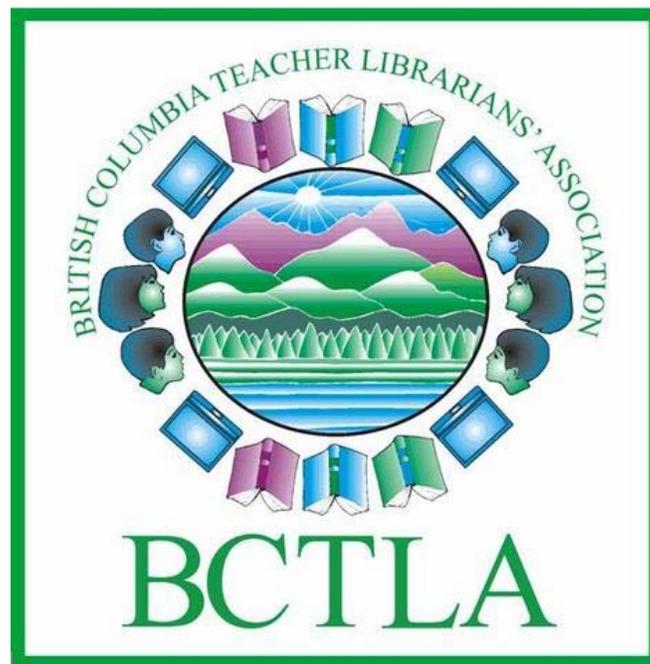# The Bookmark's

27th Annual Survey of

WORKING
AND
LEARNING
CONDITIONS

of Public School Libraries
in British Columbia

Report of the findings
April 2008

BCTLA Executive 08-09

POSITION	NAME	EMAIL	SCHOOL	#WORK
Co-President	Heather Daly	daly_heather@hotmail.com	Coquitlam SD	604-937-6380
Past-President	Bonnie McComb	bonniemccomb@shaw.ca	Parkland Sec	250-655-2737
First VP Chapter Rel.	Sylvia Zubke	szubke@vsb.bc.ca	David Living.	604-713-4985
Second VP Advocacy	Karen Lindsay	lindsaykp@shaw.ca	Reynolds Sec	250-479-1696
Communications	Halia Hirniak	haliah@shaw.ca	Laity View El.	604-463-7108
Liaison Chair	Moira Ekdahl	moirae@shaw.ca	Vancouver SB	604-713-5016
Recording Secretary	Al Smith	literateowl@gmail.com	Kelowna Sec.	250-762-2805
Treasurer	Lauren Craze	lcraze@richmond.sd38.bc.ca	Manoah Steves	604-668-6660
Working & Learning	Amanda Hufton	Kaela2@shaw.ca	Walter Lee	604-668-6210
Bookmark Editor (apt)	Angie MacRitchie	amacritchie@telus.net	Shannon Lake	250-768-1553
Conference Chair (apt)	Bonnie Chapman	3chapman@telus.net	Hillcrest	604-575-1359
Cont.Education (apt)	Lynn Turner	lyturner@uniserve.com	Thornhill Junior	250-635-9141
Web Steward (apt)	Val Hamilton	vhamilton@shaw.ca	Retired	778-888-5643

> Note to Reader: This edition of The Bookmark's Working and Learning Conditions Report includes data from the 2006-2007 Working and Learning Conditions survey.

Executive Summary
27th Annual BC Teacher-Librarians' Association
Working and Learning Conditions Survey

Relevance

The purpose of the BC Teacher-Librarians' Association (BCTLA) annual survey is to document the working and learning conditions of school libraries in British Columbia. Recent research provides compelling evidence to do so. A 2006 study conducted in Ontario by Dr. Donald Klinger[1] and colleagues found that the presence of a professional teacher-librarian was strongly linked to greater reading enjoyment, which in turn resulted in higher reading achievement. Dr. Haycock[2] (2003) at UBC cited U.S. evidence in his report on the crisis in Canadian school libraries that found student achievement is higher in schools where the library is open all day and a professional teacher-librarian is on duty full-time. Even greater improvements were found when teacher-librarians engage in collaboration with classroom colleagues, teach information literacy skills, and participate in technology management within the school. Higher spending on books and other materials were also associated with increased reading scores. These findings point to the central role teacher-librarians play in the educational development of students, and thus the importance of surveying teacher-librarians about changes in the working and learning conditions in school libraries.

Background

 Each year, for the past 27 years, the BCTLA conducts an annual survey about the working and learning conditions in school libraries in British Columbia. In 2007-08, teacher-librarians completed an online survey, which was open to all standard schools with school-aged students in the province. Of the 1,445 eligible schools, 946 returned a survey for a response rate of 65.5%. This report compares the last four years of data to examine trends in budget allocation, student and teacher-librarian FTE ratios, school-based fund raising, clerical/library technicians and technology resources in the library. The report also includes an in-depth qualitative analysis of the issues and concerns about working and learning conditions, based on the open-ended comments provided by teacher-librarians.

Quantitative Results – Changes in Budget Allocation and Library Resources

Almost all (98.1%) schools represented in the survey reported having a school library and a teacher-librarian (91.9%) in charge of the library. The average FTE teacher-librarian per 1,000 students increased in 2005–06 and 2006–07, followed by a decrease in elementary and secondary schools in 2007–08. Between 2004–05 and 2007–08, the percentage of schools with clerical support or a library technician remained the same in secondary schools (84.6%), increased slightly to 49.9% in elementary schools, and increased somewhat more in middle schools, from

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[1] Haycock, K. (2003). *The crisis in Canada's school libraries: The case for reform and re-investment.* Toronto: Association of Canadian Publishers.

[2] Ontario Library Association. (2006). *School libraries and student achievement in Ontario*.

72.9% to 80.3%. The budget allocation for the school libraries with a budget averaged $5,853.41 in 2007–08. There was considerable variation in the size of library budgets, ranging from as little as $0 to as much as $50,000. After accounting for the fourteen schools with no budget, the average budget allocation in 2007-08 is $5,752.11.

The library budget allocation decreased for elementary and middle schools between 2006–07 and 2007–08 and increased for secondary and multi-grade schools. Between 1997–98 and 2007–08, the budget allocation per student FTE has fallen from $15.54 to $13.30 for secondary schools, and from $14.73 to $12.39 for elementary schools. In the past year, the average budget allocation decreased for both elementary and secondary schools. The 2007–08 budget allocation per FTE student is now less than half of the amount recommended by the Canadian School Library Association and the Association for School Libraries in Canada in 2003[3].

Schools increasingly rely on fund-raising efforts to supplement their library budget. Of the 946 respondents, 697 school libraries reported a fund-raising budget for 2006-07. An additional 119 schools reported having received no fund-raising dollars for the library. The average amount of funds raised for the school library in 2006–07 was $2,093 (including schools with zero fund-raising dollars) and $2,451 for the schools with a fund-raising budget. Eighty per cent of schools raised less than $3,000.

The survey data indicates that libraries are increasingly utilizing electronic resources. Over 90% of elementary, middle, and secondary schools reported having a computerized catalogue and Internet access. Many more secondary (84.6%) and middle (72.1%) schools put library information on the school's webpage compared to 49.6% of elementary schools and 15.4% of multi-level grade schools.

Qualitative Results – Giving Voice to the Concerns of Teacher-Librarians

The survey also provided respondents with space to comment on library staffing, budget or other resources at the school, as well as issues and concerns about library services. About half (469) of respondents answered this open-ended question. Teacher-librarians voiced many concerns about the impact of funding cutbacks on working and learning conditions in school libraries. Many reported library funding dropping dramatically over the years while the cost of purchasing library resources increased considerably. They also expressed concern about inequities with some schools having fully resourced libraries while others have outdated resources and minimal library staff. The comments reveal that chronic under-funding has resulted in outdated book collections, inadequate clerical and/or administrative support for the library, and a lack of technology resources. Several teacher-librarians voiced the opinion that the Ministry of Education was contradicting its own new literacy policy by underfunding school libraries while promoting a new literacy initiative.

A common theme was "not enough time to do it all." Many of the teacher-librarians worked in a part-time FTE assignment. They reported having less time to maintain libraries or to keep up with new demands on their time. Many described feeling pulled in too many directions, spread too thin, or torn between their professional responsibilities and doing basic clerical/admin work

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[3] Canadian School Library Association and the Association for School Libraries in Canada. Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Libraries, 2003.

to maintain the library. Several teacher-librarians reported working on days off, evenings, and weekends to try to keep up. Some respondents described the frustration, loss of job satisfaction, and chronic stress arising from having too many demands with too few resources.

The survey responses reveal the extent to which teacher-librarians appreciated the support that was available to help them maintain the school library. Many expressed gratitude for the support the school library received from volunteers and their Parent Advisory Committees to raise funds to purchase books and computers. Teacher-librarians reported that having a principal and/or district administrator who placed a high value on school libraries made a big difference, especially in the face of funding cutbacks. Finally, teacher-librarians with access to District Resource Services expressed their appreciation of how valuable these services were for the functioning of the school library.

Teacher-librarians made five key recommendations for how to improve conditions in public school libraries in British Columbia: 1) Increase FTE assignments for teacher-librarians to provide the time needed to teach literacy, research skills, collaborate with teachers, and effectively administer the library, 2) Increase technical and clerical support to free the teacher-librarian to focus on teaching library skills and promoting literacy, 3) Update school library collections to be relevant to the needs of today's students, 4) Improve student access to technology by upgrading computer technology in school libraries and providing adequate technical support, and 5) Continue BCTLA and BCTF lobbying efforts to raise awareness of the impact of funding cutbacks on the learning conditions of students and the working conditions of teacher-librarians.

