent specialists in illumination. "There must be a sufficient number of electrical outlets and also the needed electrical power for peak loads of use," the volume says. So true, and it is also necessary to allow for changing, adding, and relocating electrical outlets as the types and complexity of electrical devices change.

The 1960 standards already recommended district media centers to serve all the schools in a single school system. Since the size and character of school districts vary so widely in this country, general policies and procedures only are suggested for adaptation to the needs of an individual school system. The nine-year-old standards also encouraged the development of regional media centers serving a number of school systems; in large metropolitan school districts, a regional center might serve only a portion of the larger district. In addition to continuing to encourage the regional center, the new standards place special emphasis on a state media center, which becomes a part of the state education agency. Such a state center in each state would serve primarily the schools but would cooperate with other state agencies such as the state library system.

The new standards recognize the need for regional centers which would serve several states. This would especially be useful where states are small in area or where major metropolitan centers are situated near or on the boundaries of several states.

To see more clearly what these standards mean in terms of actual facilities, and to envision more practically the kind of facilities that are needed for a library of this type, let us imagine a school library in use for a day.

A library assistant arrives to open the school library at seven-thirty

in the morning. The school is planned so that the library may be opened without giving access to all the remainder of the school. On Saturday, one of the librarians does this, but later in the morning; on Sunday the library opens only in the afternoon and evening. The library is open the year round; no abrupt closing down for the summer months.

Students arrive to read newspapers, peruse periodicals, do assignments, hear recordings, view films, read books. The furniture is comfortable. Most books are shelved near the catalogs not far from the charge area. Students can consult indexes and catalogs, proceed to the shelves, select materials, and continue to use areas away from distraction and traffic. Films and recordings are open on shelves, accessible as books.

Not all this is in one big room with rows of long tables, but in a number of rooms which are mainly equipped with small tables or individual carrels. In addition to more conventional resources, students have access to materials on audiotape, film, or computers by using a dial, pushbuttons, or a keyboard. The several rooms are separated from each other by means of partly-glazed partitions, or by units which become visual barriers, such as shelving. There may even be some solid walls, not load-bearing, so they can be removed if that is later desirable.

Rich are the resources in periodicals and journals as well as books, so the school reduces its reliance on textbooks and encyclopedias, Microform collections, with readily available devices to read and reproduce the material, reduce space needs for storing information in periodicals.

A class meets in a classroom in the library to continue learning more about the uses of the library's resources, because the school creates an awareness of the vastness of information, knowledge and wisdom, and encourages an understanding of the approach, attack, and technique for searching, discovering, assembling, synthesizing and utilizing knowledge.

During the morning, an outstanding teacher from the nearby university lectures in person to a large group of students in the teaching auditorium located near the library. Through the appropriate use of computer capabilities, the schedules of the students have easily been rearranged to allow attending the lecture. Because of careful design for devices, screens and light control, visual materials have been easily presented to accompany the speaker's words and acoustics permit

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response and questions from the students. The lecture is videotaped to accommodate those unable to attend and to conserve the material in the information files for future use.

At noon time, students come to the library from the nearby food service facilities to use the library during part of their lunch period. Appropriate precautions have been taken to avoid unhappy acoustical problems. In the afternoon, through the medium of telephone wire services, a scientist from a distant research center presents an illustrated lecture with the help of slides displayed through large rear-screen projection capabilities operated by one of the school's media specialists. Students can respond through the two-way telecommunications services.

A media specialist instructs teachers from this and other schools, and some students also, in preparing and using newer teaching materials. Room accommodations and equipment provide for preparing slides, filmstrips, motion pictures, overhead transparencies and photo-prints. Nearby is a facility to view and to hear visual and audio materials.

An art teacher with some students, without exploitation, assist an economics teacher in the development of striking and graphically clean maps and charts, using resources on file in the library center. Some students of art find the school's own resources limited; with direct lines to the local museums and university art department, arrangements are quickly made for temporary loans from the larger resources of these other institutions.

First echelon level repairs and maintenance of mechanical and electronic devices are handled in the work rooms of the library. For more extensive service, the central offices and shops for the school system provide technical services or attention through negotiated service contracts.

Learning and teaching stations throughout the school are liberally supplied with needed equipment and devices, but the library center furnishes additional hardware as needed.

Students from one class come to the library center to select a set of materials, print, audio, other visuals and check them out for a temporary loan for use on a project underway.

Some of the science facilities are at some distance from the main library center and have been supplied with a unit library with permanent collections appropriately served by competent library personnel managed by the head of the school's media services.