This report was prepared by:

Amanda Hufton, Chair
BCTLA Working & Learning Conditions

Margaret White, Research Analyst
BCTF Research Department

May 2008

Introduction

Each year, for the past 27 years, the British Columbia Teacher-Librarians' Association (BCTLA) conducts an annual survey about the working and learning conditions in school libraries in British Columbia. In 2007-08, teacher-librarians completed an online survey, which was open to all standard schools with school-aged students in the province. This report presents the results of the 27th Annual BCTLA Survey of Working and Learning Conditions. The report compares the last four years of data to examine trends in library budget allocation, student and teacher-librarian FTE ratios, clerical/library technicians, and technology resources in the library. The report also includes an in-depth qualitative analysis of issues and concerns about school library working and learning conditions, based on the open-ended comments provided by teacher-librarians. This report was prepared with research support from the BC Teachers' Federation Research Department.

A special thank-you is extended to all those who participated this year.

Response to the survey

An announcement was faxed to all eligible schools in October 2007, asking the school's teacher-librarian to complete an online survey, which was posted on the BCTLA web site. A total of 1,456 standard Grade K–12 public schools in British Columbia were eligible for the 2007–08 survey. Eleven of these schools were excluded from the survey population, as they did not have a contact fax number. Of the remaining 1,445 eligible schools, 946 responded to the survey, for a response rate of 65.5%.

Since 2004–05, the annual report has presented the survey results by school type (multi-level[4], elementary, middle, and secondary schools). Compared to provincial data, elementary, middle, and secondary schools are well-represented in the survey responses. Schools with multi-level grades are under-represented, although there was an increase in participation from 10 schools in 2006–07 to 26 schools in 2007–08. Table 1[5] compares the response rate for elementary, middle, and secondary schools to the proportion of schools for each grade type in the province.

Table 1: Percentage of schools responding vs. all BC schools: By type of school

	Multi-level	**Elementary**	**Middle**	**Secondary**
British Columbia	8.5%	65%	6%	20%
Survey n/a =1.4% (14)	2.7% (26)	69% (657)	6% (61)	20% (188)

Source: Ministry of Education: *Full summary of student statistics, 2007–08,* p. 9.

While the response was good in many school districts, thirteen districts had a very low response to the survey. No schools responded in six districts (47, 50, 81, 87, 92, 93), one school responded in three districts (49, 74, 84), and two schools responded in four districts (10, 46, 51, 58). In six districts (20, 22, 35, 41, 71, 75), 100% of eligible schools completed the survey.

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[4] Multi-level schools include elementary/secondary (K to 12) and elementary/junior secondary schools.
[5] The survey sample excludes some programs included in the provincial data, such as Continuing Education, Alternate Programs, Distance Learning Centres, and other Specialized Learning Centres.

Part I: Quantitative results

Professional staffing

Almost all respondents (98.1%) have a library at their school, with 91.9% having a teacher-librarian in charge. Where no teacher-librarian was in charge, the library was staffed by a principal or vice-principal (2.7%), a clerk or technician (2.5%), or other staff (1.6%). Four schools either had no one in charge or had a parent or volunteer look after the library. About 60% of respondents reported their school library having a district library consultant.

On average, the T-L assignment for 2007–08 was 0.55 FTE, for all reporting schools. The average FTE T-L is higher in secondary schools, as is the student population, resulting in a lower average FTE T-L per 1,000 students. Table 1 shows an increase in the average full-time equivalent teacher-librarians per 1,000 students between 2005–06 and 2006–07, followed by a slight decrease in FTE T-L time in elementary and secondary schools in 2007–08.

Table 2: Average full-time equivalent teacher-librarians per 1,000 students

	Multi-level	Elementary	Middle	Secondary
2004–05	-	1.43	1.25	0.97
2005–06	-	1.45	1.19	0.99
2006–07	-	1.56	1.25	1.01
2007–08	-	1.51	1.32	0.98

Library support (clerical and technical) staffing

Table 3 shows changes in library clerical and technical support staff since 2004–05. The percentage of schools with a paid clerk or technician in elementary and secondary schools is about the same as it was in 2004–05, while increasing gradually in middle schools. Clerical and technical staff assignments averaged 13.72 hours per week, with multi-level schools receiving about half the hours of other types of schools.

Table 3: Percentage of schools with a paid clerk or technician

	Multi-level	Elementary	Middle	Secondary
2004–05	-	48.0	72.9	84.7
2005–06	-	52.4	77.2	83.1
2006–07	-	52.4	77.2	81.6
2007–08	-	49.9	80.3	84.6

Budget allocation

The budget allocation for the school libraries reporting figures in this survey (837 responses) averaged $5,853.41 in 2007–08. Library budget allocations decreased for elementary and middle schools, while secondary schools experienced a slight increase in funding. The increased budget allocation for secondary schools was not sufficient to offset the increase in students, with the funding per FTE student decreasing slightly since 2006–07. There was considerable variation in the size of library budgets, ranging from as little as $0 to as much as $50,000.

In this year's survey, respondents were asked to report if their school library had a zero budget allocation. Table 4 shows the budget allocation figures, adjusted for the fourteen schools operating with no library budget. After accounting for schools with a zero budget, the average budget allocation in 2007-08 decreases to $5,752.11. Most of the fourteen schools reporting a zero budget were elementary schools, which is reflected in the slight reduction in the overall budget allocation for these schools. Only one multi-level school reported a zero budget, but as there are so few schools in this group, the zero value resulted in a greater decrease in the average budget allocation

Table 4: Budget allocation

	Multi-level	Elementary	Middle	Secondary
Amount per student FTE				
2004–05	$14.50	$11.13	$12.25	$13.21
2005–06	$16.36	$12.33	$13.38	$12.74
2006–07	$13.97	$12.73	$13.36	$13.41
2007–08	$19.77	$12.39	$14.61	$13.30
Amount per student FTE, including schools reporting a zero budget				
2007–08	$18.77	$12.13	$14.60	$13.22
Amount per school				
	Multi-level	**Elementary**	**Middle**	**Secondary**
2004–05	$1,110	$2,880	$5,918	$11,892
2005–06	$3,545	$3,719	$7,272	$12,160
2006–07	$3,044	$3,673	$7,369	$12,440
2007–08	$4,240	$3,609	$7,289	$12,815
Amount per school, including schools reporting a zero budget				
2007–08	$4,025	$3,532	$7,284	$12,743

Chart 1: Changes in library funding per student in the past decade

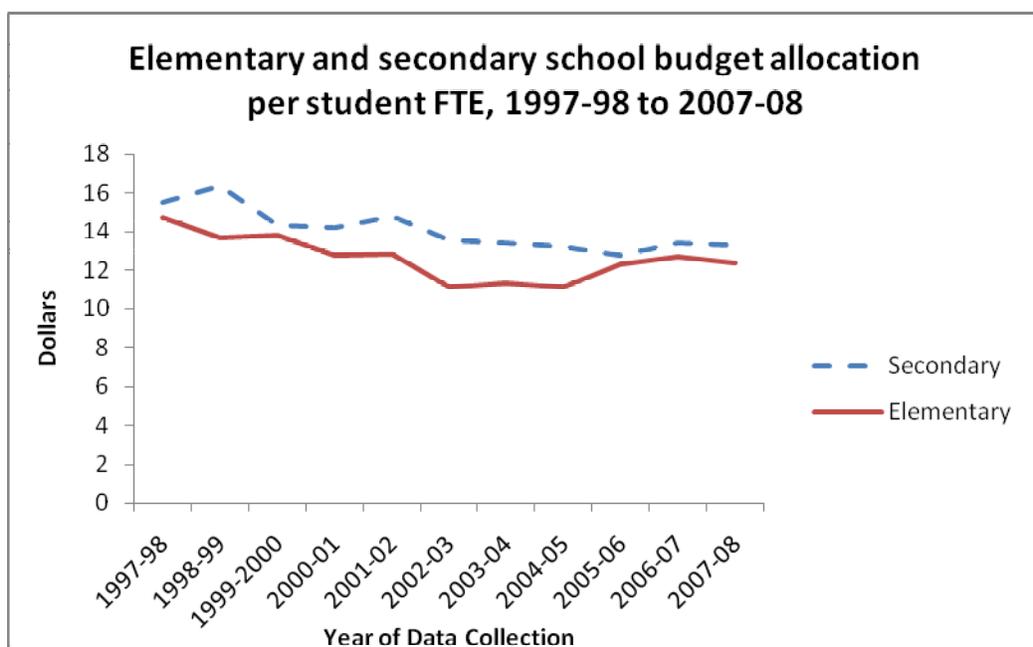*27ᵗʰ annual BCTLA survey of Working and Learning Conditions, 2007–08*

Chart 1 illustrates changes in library budget allocation for elementary and secondary schools since 1997. Budget allocation per student FTE declined in elementary schools between 2002 and 2006, and has increased slightly since then. Between 1997–98 and 2007–08, the budget allocation per student FTE has fallen from $15.54 to $13.30 for secondary schools, and from $14.73 to $12.39 for elementary schools. It is important to note that these figures are in nominal dollars and do not take into account the inflation rate over the past ten years.

Fund raising

In the face of on-going cutbacks to school library budgets, many schools have had to turn to fund raising to meet the most basic needs of the library. Over time, this can create inequities between schools, as communities vary widely in their wealth and organizational capabilities. It is also important to note that funds raised from other sources may vary considerably from year to year, and therefore cannot be relied upon as an ongoing source of funding.

Of the 946 respondents, 822 (87%) answered the question asking for the amount of funds raised for the library in 2006–07 from other sources such as PACs or community donations. About 1 out of 7 respondents (119 schools) reported receiving no funds for the library that were raised from other sources. The majority of schools did not raise significant amounts of funds. Table 5 shows that 80% of the schools raised less than $3,000. Only 5.6% of schools raised over $10,000, with 21.3% of the total amount of funds raised ($365,985) going to these 46 schools. The average amount of funds raised for the school library in 2006–07 was $2,093 (including schools with zero fundraising dollars) and $2,451 for the 697 schools with a fund-raising budget.

Table 5: Amount of funds raised from other sources for the library in 2006-2007

Amount of funds raised	Number of Responses	% of Total Responses	Total Funds Raised	% of Total Funds Raised
Zero funds raised	119	14.5%	0	.0%
$1 to $1,000	183	22.3%	$132,005	7.7%
$1,001 to $2,000	223	27.1%	$373,831	21.7%
$2,001-$3,000	133	16.2%	$363,122	21.1%
$3,001-$4,000	78	9.5%	$292,575	17.0%
$4,001-$5,000	40	4.9%	$192,950	11.2%
$5,001 to $10,000	42	5.1%	$285,823	16.6%
$10,001 to $45,000	4	.5%	$80,162	4.7%

Electronic library services

Table 6 shows that most schools now have Internet access with few schools using card catalogues. The percentage of schools with computerized catalogues has remained stable since 2004–05, with the exception of multi-level schools. This change may reflect the increased number of schools responding this year (*26 in 2007–08 versus 10 in 2006–07*). More schools are putting library information on their school web page compared to previous years.

Table 6: Percentage of schools with the following electronic services

	Multi-level	**Elementary**	**Middle**	**Secondary**
Computerized catalogue				
2004–05	81.3	91.4	98.3	92.1
2005–06	90.9	91.7	96.5	90.7
2006–07	81.3	87.4	96.5	97.4
2007–08	69.2	92.2	98.4	94.7
Internet access				
2004–05	81.3	91.4	100.0	95.8
2005–06	81.8	93.2	98.2	95.6
2006–07	68.8	91.4	96.5	100.0
2007–08	84.6	96.0	100.0	98.4
Electronic library security system				
2004–05	12.5	10.2	28.8	78.9
2005–06	18.2	8.2	24.6	81.4
2006–07	6.3	9.6	29.8	82.1
2007–08	34.6	8.8	26.2	81.4
Computerized reading program				
2004–05	6.3	12.7	16.9	5.8
2005–06	9.1	14.6	19.3	7.7
2006–07	6.3	13.2	26.3	7.4
2007–08	11.5	12.9	14.8	8.0
Card catalogue				
2004–05	31.3	7.1	3.4	5.8
2005–06	18.2	6.2	1.8	6.0
2006–07	12.5	7.4	1.8	4.2
2007–08	7.7	4.6	0	3.2
Library information on web page				
2004–05	25.0	33.8	62.7	75.3
2005–06	27.3	35.3	71.9	74.3
2006–07	31.3	41.9	66.7	82.6
2007–08	15.4	49.6	72.1	84.6

Part 2: Qualitative results—Giving voice to the concerns of Teacher-Librarians

The last question on the survey provided respondents with space to comment on library staffing, budget or other resources at the school, as well as on library services in general. Of the 946 teacher-librarians (or designates) who completed the survey, 469 responded to this open-ended question. The textual data of the comments was analyzed, using Atlas-ti, to conduct a descriptive qualitative analysis. The qualitative results are organized into six major topic areas:

  I.   Funding issues: Cutbacks, inequities, and policy issues
  II.   Impact of underfunding on learning conditions for students
  III. Impact of underfunding on working conditions of teacher-librarians
  IV.   Impact of underfunding on library resources
  V.   What made a difference? Supports to maintaining existing library services
  VI.   Recommendations for how to improve conditions in school libraries.

Themes which emerged in the analysis are discussed for each of these topic areas. Illustrative quotes are included in the appendices.

I. Funding issues: Cutbacks, inequities, and policy issues

Shrinking budgets—Increasing demands
Chronic underfunding of school libraries over the past decade was identified as an important issue by many survey respondents. Many T-Ls described how funding levels for their school library have dropped dramatically over the years. One teacher-librarian noted how her *"budget in many years past was $3,000—then for a few years $1,000—now this year just over $600."* Several respondents noted that during the past decade of shrinking library budgets, the cost of purchasing books for the library collection has increased considerably, as has the cost of textbooks, which drains resources when the Ministry of Education introduces a new curriculum.

Funding inequities—"Have" and "Have-not" schools
The survey responses revealed the extent to which teacher-librarians are concerned about funding inequities between schools, with some schools having fully staffed and resourced libraries while others have outdated resources and minimal library staff. One theme that arose was the sense of there being "have" and "have-not" schools arising from funding inequities. One respondent suggests these inequities arise due to school-based decision-making about library funding, as well as built-in inequities towards elementary schools.

Concerns about the new funding formula
Respondents also expressed concern that the school-based funding approach would create further inequities in the province. A respondent from a small school pointed out how the funding formula disadvantages school libraries with smaller student populations, making it difficult to *"get appropriate resources for when curriculum requirements change or resources need to be updated."*

Ministry cuts school library funding while promoting literacy
Several respondents voiced the opinion that the Ministry of Education was contradicting its own new literacy policy by leaving school libraries to struggle with the effects of chronic

underfunding while promoting a new literacy initiative. Many expressed frustration that the Ministry of Education ignored the central role of school libraries in promoting and achieving literacy. One teacher-librarian asks, *"With the endless talk of increasing student literacy, where is the money to go into libraries, which are the centres of literacy in the school?"*

II. Impact of underfunding on learning conditions for students

Concern was also expressed that reduced FTE T-L assignments have created unreasonable expectations on teacher-librarians, given how few resources are available. Teacher-librarians reported being unable to provide the library services to teachers and students that were available in the past. One T-L describes how the school's library service went from being "*a vibrant, exciting learning space, that was always full of activity, to a quiet, stagnant space, that may still have lots to offer, but has become increasingly difficult to access."*

The survey responses also revealed the impact of reduced FTE T-L time on library services. Teacher-librarians reported having less time to maintain libraries, or to keep up with new demands on their time. In particular, teacher-librarians expressed concern that reduced T-L time meant they were unable to give students and teachers the support they need. One teacher-librarian noted how the school library can also provide a social safety net for students at risk, which she cautioned may be lost with the erosion of school libraries: "*Our fear is that once the financial resources are depleted, these students (many of them high risk) will lose one of the safest, positive, and most educationally productive areas of the school."*

Finally, some respondents expressed concern that over time, reduced T-L time to teach research and computer literacy skills, combined with inadequate library resources, may negatively affect students' and teachers' perceptions of the school library.

III. Impact of underfunding on working conditions of Teacher-Librarians

Not enough time to do it all
Many of the teacher-librarians responding to the survey worked in a part-time assignment as the school librarian. A common theme was "not enough time to do it all." T-Ls spoke about being pulled in too many directions, spread too thin, or feeling torn between their professional librarian responsibilities and doing the clerical/admin work to maintain the library. Many stated that the diminishing amount of FTE T-L assignments made it difficult if not impossible to maintain an effective school library. One teacher-librarian expresses her concerns about the loss of FTE T-L time: "*Inadequacy of my time is resulting in inadequacy of service, which is undermining the import of the library, slowly eroding it as a place to value and nurture in the school."*

New demands increase workload for T-Ls
Teacher-librarians identified many new work demands placed on them, without extra resources to implement new programs or meet student needs. Many reported the "automation" of the school libraries was a huge undertaking, which absorbed much of their time. Other new demands without accompanying resources included the use of the library by preschool programs, time to process library collections inherited from closed schools, supervising students with spares or suspensions, meeting the needs of distributed-learning students, acting as tech support for the school, accelerated reading programs, textbook management programs, and computer mobile

labs. Some teacher-librarians also reported that the student population in their school had increased significantly without any increase in the T-L budget.

Another issue was the impact of "prep" time on the ability of T-Ls to fulfil their role as professional librarians. Several teacher-librarians expressed concern that prep time undermined their ability to teach library and research skills to students.

Part-time assignment to do a full-time job
Many respondents talked about how difficult it was for them to try to meet all of the responsibilities of a school librarian on a part-time FTE appointment. The lack of clerical support meant teacher-librarians had to spend more time doing administrative and basic library tasks at the expense of teacher collaboration and student projects.

Job security was also an issue. Some T-Ls took on two or more part-time assignments to try to maintain full-time work, which meant either working in a number of part-time roles within the school, or working in more than one school. One respondent described living with the uncertainty of not knowing what her FTE hours will be from year to year.

Unpaid overtime
The survey responses revealed the extent to which teacher-librarians worked hours of unpaid overtime to compensate for the underfunding of libraries. Several respondents reported working on weekends, evenings, and scheduled days off to try to keep up with the demands and maintain an effective library service. Many worked extra hours on evenings and weekends to keep up with the administrative and clerical tasks needed to maintain the library, as well as to organize book fairs. One teacher-librarian reported working 12–14 hour days to do her own automation of the library. On a day-to-day basis, many teacher-librarians often went without lunch or coffee breaks because there was too much to do or no-one to replace them during the break.

It appears from the survey results that many T-Ls are trying to meet their professional responsibilities with fewer and fewer resources, absorbing the funding cutbacks by working unpaid overtime. Some respondents described the frustration, loss of job satisfaction, and chronic stress arising from having too many demands with too few resources. One teacher-librarian said she is leaving the profession as she is "*extremely frustrated and, despite loving being a T-L for the past nine years, [is] determined to quit and go back to full-time classroom teaching. I am tired of giving up all my personal time (including summer holidays) to try and keep my collection in decent shape.*"

IV. Impact of underfunding on library resources

Outdated book collections
Many librarians identified outdated book collections as a major concern. Several schools noted that the library collection was almost 20 years out of date. A few respondents reported that schools were buying the cheapest books available, or purchasing the commercially-discounted packages sent to schools to try to maintain a book collection.

The survey responses also reveal that schools are increasingly dependent on local fund raising for their library budgets to purchase new books and computers. Thus, some libraries made significant improvements to their collections, due to the fund-raising efforts of their Parent Advisory Committees, while many others had increasingly outdated collections. Some schools reported having ample fund raising to purchase new books but lacked the staff needed to process the books.

Several teacher-librarians expressed concern that too much of the small library budget was used to purchase computer supplies and textbooks for the classroom instead of updating the library collection. The comments also revealed that lack of clerical support and/or administrative time for librarians to maintain the library collection was an issue.

Technology resources

Respondents identified a number of concerns related to technology and the school library. Computerization of library systems clearly increased the demands on teacher-librarian time. Several respondents indicated the time required to computerize circulation and update the online catalogue left little time to fulfill other professional responsibilities.