The principal or chief officer of the school meets with a local curriculum study committee in the library's professional center. This has extensive collections of professional materials. It is immediately accessible to all of the school's resources and also to the district's administrative center through audio and visual telecommunications services.

The television studios are near at hand; the media center's collection of visuals, charts, slides, photos, and transparencies are readily available for video presentations. Technicians in graphics are available to the video center as well as the remainder of the media programs.

Students and adults have opportunity under controlled conditions to extend their understanding of video technologies and may develop their skills and talents, perhaps for occupational purposes. Yet all students, young and old, elementary and secondary, use television capabilities for experiences with new media. These services of the television devices supplement their obvious function as a communications tool.

Radio has come back to extend the school's services. Besides offering any student, elementary or secondary, an opportunity to learn about radio broadcasting and the science and technology thereof, the radio extends the school day, providing information, music, entertainment, and instruction to all who will listen, especially useful to the homebound.

Computer services, besides assisting student scheduling and school management, provide for computer-assisted instruction and for instruction in computer technologies. Accounting, record keeping, cataloging of media materials are improved by using computers.

Most of the students leave the school sometime during the middle of the afternoon, but the library does not close. For a while the charging desk is busy—and it is not a quiet place; people talk, the annoying sound of whispering is not heard. But this active area of the library is appropriately acoustically separated from those portions where quiet and peace is needed. The library is so divided according to use: busy and noisy, quiet and peaceful, for conversation, for audio devices, for typewriters, for study, for technical activities. It is divided to allow variety in lighting: for reading, for visual devices, for working, and for technical processes.

Some students and teachers continue to use parts of the library, served now by additional library staff who arrive for the late afternoon and evening hours. In the evening others return, including adults

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from the community. Lectures, classes, motion picture performances may be underway in the teaching auditorium or one of the smaller accommodations. A gallery of art is open near the auditorium, displaying with proper safeguards original works of art, some by student and faculty, and reproductions, some of which are prints from the school's collection, others obtained through temporary or permanent loan. The school also has other exhibits for science and mechanics, for programs in business education, in physical education, and other segments of the learning program of the school. Yet along with all these services based on technological devices, students and teachers will obviously continue to use the more conventional materials.

The services, equipment, materials and building accommodations described in the preceding paragraphs are all available and possible now and hopefully many schools are already utilizing them. And nothing has been said of regional and nationwide central library systems, through whose communications networks individual schools can have access to the resources of libraries located all over the world. Nothing has so far been suggested about possibilities for direct television communications in color eliminating the need for national networks and intermediate local television stations through an organized system of intra- and intercontinental communication satellites.

If the library services will in fact become so extensive and so complex as have been described, how do we get there from where we are? First we must ask where we are. Customarily a school library has developed in a way something like this: the school set aside a room, or built one especially for the purpose, and made it the library, stocked it with books and with other print materials and with some other audio-visual materials and devices, and equipped it with a competent librarian. The library was pretty much self-contained, that is, it served its school with resources which were contained within the library itself.

The next step may have been the sharing of resources which are located at the central administrative office of the school district. An audio-visual center was located there. This audio-visual center had a collection of films, slides, records and tapes which it checked out and distributed to all the schools in the district. The center delivered these materials and, at an appropriate time, picked them up again for redistribution to other schools. At this point, the individual school library was no longer dependent only on its own resources, it was a part of a larger combination of resources.

The conventional school may have had a communications system. This system was probably limited to a central call arrangement which allowed the principal or other authorized person in the administrative suite to communicate messages to selected rooms or areas in the schools, or even generally throughout the entire plant. This might be an "intercom," by which someone in the teaching area or classroom could respond to the office. Added to this was a signal system, through which signals for time clocks, or music could be generally or selectively transmitted throughout the plant. The extent of refinement or sophistication of such a system varied with the needs, or the knowledge of the engineer, or the budget, or all three. And there was a conventional telephone to the world outside.

But that is only the beginning. Add to that the possibilities of the modern telephone, radio, television—broadcast or closed circuit, the computer, new techniques for recording picture and sound, information retrieval possibilities, and all the other benefits of current and coming technologies and techniques including communications satellites. Then the school can reach to its neighboring schools, to a center at the administrative unit level, or to a state or regional center, even to national and international resources, public and non-public. That is the way it can go.

This communication capability will be expanded and integrated with the total system of audio-visual and computer signals. This will require a communications center in the school equipped with appropriate equipment and devices, manned by competent technicians with professional engineering talent and maintenance personnel near at hand to operate it and to keep it functioning properly.