Too few computers, outdated technology, lack of space, and limited FTE T-L time resulted in a lack of access to computers in some schools. Many respondents expressed concern about the outdated computers in the school library. In some cases, teachers and librarians could not use programs such as Reader Rabbit, as the library could not afford the computer upgrade needed to run the program. Some librarians felt they lacked the time and the computer resources to teach students computer literacy or fully utilize computers in the library. As one teacher-librarian put it, *"How can we teach information literacy without computer/Internet access? I have four computers in my library so there is hardly any online information literacy instruction happening."* A few teacher-librarians also reported that insufficient IT support to deal with hardware and software problems led to lengthy delays in resolving problems.

A teacher-librarian with considerable training in library sciences and technology expressed her frustration and concern about the future of school libraries, given the limited funding many school libraries have available to maintain fully functional, up-to-date computer systems.

Staffing concerns

Teacher-librarians also revealed many staffing concerns in their comments. These included lack of administrative FTE time for the library, a shortage of clerical staff, and having library staff pulled away to work on non-library assignments (e.g., school secretary, vice-principal, principal). Without clerical staff, some T-Ls had to do the clerical tasks, leaving less time for the professional librarian role. While T-Ls acknowledged how much they value library assistants, a few expressed concern that the school administration is replacing professional teacher-librarians and technicians with lower-paid assistants.

V. What made a difference?—Supports to maintaining existing library services

The survey responses reveal the extent to which T-L appreciated the support that was available to help them maintain the school library.

Volunteers

Many expressed gratitude for the support the school library received from the community. Some respondents reported receiving considerable support from volunteers to help maintain the library service in the school. In some cases this was student volunteers, with one school having 45 student volunteers who helped with non-administrative/non-professional duties. Others relied on parent or other community volunteers.

PAC fund raising

The responses also reveal the extent to which schools rely on support from their Parent Advisory Committees to raise funds to purchase books and computers, and to volunteer in the library.

Other sources of funding that helped to maintain the school library in some schools were international-student programs, newspapers such as the *Vancouver Sun/Province* and *Times-Colonist*, book fairs, and other one-time grants.

Supportive principal and/or school district

Many teacher-librarians indicated that having a principal and/or district administrator who placed a high value on school libraries was an important source of support and made a big difference in the quality of the library service. Administrative support for the school library was especially important in the face of budget cutbacks. A number of responses also revealed how the combined support from parents, community, and administration made a real difference in the quality of the library service in the school.

District resources

Finally, T-Ls with access to District Resource Services expressed their appreciation of how valuable these services were for the functioning of the school library. Helping teachers, Pro-D Day for new teacher-librarians, and library technician support from a central location were district services identified as an important source of support.

VI. Recommendations for how to improve conditions in school libraries

In the survey, respondents identified many unmet needs for library resources and made suggestions for how to improve conditions in school libraries in British Columbia.
The survey responses related to this topic are presented as five major recommendations for improving library services, which emerged in the qualitative analysis:

1. Increase FTE time for Teacher-Librarians.

Throughout the survey responses, teacher-librarians identified the inadequacy of FTE T-L time as an important unmet need. Restoring or increasing T-L time was identified as essential to improving library services. Some of the services teacher-librarians said they could provide with an increased FTE assignment included providing literacy education at all grade levels, helping students to develop research skills, implementing accelerated reading programs, collaborating with teachers, and effectively administering the library.

2. Improve technical and clerical support for libraries.

Several teacher-librarians identified the need for more clerical and library assistant support at their school. Having staff to do non-professional library tasks both helps the library to run smoothly and frees the T-L to focus on his or her professional role of teaching library skills and promoting literacy.

3. Update the school library collection.

The survey results reveal the challenges many school libraries face in maintaining an updated collection of library resources. The quality of collections varied considerably, depending on school-specific fund raising or other local sources of revenue, with some library collections being 15 to 20 years out of date. Providing funding to upgrade library collections so they are current and relevant to the needs of today's students was seen as a necessary condition to improving library services.

4. Improve access to technology.

Outdated computers, lack of technical support, and insufficient technology were all identified as unmet needs by survey respondents. Allocation of space for computers was an unmet need for a

few schools. As with library collections, student access to updated computers in the library often depended on school-specific funds or parent fund-raising efforts. In the survey, teacher-librarians recommended improving student access to technology at the elementary and secondary level, upgrading computers and servers, and providing adequate technical support to run a fully-functioning computer/library service.

5. Continue lobbying efforts to maintain and improve funding.

Some respondents also recommended that the BCTLA and the BC Teachers' Federation increase their lobbying efforts to raise awareness of the impact of ongoing funding cutbacks on the learning conditions of students and the working conditions of teacher-librarians. In particular, teacher-librarians would like to see an emphasis on the need to restore/increase T-L FTE assignments and recognition of the integral role teacher-librarians play in learning and literacy.

APPENDICES

District tables for the 2006–07 and 2007–08 school years

Table A: Survey response by district compared to eligible standard schools in BC, 2007–08

Table B: Number of schools responding to the BCTLA survey, 2006–07 and 2007–08

Table C: Student FTE, Teacher-Librarian FTE, and students per Teacher-Librarian FTE, based on responding schools, 2006–07 and 2007–08

Table D: Student FTE, reported budget and dollars per student FTE, 2006–07 and 2007–08

Table E: Average amount of funds raised, based on responding schools, by type of school, in 2005–06 and 2006–07

Table F: Count, responding schools with paid library technician or clerical assistant, 2007–08

Qualitative quotes

Illustrative quotes for each of the topic/thematic areas in Part 2.

Table A: Survey response by district compared to eligible standard schools in BC, 2007–08

SD #	District Name	Eligible Schools	# Survey Responses	Response Rate
5	Southeast Kootenay	19	14	74%
6	Rocky Mountain	15	13	87%
8	Kootenay Lake	24	16	67%
10	Arrow Lake	5	2	40%
19	Revelstoke	5	4	80%
20	Kootenay-Columbia	11	11	100%
22	Vernon	19	19	100%
23	Central Okanagan	40	34	85%
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	28	6	21%
28	Quesnel	16	6	38%
33	Chilliwack	28	14	50%
34	Abbotsford	45	3	7%
35	Langley	39	39	100%
36	Surrey	118	62	53%
37	Delta	33	20	61%
38	Richmond	48	44	92%
39	Vancouver	109	108	99%
40	New Westminster	12	11	92%
41	Burnaby	48	48	100%
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	28	23	82%
43	Coquitlam	66	52	79%
44	North Vancouver	35	25	71%
45	West Vancouver	17	9	53%
46	Sunshine Coast	13	2	15%
47	Powell River	8	0	0%
48	Howe Sound	14	10	71%
49	Central Coast	5	1	20%
50	Haidi Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	6	0	0%
51	Boundary	10	2	20%
52	Prince Rupert	12	5	42%
53	Okanagan Similkameen	9	3	33%
54	Bulkley Valley	9	8	89%
57	Prince George	47	33	70%
58	Nicola Similkameen	10	2	20%
59	Peace River South	22	3	14%
60	Peace River North	19	9	47%
61	Greater Victoria	45	40	89%
62	Sooke	24	12	50%
63	Saanich	15	12	80%
64	Gulf Islands	9	8	89%
67	Okanagan Skaha	18	13	72%
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	40	35	88%
69	Qualicum	14	8	57%
70	Alberni	13	10	77%
71	Comox Valley	24	24	100%
72	Campbell River	19	13	68%
73	Kamloops-Thompson	46	18	39%
74	Gold Trail	13	1	8%
75	Mission	19	19	100%
78	Fraser-Cascade	8	4	50%
79	Cowichan Valley	25	19	76%
81	Fort Nelson	5	0	0%
82	Coast Mountains	19	15	79%
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	24	18	75%
84	Vancouver Island West	5	1	20%
85	Vancouver Island North	14	4	29%
87	Stikine	4	0	0%
91	Nechako Lakes	20	3	15%
92	Nisga'a	4	0	0%
93	Conseil Scolaire Francophone	37	0	0%
	District-librarian, or no data		8	
Total		**1,456**	**946**	**65%**

Standard schools are regular schools with school-aged students, and do not include programs such as Distance Education, Continuing Education, Alternate Programs.

27th annual BCTLA survey of Working and Learning Conditions, 2007–08

Table B: Number of schools responding to the BCTLA survey, 2006-07

SD #	School District	Multi-level	Elementary	Middle	Secondary	District total
5	Southeast Kootenay	1	8	2	4	15
6	Rocky Mountain		7		3	10
8	Kootenay Lake	2	12		3	17
10	Arrow Lake	1	3		1	5
19	Revelstoke		4			4
20	Kootenay-Columbia		7		3	10
22	Vernon		7		4	11
23	Central Okanagan		20	6	5	31
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin		9	1	2	12
28	Quesnel		6		1	7
33	Chilliwack		15	5		20
34	Abbotsford		2	1	2	5
35	Langley	1	18		7	26
36	Surrey		53		14	67
37	Delta		17		6	23
38	Richmond		28		10	38
39	Vancouver		89		17	106
40	New Westminster		9		1	10
41	Burnaby		38		8	46
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows		16		3	19
43	Coquitlam		26	8	7	41
44	North Vancouver		20		5	25
45	West Vancouver		7		3	10
46	Sunshine Coast				1	1
47	Powell River		2	1	1	4
48	Howe Sound		6		3	9
49	Central Coast	no data				
50	Haida Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	no data				
51	Boundary				1	1
52	Prince Rupert		2		1	3
53	Okanagan Similkameen		5	1	2	8
54	Bulkley Valley		4		2	6
57	Prince George		32	3	8	43
58	Nicola Similkameen		3		1	4
59	Peace River South		9	1	2	12
60	Peace River North	3	10	2	1	16
61	Greater Victoria		15	4	6	25
62	Sooke		14	3	2	19
63	Saanich		7	3	3	13
64	Gulf Islands		3	1	1	5
67	Okanagan Skaha		10	4	2	16
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith		23		7	30
69	Qualicum	1	5	3	1	10
70	Alberni	1	7	3		11
71	Comox Valley		15	5	2	22
72	Campbell River		6	2	1	9
73	Kamloops-Thompson		14		5	19
74	Gold Trail				2	2
75	Mission		7		2	9
78	Fraser-Cascade		2	1	2	5
79	Cowichan Valley		11	2	2	15
81	Fort Nelson	1				1
82	Coast Mountains	1	10	2	2	15
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap		18	2	5	25
84	Vancouver Island West	1				1
85	Vancouver Island North				1	1
87	Stikine	no data				
91	Nechako Lakes	1	4		3	8
92	Nisga'a	no data				
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	3	1			4
	Total	**17**	**666**	**66**	**181**	**930**

Table B: Number of schools responding to the BCTLA survey, 2007-08

SD #	School District	Multi-level	Elementary	Middle	Secondary	District total
5	Southeast Kootenay	1	7	2	4	14
6	Rocky Mountain	1	7	1	3	13
8	Kootenay Lake	1	13		2	16
10	Arrow Lake	1	1			2
19	Revelstoke		4			4
20	Kootenay-Columbia		8		3	11
22	Vernon		13		5	20
23	Central Okanagan		24	5	5	34
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	2	2		2	6
28	Quesnel		5		1	6
33	Chilliwack		12	1	1	14
34	Abbotsford		2	1		3
35	Langley	2	27		9	41
36	Surrey		44		16	62
37	Delta		15		5	20
38	Richmond		33	1	10	44
39	Vancouver	1	88		18	108
40	New Westminster		9	1	1	11
41	Burnaby		41		7	48
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows		18		5	23
43	Coquitlam		30	13	9	52
44	North Vancouver	1	17		6	25
45	West Vancouver		7		2	9
46	Sunshine Coast		1		1	2
47	Powell River	No data				
48	Howe Sound		7		3	10
49	Central Coast		1			1
50	Haida Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	No data				
51	Boundary		2			2
52	Prince Rupert		5			5
53	Okanagan Similkameen	1	1		1	3
54	Bulkley Valley		6		2	8
57	Prince George		24	1	8	33
58	Nicola Similkameen		1		1	2
59	Peace River South		1		2	3
60	Peace River North	3	4		2	9
61	Greater Victoria	1	23	9	7	40
62	Sooke		8	3	1	12
63	Saanich		8	2	2	12
64	Gulf Islands	2	5	1		8
67	Okanagan Skaha		8	3	2	13
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	1	26	1	7	35
69	Qualicum		2	3	3	8
70	Alberni	1	6	2	1	10
71	Comox Valley		17	5	3	25
72	Campbell River	2	7	1	3	13
73	Kamloops-Thompson	1	13		4	18
74	Gold Trail				1	1
75	Mission		16		3	19
78	Fraser-Cascade		3		1	4
79	Cowichan Valley		12	3	4	19
81	Fort Nelson	No data				
82	Coast Mountains		10		5	15
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	1	10	2	5	18
84	Vancouver Island West	1				1
85	Vancouver Island North	1	2		1	4
87	Stikine	No data				
91	Nechako Lakes	1	1		1	3
92	Nisga'a	No data				
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	No data				
	Total	**26**	**657**	**61**	**188**	**946**

Note: Totals for districts 22 (1), 35 (2), and 71 (1) include district librarians who completed the survey.

Table C: Student FTE, Teacher-Librarian FTE, and students per Teacher-Librarian FTE, based on responding schools, 2006–07

SD #	District	FTE (Full-time equivalent)		
		Students	T-L	Student/T-L
81	Fort Nelson	15	0	
37	Delta	11,538	160.57	71.86
74	Gold Trail	384	1.3	295.38
39	Vancouver	52,993	168.3058	314.86
35	Langley	14,751	43.559	338.64
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	894	1.95	458.46
19	Revelstoke	688	1.49	461.74
82	Coast Mountains	3,968	8.335	476.06
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	3,600	6.621	543.72
51	Boundary	579	1	579.00
67	Okanagan Skaha	6,103	10.54	579.03
54	Bulkley Valley	1,886	3.235	583.00
78	Fraser-Cascade	1,794	3.05	588.20
73	Kamloops-Thompson	7,712	12.7275	605.93
58	Nicola Similkameen	1,090	1.7857	610.40
38	Richmond	18,747	28.405	659.99
20	Kootenay-Columbia	4,103	6.2	661.77
41	Burnaby	23,299	33.53	694.87
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	8,676	12.475	695.47
57	Prince George	14,151	20.21	700.20
6	Rocky Mountain	2,629	3.693	711.89
23	Central Okanagan	17,912	25.065	714.62
33	Chilliwack	9,765	13.506	723.01
60	Peace River North	5,880	7.98	736.84
63	Saanich	7,178	9.63	745.38
72	Campbell River	3,924	5.2	754.62
28	Quesnel	2,283	3.02	755.96
5	Southeast Kootenay	4,713	6.234	756.02
91	Nechako Lakes	2,034	2.69	756.13
46	Sunshine Coast	760	1	760.00
69	Qualicum	3,598	4.7	765.53
70	Alberni	3,813	4.92	775.00
79	Cowichan Valley	5,523	7.12	775.70
45	West Vancouver	5,506	7	786.57
47	Powell River	1,351	1.7	794.71
75	Mission	3,315	4.148	799.18
44	North Vancouver	13,374	16.38	816.48
8	Kootenay Lake	3,803	4.655	816.97
48	Howe Sound	3,242	3.828	846.92
59	Peace River South	3,176	3.725	852.62
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	12,545	14.607	858.83
22	Vernon	6,133	6.97	879.91
36	Surrey	38,257	42.654	896.91
64	Gulf Islands	1,346	1.495	900.33
53	Okanagan Similkameen	2,645	2.847	929.05
61	Greater Victoria	13,089	13.7	955.40
52	Prince Rupert	896	0.9	995.56
43	Coquitlam	22,534	22.538	999.82
62	Sooke	7,351	7.154	1027.54
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	9,720	9.11	1066.96
85	Vancouver Island North	349	0.3	1163.33
40	New Westminster	5,015	3.83	1309.40
34	Abbotsford	3,855	2.7	1427.78
71	Comox Valley	7,504	3.975	1887.80
84	Vancouver Island West	39	0.02	1950.00
10	Arrow Lakes	625	0.28	2232.14
49	Central Coast	No data		
50	Haida Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	No data		
87	Stikine	No data		
92	Nisga'a	No data		
	Total	**412,653**	**794.563**	**519.35**

Table C: Student FTE, Teacher-Librarian FTE, and students per Teacher-Librarian FTE, based on responding schools, 2007–08

SD #	District	FTE (Full-time equivalent)		
		Students	T-Ls	Student/T-L
74	Gold Trail	106	0.25	424.00
52	Prince Rupert	546	1.14	478.95
19	Revelstoke	1,075	2.2	488.64
33	Chilliwack	4,385	8.14	538.70
39	Vancouver	38,888	67.6	575.26
63	Saanich	5,391	9.22	584.71
91	Nechako Lakes	1,225	2.08	588.94
58	Nicola Similkameen	791	1.32	599.24
6	Rocky Mountain	2,086	3.45	604.49
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	5,801	9.06	640.29
20	Kootenay-Columbia	3,715	5.8	640.43
41	Burnaby	21,517	33.03	651.44
70	Alberni	2,048	3.04	673.68
23	Central Okanagan	13,517	19.5	693.18
57	Prince George	12,191	17.15	710.85
82	Coast Mountains	3,822	5.32	718.42
54	Bulkley Valley	2,480	3.44	720.90
28	Quesnel	1,204	1.65	729.70
60	Peace River North	2,375	3.2	742.03
45	West Vancouver	4,134	5.5	751.64
75	Mission	6,056	7.9	766.58
59	Peace River South	1,422	1.84	772.69
44	North Vancouver	12,214	15.77	774.51
53	Okanagan Similkameen	1,000	1.24	806.45
78	Fraser-Cascade	716	0.88	813.64
38	Richmond	21,339	26.21	814.15
72	Campbell River	4,636	5.65	820.53
85	Vancouver Island North	501	0.6	835.00
79	Cowichan Valley	7,350	8.8	835.23
22	Vernon	6,412	7.67	835.98
69	Qualicum	4,110	4.86	845.68
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	12,506	14.69	851.29
73	Kamloops-Thompson	6,911	8.1	853.20
61	Greater Victoria	17,146	19.95	859.45
51	Boundary	518	0.59	877.97
34	Abbotsford	1,080	1.2	900.00
8	Kootenay Lake	3,271	3.63	901.17
5	Southeast Kootenay	3,545	3.88	913.53
48	Howe Sound	2,979	3.24	919.44
46	Sunshine Coast	1,020	1.1	927.27
67	Okanagan Skaha	4,743	4.91	965.89
43	Coquitlam	23,280	23.55	988.54
64	Gulf Islands	841	0.85	989.41
37	Delta	8,935	8.88	1,006.19
36	Surrey	33,309	32.88	1,013.05
62	Sooke	5,493	5.3	1,036.42
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	10,757	10.18	1,056.63
71	Comox Valley	4,848	4.55	1,065.49
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	1,724	1.51	1,141.72
35	Langley	13,741	10.53	1,304.89
40	New Westminster	5,362	3.46	1,549.57
10	Arrow Lakes	No data		
47	Powell River	No data		
49	Central Coast	No data		
50	Haida Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	No data		
81	Fort Nelson	No data		
84	Vancouver Island West	No data		
87	Stikine	No data		
92	Nisga'a	No data		
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	No data		
	Total	**355,056.87**	**446.43**	**795.32**