This concept of communications and information services for the modern school library calls for facilities which include much equipment, many devices and communications services and computer capabilities, in addition to the buildings and furnishings located at the school. Planning a library now becomes much more than designing a building or a part thereof, it is planning a set of coordinated resources. The buildings and furniture are only a component in this set. Other components are communications devices and services—telephone, telegraph, radio, television, and computer capabilities.

To plan these coordinated resources requires crossing the conventional and traditional geographic boundaries; school district lines will become blurred—television signals and radio signals know nothing about county or state lines and city limits and school district bound-

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aries. These signals keep on going until distance or other barriers weaken or stop them. These extended services of the library must then be planned in concert with the administrators of a number of school districts, and jointly with state education agencies and other state, local, and Federal public and governmental services and agencies, with regional educational centers, colleges and universities, even with private agencies and enterprises.

Transportation services are also a factor; in fact, transportation and communication need to be seen as a unity. Until about a hundred and thirty years ago, communication required transportation, with rare exceptions such as the smoke signal, the drum, the cannonade, the signal flag and the trumpet. The messenger, the postal service, even the carrier pigeon, all use transportation to communicate. But since the invention and use of almost instantaneous communication by wire or wireless, carrying messages by vehicles and conveying them by communications media must be viewed simultaneously.

C. Walter Stone says this about library functions: "To put it more specifically for one type of library, performance of the library function on a university campus should mean provision of the full range of recorded communication and information services (including necessary reproduction) required to sustain instruction and research."⁶ Similar statements can be made about a secondary school library, or an elementary school library, for that matter.

So the library, and the school where it is located, are no longer bound by the limits of one building, one site, one school, one district, one state, or even one nation, because the school has become interconnected by a network of communication-transportation capabilities. The library is no longer primarily a place, it is a service.

Stone goes on:

"What will libraries look like in the future?" The question is less perceptive than, "How may the library function be carried forward?" A single but important error about future library development has cropped up. The error is reflected in such a statement as: "The sort of library I envision doesn't exist anywhere today, at least not in one place, although various aspects of it can be seen by viewing libraries separately in places where they are now developing." The point is that in the future it will probably be less and less necessary to have all the pieces of a library program in one place so long as the program parts can be linked together in networks and the resources of each part deployed to support an over-all

system. The library of the future is not wisely conceived as a place at all, but rather as a far-flung network composed of units of various sizes and types, each of which may perform similar as well as different functions, but all of which will be linked together electro-mechanically.⁷

The question is repeated, "where does the library end and where does the rest of the school begin?" We can add the question, "where does the school end and where does the community begin?" It might be well if the library, the school and the community, possibly including the world, are all considered parts of the same fabric, a continuum, tied together with a coordinated system of communication and transportation services.

What will the costs be for so diverse and seemingly elaborate services and facilities? That is hard to say, but obviously not to be ignored. Here is another duty for the library and media people, for other educators and their consultants: to make the economic studies which these decisions will entail in order to determine the outcomes for human development and betterment which are at least two goals of education.

Assessment of educational progress, appraisal of results of learning processes is always difficult, but the large number of options and choices now available to educational agencies and schools makes inevitable the question: how much "educational value" do we get for the money spent for this great variety of resources? To answer that question is not the objective of this article.

The new publication *Standards for School Media Programs* should be useful immediately. It should, therefore, probably not set forth standards and minimum recommendations which are unreasonable and unattainable. The standards should not cause frustration by demanding unachievable goals. But for the alert educator—administrator, librarian, teacher—this book may be settling for too little. It may not be presenting a hard enough challenge to the best of schools, and even the best of the standards may not be good enough. The 1969 standards are likely to be too low for what ought to be taking place in education in the immediate tomorrow, if not today. It might be unfair, however, to expect the media centers to contribute dramatically to the change that should be taking place in the processes of education and in the structure and organization of what is called the school. If it is acknowledged that this new book will need to be updated and revised in just a few years, then this 1969 statement may

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yet provide a thrust to the greater improvement that education demands.

A final comment about architecture. As educators view the possibilities of the new media and devices, and take a hard look at the dollars, they must remember that all this is for people. Planning library and media services and buildings is still primarily preparing an environment in which people can profitably and beneficially interact with the media and with each other. Planning libraries will continue to require the organizing of space for delight as well as utility and the designing of devices and the arranging of resources for the efficient and effective use by people—the students and teachers, and also the management and service staff of the media center.

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