Table D: Student FTE, reported budget and dollars per student FTE, 2006–07

SD #	District	FTE Students	Total Budget	$ per Student FTE
74	Gold Trail	273	$ 10,676	$ 39.11
28	Quesnel	1,489	$ 51,386	$ 34.51
10	Arrow Lake	212	$ 7,000	$ 33.02
23	Central Okanagan	15,042	$ 433,465	$ 28.82
51	Boundary	579	$ 12,800	$ 22.11
60	Peace River North	4,474	$ 95,400	$ 21.32
78	Fraser-Cascade	1,794	$ 33,526	$ 18.69
54	Bulkley Valley	1,886	$ 34,679	$ 18.39
67	Okanagan Skaha	5,812	$ 106,773	$ 18.37
71	Comox Valley	7,123	$ 130,884	$ 18.37
57	Prince George	12,952	$ 235,400	$ 18.17
91	Nechako Lakes	1,837	$ 33,350	$ 18.15
19	Revelstoke	688	$ 12,000	$ 17.44
6	Rocky Mountain	2,507	$ 43,280	$ 17.26
85	Vancouver Island North	349	$ 6,000	$ 17.19
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	3,600	$ 60,789	$ 16.89
73	Kamloops-Thompson	7,712	$ 128,442	$ 16.65
53	Okanagan Similkameen	1,386	$ 22,100	$ 15.95
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	8,676	$ 135,298	$ 15.59
59	Peace River South	2,887	$ 43,166	$ 14.95
48	Howe Sound	3,242	$ 48,100	$ 14.84
41	Burnaby	23,299	$ 331,690	$ 14.24
58	Nicola Similkameen	1,090	$ 15,343	$ 14.08
8	Kootenay Lake	2,890	$ 40,013	$ 13.85
64	Gulf Islands	735	$ 10,000	$ 13.61
46	Sunshine Coast	760	$ 10,000	$ 13.16
33	Chilliwack	8,215	$ 106,397	$ 12.95
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	854	$ 11,000	$ 12.88
52	Prince Rupert	896	$ 11,226	$ 12.53
82	Coast Mountains	3,384	$ 42,350	$ 12.51
36	Surrey	34,352	$ 405,365	$ 11.80
75	Mission	2,749	$ 32,250	$ 11.73
20	Kootenay-Columbia	3,912	$ 45,629	$ 11.66
35	Langley	12,938	$ 148,649	$ 11.49
38	Richmond	17,250	$ 192,286	$ 11.15
40	New Westminster	1,579	$ 17,300	$ 10.96
5	Southeast Kootenay	3,974	$ 42,433	$ 10.68
69	Qualicum	2,679	$ 27,740	$ 10.35
22	Vernon	5,535	$ 55,100	$ 9.95
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	9,091	$ 88,386	$ 9.72
62	Sooke	6,610	$ 64,030	$ 9.69
43	Coquitlam	16,712	$ 160,596	$ 9.61
79	Cowichan Valley	4,738	$ 45,300	$ 9.56
45	West Vancouver	5,506	$ 52,511	$ 9.54
39	Vancouver	51,536	$ 488,726	$ 9.48
47	Powell River	1,230	$ 11,500	$ 9.35
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	11,060	$ 101,950	$ 9.22
61	Greater Victoria	12,122	$ 108,189	$ 8.93
44	North Vancouver	10,922	$ 95,692	$ 8.76
37	Delta	11,046	$ 94,173	$ 8.53
63	Saanich	6,122	$ 51,668	$ 8.44
72	Campbell River	3,222	$ 25,152	$ 7.81
34	Abbotsford	3,082	$ 23,000	$ 7.46
70	Alberni	3,067	$ 19,800	$ 6.46
49	Central Coast	No data		
50	Haida Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	No data		
81	Fort Nelson	No data		
84	Vancouver Island West	No data		
87	Stikine	No data		
92	Nisga'a	No data		
	Total	**367,677**	**$ 4,659,958**	**$ 12.67**

Table D: Student FTE, reported budget and dollars per student FTE, 2007–08

SD #	District	FTE Students	Total Budget	$ per Student FTE
59	Peace River South	1,422	$ 42,500	$ 29.89
19	Revelstoke	1,075	$ 29,500	$ 27.44
23	Central Okanagan	17,185	$ 464,324	$ 27.02
71	Comox Valley	8,646	$ 216,426	$ 25.03
60	Peace River North	2,375	$ 54,800	$ 23.08
91	Nechako Lakes	1,225	$ 25,000	$ 20.41
82	Coast Mountains	3,634	$ 44,650	$ 20.35
67	Okanagan Skaha	4,743	$ 90,844	$ 19.16
57	Prince George	12,191	$ 232,380	$ 19.06
6	Rocky Mountain	2,618	$ 49,630	$ 18.96
53	Okanagan Similkameen	1,000	$ 18,300	$ 18.30
51	Boundary	518	$ 9,225	$ 17.81
78	Fraser-Cascade	374	$ 6,500	$ 17.38
54	Bulkley Valley	2,480	$ 40,271	$ 16.24
46	Sunshine Coast	1,020	$ 16,500	$ 16.18
73	Kamloops-Thompson	6,673	$ 107,826	$ 16.16
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	1,764	$ 27,996	$ 15.87
85	Vancouver Island North	654	$ 10,100	$ 15.44
64	Gulf Islands	573	$ 8,750	$ 15.27
28	Quesnel	1,832	$ 27,888	$ 15.22
58	Nicola Similkameen	791	$ 11,906	$ 15.05
41	Burnaby	21,517	$ 311,962	$ 14.50
33	Chilliwack	3,946	$ 56,819	$ 14.40
49	Central Coast	2,979	$ 38,250	$ 12.84
20	Kootenay-Columbia	3,996	$ 48,925	$ 12.25
36	Surrey	34,870	$ 422,171	$ 12.11
52	Prince Rupert	640	$ 7,716	$ 12.06
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	4,262	$ 51,280	$ 12.03
40	New Westminster	2,629	$ 31,183	$ 11.86
38	Richmond	20,724	$ 239,409	$ 11.55
35	Langley	13,592	$ 147,912	$ 10.88
79	Cowichan Valley	6,853	$ 73,939	$ 10.79
43	Coquitlam	25,118	$ 265,643	$ 10.58
61	Greater Victoria	15,034	$ 155,082	$ 10.32
5	Southeast Kootenay	4,434	$ 43,768	$ 9.87
8	Kootenay Lake	2,720	$ 26,770	$ 9.84
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	10,757	$ 104,862	$ 9.75
63	Saanich	5,051	$ 48,730	$ 9.65
70	Alberni	1,862	$ 17,500	$ 9.40
39	Vancouver	42,026	$ 391,167	$ 9.31
37	Delta	8,935	$ 79,532	$ 8.90
72	Campbell River	4,636	$ 41,281	$ 8.90
44	North Vancouver	11,773	$ 100,840	$ 8.57
84	Vancouver Island West	35	$ 300	$ 8.54
62	Sooke	5,023	$ 42,641	$ 8.49
34	Abbotsford	1,194	$ 9,500	$ 7.96
22	Vernon	5,460	$ 43,100	$ 7.89
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	12,743	$ 95,280	$ 7.48
75	Mission	5,274	$ 29,400	$ 5.58
45	West Vancouver	4,134	$ 51,964	$ 4.41
69	Qualicum	4,110	$ 17,300	$ 4.21
10	Arrow Lake	116	$ 250	$ 2.16
47	Powell River	No data		
48	Howe Sound	No data		
50	Haida Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	No data		
74	Gold Trail	No data		
81	Fort Nelson	No data		
87	Stikine	No data		
92	Nisga'a	No data		
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	No data		
	Total	**359,231.13**	**$ 4,529,792**	**$ 12.61**

Table E: Average amount of funds raised, based on responding schools, by type of school, in 2005–06 (T-Ls report for previous school year)

		Average $				
		Multi-level	Elementary	Middle	Secondary	Total
5	Southeast Kootenay	2500	2257.14	700		$ 1,727.27
6	Rocky Mountain		780			$ 487.50
8	Kootenay Lake	900	1604.55		433.33	$ 1,296.88
10	Arrow Lake				2000	$ 2,000.00
19	Revelstoke		2225			$ 2,225.00
20	Kootenay-Columbia		842.86			$ 590.00
22	Vernon		1900		2500	$ 2,118.18
23	Central Okanagan		1397.78	100		$ 1,018.40
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin		927.78			$ 759.09
28	Quesnel		1333.33			$ 1,333.33
33	Chilliwack		4506.67	5900		$ 4,800.00
34	Abbotsford		4000		1600	$ 2,400.00
35	Langley	450	6361.11		4166.67	$ 5,598.00
36	Surrey		4278.89		2615.38	$ 3,906.03
37	Delta		2879.38		7707.5	$ 4,196.14
38	Richmond		2615		1847.04	$ 2,376.67
39	Vancouver		4857.45		5533.33	$ 4,964.17
40	New Westminster		2053.44		2500	$ 2,098.10
41	Burnaby		2331.94		2790.25	$ 2,421.36
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows		3773.33		1666.67	$ 3,422.22
43	Coquitlam		2714.46	6166.67	9000	$ 4,337.42
44	North Vancouver		3560		7550	$ 4,225.00
45	West Vancouver		2550		3000	$ 2,700.00
46	Sunshine Coast					
47	Powell River		350	500		$ 300.00
48	Howe Sound		4433.33		2760	$ 3,875.56
49	Central Coast	No data				
50	Haida Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	No data				
51	Boundary	No data				
52	Prince Rupert		1000			$ 666.67
53	Okanagan Similkameen		850	1000		$ 675.00
54	Bulkley Valley		1925		575	$ 1,475.00
57	Prince George		1276.67	7500	4500	$ 2,159.64
58	Nicola Similkameen		1966.67		8800	$ 3,675.00
59	Peace River South		2980	1000		$ 2,484.00
60	Peace River North	750	7250			$ 3,906.25
61	Greater Victoria		3195.57	2250	2666.67	$ 2,905.75
62	Sooke		2745.45	2000	1250	$ 2,418.75
63	Saanich		3025	3250	11733.33	$ 5,440.91
64	Gulf Islands		933.33	600	2000	$ 1,080.00
67	Okanagan Skaha		1635	2000	1300	$ 1,684.38
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith		2133.33		1771.43	$ 2,042.86
69	Qualicum		3100	6300	2500	$ 4,100.00
70	Alberni	2000	750	1133.33		$ 1,016.67
71	Comox Valley		1453.47	937.5		$ 1,216.76
72	Campbell River		3083.33	6750	1500	$ 3,722.22
73	Kamloops-Thompson		1683.33		2625	$ 1,918.75
74	Gold Trail				1500	$ 1,500.00
75	Mission		2350		2000	$ 2,300.00
78	Fraser-Cascade		2050	2000		$ 1,220.00
79	Cowichan Valley		2138.89	1000	1000	$ 1,788.46
81	Fort Nelson	1500				$ 1,500.00
82	Coast Mountains	1600	2305	5500	50	$ 2,590.83
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap		1157.63	2000	1750	$ 1,341.91
84	Vancouver Island West	-			500	
85	Vancouver Island North				3500	$ 500.00
87	Stikine	No data				
91	Nechako Lakes		933.33		3500	$ 2,216.67
92	Nisga'a	No data				
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	1533.33	500			$ 1,275.00
Total		**$ 1,192.86**	**$ 2,956.36**	**$ 3,187.50**	**$ 3,121.83**	**$ 2,973.30**

Table E: Average amount of funds raised, based on responding schools, by type of school, in 2006–07 (T-Ls report for previous school year)

SD #	District	Average $				
		Multi-level	Elementary	Middle	Secondary	Total
5	Southeast Kootenay	900	1,500	800	1,000	$ 1,275
6	Rocky Mountain	.	1,108	4,200	.	$ 1,550
8	Kootenay Lake	1,800	1,440	.	600	$ 1,400
10	Arrow Lake	No data .	.	.	.	.
19	Revelstoke	.	1,838	.	.	$ 1,838
20	Kootenay-Columbia	.	1,942	.	.	$ 1,942
22	Vernon	.	3,370	.	1,333	$ 2,880
23	Central Okanagan	.	2,674	500	500	$ 2,377
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	1,800	1,220	.	.	$ 1,413
28	Quesnel	.	2,200	.	.	$ 2,200
33	Chilliwack	.	4,325	2,000	.	$ 4,114
34	Abbotsford	.	2,500	300	.	$ 1,767
35	Langley	800	2,266	.	4,533	$ 2,466
36	Surrey	.	2,131	.	2,196	$ 2,142
37	Delta	.	2,636	.	3,000	$ 2,660
38	Richmond	.	2,393	2,000	3,200	$ 2,497
39	Vancouver	.	2,864	.	3,183	$ 2,873
40	New Westminster	.	3,561	900	1,500	$ 3,132
41	Burnaby	.	2,565	.	1,670	$ 2,456
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	.	2,303	.	1,000	$ 2,226
43	Coquitlam	.	2,728	1,905	1,267	$ 2,304
44	North Vancouver	300	3,524	.	1,650	$ 2,935
45	West Vancouver	.	4,583	.	1,038	$ 3,697
46	Sunshine Coast	.	2,500	.	.	$ 2,500
47	Powell River	No data				
48	Howe Sound	.	2,271	.	500	$ 2,050
49	Central Coast	.	.	.	.	.
50	Haida Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	No data				
51	Boundary	.	2,000	.	.	$ 2,000
52	Prince Rupert	.	1,700	.	.	$ 1,700
53	Okanagan Similkameen	.	2,100	.	.	$ 2,100
54	Bulkley Valley	.	2,070	.	1,650	$ 1,965
57	Prince George	.	1,882	5,000	1,750	$ 2,018
58	Nicola Similkameen	.	2,000	.	2,000	$ 2,000
59	Peace River South	.	2,000	.	.	$ 2,000
60	Peace River North	850	4,167	.	.	$ 2,840
61	Greater Victoria	1,000	3,810	3,567	2,953	$ 3,513
62	Sooke	.	2,625	3,750	.	$ 2,850
63	Saanich	.	4,056	2,950	6,029	$ 4,201
64	Gulf Islands	1,500	1,100	1,000	.	$ 1,160
67	Okanagan Skaha	.	1,657	1,433	.	$ 1,590
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	4,000	2,207	1,500	2,400	$ 2,282
69	Qualicum	.	2,100	1,267	4,667	$ 2,750
70	Alberni	500	1,520	2,900	4,000	$ 1,989
71	Comox Valley	.	2,667	400	300	$ 1,740
72	Campbell River	.	3,100	1,000	1,942	$ 2,593
73	Kamloops-Thompson	.	1,623	.	2,650	$ 1,760
74	Gold Trail	.	.	.	.	.
75	Mission	.	2,073	.	.	$ 2,073
78	Fraser-Cascade	.	2,333	.	.	$ 2,333
79	Cowichan Valley	.	1,753	2,033	700	$ 1,668
82	Coast Mountains	.	1,963	.	2,600	$ 2,090
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	2,500	1,607	750	500	$ 1,390
84	Vancouver Island West	.	.	.	.	.
85	Vancouver Island North	1,000	1,850	.	500	$ 1,300
81	Fort Nelson	No data				
91	Nechako Lakes	1,000	3,900	.	1,128	$ 2,009
92	Nisga'a	No data				
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	No data				
	Total	$ 1,343	$ 2,533	$ 2,161	$ 2,293	$ 2,447

Table F: Count, responding schools with paid library technician or clerical assistant, 2007–08

SD#	District	Multi-level	Elementary	Middle	Secondary	Total with Paid Assistant	Total Survey Responses
5	Southeast Kootenay	1	7	1	2	11	14
6	Rocky Mountain		6	1	3	10	13
8	Kootenay Lake	1	11		2	14	16
10	Arrow Lake	1	1			2	2
19	Revelstoke		4			4	4
20	Kootenay-Columbia		8		3	11	11
22	Vernon		12		5	17	20
23	Central Okanagan		23	5	5	33	34
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	2	1		2	5	6
28	Quesnel	No data					6
33	Chilliwack				1	1	14
34	Abbotsford			1		1	3
35	Langley	2	25		6	33	41
36	Surrey		21		16	37	62
37	Delta				5	5	20
38	Richmond		1		10	11	44
39	Vancouver		2		1	3	108
40	New Westminister		8	1	1	10	11
41	Burnaby		8		7	15	48
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows		4		5	9	23
43	Coquitlam		3	11	9	23	52
44	North Vancouver		1		6	7	25
45	West Vancouver		5		2	7	9
46	Sunshine Coast		1		1	2	2
47	Powell River	No data					
48	Howe Sound		7		2	9	10
49	Central Coast	No data					1
50	Haida Gwai'i/Queen Charlotte	No data					
51	Boundary		2			2	2
52	Prince Rupert		5			5	5
53	Okanagan Similkameen	1	1		1	3	3
54	Bulkley Valley		6		2	8	8
57	Prince George		18	1	8	27	33
58	Nicola Similkameen				1	1	2
59	Peace River South		1		2	3	3
60	Peace River North		1			1	9
61	Greater Victoria	1	20	7	7	35	40
62	Sooke		8	3	1	12	12
63	Saanich		8	2	2	12	12
64	Gulf Islands	2	4	1		7	8
67	Okanagan Skaha		8	3	2	13	13
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	1	26	1	7	35	35
69	Qualicum		2	3	3	8	8
70	Alberni				1	1	10
71	Comox Valley		16	5	3	24	25
72	Campbell River	2	7	1	3	13	13
73	Kamloops-Thompson	1	13		4	18	18
74	Gold Trail				1	1	1
75	Mission		1		3	4	19
78	Fraser-Cascade	No data					4
79	Cowichan Valley				2	2	19
81	Fort Nelson	No data					
82	Coast Mountains		10		5	15	15
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	1	10	2	5	18	18
84	Vancouver Island West	1				1	1
85	Vancouver Island North	1	2		1	4	4
87	Stikine	No data					
91	Nechako Lakes	1			1	2	3
92	Nisga'a	No data					
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	No data					
	Total	**19**	**328**	**49**	**159**	**555**	**946**

Note: Totals for districts 22 (1), 35 (2), and 71 (1) include district-librarians who completed the survey.

Qualitative results: Illustrative quotes for each of the topic/thematic areas

1.   Funding issues: Cutbacks, inequities and policy issues

A decade of shrinking library budgets

"The annual budget has been shrinking over the decades, and this has resulted in a shrinking of collection and the resources we can offer to students. It compromises our ability to remain a viable and relevant place to go for information and recreational reading."

"I am new to this library... The budget at the smaller school (she previously worked in) in the late '90s was greater than it is here, now."

"Whilst cleaning out some file drawers this past spring, we found a 1981 budget sheet that indicated the library allocation at our school to be TWICE as much as we get today. Enrollment was slightly higher in the '80s but not twice what we now have."

"My budget in many years past was $3,000—then for a few years $1,000—now this year just over $600."

"When I started as the librarian 5 years ago, we had a budget of $25,000. This year, I am HOPEFUL for $10,000. The shortfall is largely due to the increased need in other subject areas (often electives where the students can no longer be charged for supplies)."

Increasing demands

"School has grown by two divisions (about 60 students) but library FTE has not grown at all. No time to do everything that needs to be done around here."

"The budget has slowly been decreasing over the past few years because government is not supporting new curriculum. Text books are so expensive and every time there is a change in curriculum the school must find the money in learning resources to buy the texts… This just eats up a school's learning resources budget."

"The cost of books is rising steadily but there has been no increase in our library budget to address this problem."

"Not near enough $ — books are so expensive and teachers all want different resources to go with their reading programs or oral language (new emphasis) or science or new math programs, etc."

Increase in student population did not result in increased teacher-librarian time which decreases the amount of time I can spend with each student."

Funding inequities—"Have" and "Have-Not" schools

"I am in the extremely fortunate position of being in a 'have' school. The principal supports the library financially to about $9 per student, and the PAC gives about $14 per student. So we have a wonderful collection."

"We are the only high school in this district of 7 high schools that only has a part-time librarian. We are absolutely a 'have-not' school as we have the least time, and the least amount of money to spend. As well, 5 hours of clerk time is not adequate."

"We are thrilled about our increase to full-time librarian, but very upset about the lack of T-L time in other schools in our district."

"I find it very frustrating in [our] School District that some librarians are able to have clerk time on a regular basis, while others get zero."

"Unfortunately, each school T-L has to negotiate library budget funding. Secondary libraries are usually given around the same amount (the principals obviously check with each other!). This is not the case in the district's elementary libraries. They have to fight for every penny, and there are definite 'have' and 'have not' schools."

Concerns about the new funding formula

"The move towards school-based funding in our district has created inequities in terms of support for library staffing and resources. Much depends on the principal's views of the library and the financial situation of the school. Although there is a recommended funding formula, this formula is only a recommendation. There are definite 'have' and 'have-not' libraries in our district with varying levels of support."

"We are very concerned about the new funding formula and how it will impact school libraries. With libraries, counsellors, ESL and Sp Ed all lumped in to "Incremental Staffing," our library staffing will be disproportionately hit. One to four block cuts to library, in a department with only 1.5 to 2 members is a huge percentage of staffing. One to four block cuts to a department with 5 FTEs doesn't impact it at the same level/percentage. When staffing is left to the school, and ultimately the Principal, the library is perceived the easiest area to cut. It is very difficult to cut ESL and Sp Ed when there is so much publicity about class size; it is very difficult to cut counsellors when they do so much administrative work in a school."

"Since our district allocates library money on a basis of $1,500 + $5.50/FTE, being in a small school gives me a really limited budget to acquire new materials each year. This makes it difficult to get appropriate resources for when curriculum requirements change or resources need to be updated (for example, now that Pluto isn't a planet, most of my space books are outdated)."

"I am concerned that [our] school board no longer is covering the cost of databases, but is taking that money partly from library funds. The school board covered the cost of circulation computers and our online catalogue, but will not cover the cost of updating the circulation computer or providing computers for students to access the online catalogue and databases. Teacher-Librarians are expected to ask and receive computers for the library from the administrator. This does not provide equitable access."

Ministry of Education cuts school library funding while promoting literacy

"It is ironic that in a time when the government is promoting literacy, this school's, and many other schools', library budget seems to be decreasing at an ever-quickening pace. We have lost funding for materials, support, and librarian and clerical time in an era when our province is in a surplus situation and the issue of 'literacy' is on the front page of every newspaper."

"Collections are outdated and minimal funding is available although 'literacy' is the number one goal for our schools and district! The district hired a 'literacy' district teacher, yet didn't improve school libraries."

"I do not understand how the premier can stand up in the legislature and promise the people of BC that 'we will be the most literate province in the country' when he does not provide for 100% funding for libraries."

"With the provincial government's push to have BC become one of the most literate places in the world, they are not doing enough to provide services for school-aged children. We have many hours where no staff is in the library."

"With the endless talk of increasing student literacy, where is the money to go into libraries, which are the centres of literacy in the school?"

"I find it ironic and professionally insulting that the Ministry supposedly considers reading and writing of great importance and yet greatly underfunds libraries in our schools. What was once considered a full-time job, is now given only a day a week to be done."

"This government wants our province to be the most literate in Canada. It is obvious that school libraries need to be brought back to pre-1990 levels for staffing and funding in order to support this goal. We all know that well-funded libraries, professionally-staffed, improve reading scores. I have seen my budget drop more than 50% since in the last ten years."

II. Impact of underfunding on learning conditions for students

Effect on the quality of library services

"Staffing and budget are inadequate. Students are not receiving adequate information-skills instruction. Budget does not allow for upkeep of outdated materials to the 5-year margin. Library needs to be staffed all day."

"Years ago we had a real teacher-librarian with both teaching and library experience. In addition, we had a library aide who spent about 3 hours a day in the library. There were always new books on the shelves; the library aide or librarian would help teachers look for books that were related to their teaching theme, etc. (They would pull together all of the alphabet books for you; or, they would find everything in the library related to penguins, for instance, if that were the theme you were doing.) They would always give you an update of what they ran across that was new, or different, or exciting—especially when it came to internet resources, etc. Now, it's as if our library has gone from a vibrant, exciting learning space, that was always full of activity, to a quiet, stagnant space, that may still have lots to offer, but has become increasingly difficult to access."

Effect on student literacy

"We have to work really hard to get kids to access books instead of immediately using "google". There are so many good resources that are far easier for some kids to use than the computer. I think a full time teacher-librarian would make a huge difference in turning kids on to print materials."

"The working conditions are adequate to circulate books; however, the staffing hours provided are not enough to actually run the library—catalogue, repair, re-shelve, deal with fines and overdues, order books so our materials stay current, etc. Most of this happens on my own time or has to be done by the teaching assistant when there is a moment. Much of it just simply does not get done. This is no way to improve on the literacy of the students in the school…not a good way to make the best use of resources and space."

Effect on time spent with students

"I do not work with students in any capacity this year. In my place, a support staff has been hired for 2 hours a day, and she now has the only access to students in the form of book exchange. What I have observed is that book circulation has dropped dramatically. Students are only in the library for a half an hour each a week and the rest of the time the library sits empty."

"I am excited to work with the students as much as possible. They need support, enrichment, caring people who take an interest in their interests. We need to be there as much as possible for them in this changing world. The time allotted is not enough in order to give the kids and teachers the support that they need."

"Reduced time with increased number of students…I was teaching research units using both the internet and print resources. This year I have found that I am not able to do that. I try to do book exchange with a short 5–10 minute lesson on some aspect of literacy."

"A library position that is 0.5 is challenging, especially when it is shared by two people. Many aspects of a library program are 'lost' as the time is spent mainly on book exchanges, library administration, and supporting some classrooms with research projects."

"Since time has been cut this year, when I teach prep to other classes, there are constant streams of children wanting to check out books, and take Accelerated reading tests while I am trying to teach. Staff find it difficult to remember that the Library time has been cut."

Social value of the school library

"Our library averages 803 patron visits per day. We know that we meet our students' needs at very many different levels (educational as well as emotional) and our fear is that once the financial resources are depleted, these students (many of them high risk) will lose one of the safest, positive, and most educationally productive areas of the school."

"Inadequacy of my time is resulting in inadequacy of service, which is undermining the import of the library, slowly eroding it as a place to value and nurture in the school, try as I do to keep it going via curriculum support, Student Club, warm cozy place, book talks, etc."

III. Impact of underfunding on the working conditions of Teacher-Librarians

Part-time assignment to do a full-time job

"Of course, I have been very upset these past five years about being cut to half-time and then to 0.71% time. It has been difficult to maintain a really good library program."

"It's challenging with limited hours allotted for library clerks. In a small school, I come for basically one day, teach all 5 divisions, then quickly try to set up new books for my secretary to work on when I'm gone. We can rarely work together, because she is also the school secretary. It's amazing what we all get done, but wow, what a circus!"

"Obviously the 50% position is problematic when the library is expected to run 100% of the time!"

"I wrote a letter to our district to request more Teacher-Librarian time, the amount of teaching time is at a minimum level and programs like the Red Cedar Book Awards had to be cut, with a 0.2 FTE."

"Our elementary school librarians are still trying to do the job on inadequate assignments as some still struggle with wearing several hats."

Unpaid overtime

"My working time has increased by 0.2 (1 day) but I do not feel I have any time to organize research activities outside of prep time SO all research is conducted during prep time. I had some clerk time last year that was voluntary by whatever TA was free for other duties, but this year, I have none. I am struggling to run and manage a library but do the teaching that I am required to do plus prepare report cards for all the students I teach plus contribute to a bi-weekly newsletter, and run Red Cedar. Nearly every Sunday I am in the library just trying to stay on top of the job."

"I am concerned for the future of elementary libraries. Not only the school and the district admin, but also too many classroom teachers do not understand what we could do, given the time and budget, and I'm afraid we will soon go the way of the dodo. I often come in on the weekend to get caught up. I am at the school 0.9, but the 0.5 that is not assigned library is library prep and providing prep through French instruction."

"I am extremely frustrated and, despite loving being a T-L for the past nine years, am determined to quit and go back to full-time classroom teaching. I am tired of giving up all my personal time (including summer holidays) to try and keep my collection in decent shape."

"The Library budget comes from the PAC. This year they have cut my budget in half. The PAC and the school district expect the Teacher-Librarian to run the Scholastic Book Fair to raise money for books. The time to run the fair is done on the Teacher-Librarian's own time."

Working without lunch or coffee breaks

"The library is expected to be open but no extra time is given to me to do so. I work through lunch...leaving to eat for 15 minutes and the student monitors are in charge."

"I did a survey of 5 other schools the same size as ours and their clerk time is 25-30 hours a week. We have 8. I am unable to take a lunch hour because I cannot close the library nor have anyone to relieve my position."

"Just that I enjoy being in the library but the cutbacks have really had an impact on my and other teacher-librarians' workload over the years. I am finding that I am working during my recess and lunch hours just to meet all the demands of the day."

Impact of the funding cutbacks on morale and quality of work life

"Besides the everyday library duties, I, of course, teach library prep classes. It is because of this and the cutbacks of time that I understand why actual trained librarians might not want to take library jobs anymore… I can honestly say that teaching library prep is one of the worst jobs that I have ever had. You often feel like you are just babysitting the students for 45 minutes, even when you try to incorporate library/reading programs into each lesson (i.e., Accelerated Reader, the Red Cedar Awards, library/research skills). I have taught music prep before and it always felt like I was teaching a real program to the students and that they really benefited by the time being spent with you. Library prep is completely different. I don't know what the answer is, but I do know that I will be looking for a different teaching position next year."

"We are always having to justify our jobs and existence, which is demoralizing and frustrating."

"Prep time has increased and costs (of books, supplies, technology, etc.) have also increased exponentially. I find that I can barely manage to run the library with the resources assigned. It barely allows you to buy a comic, let alone library resources. I have had to take partial stress leave this term because of incredibly demanding working conditions."

"Not enough time to teach and keep up with clerical. Always feel torn between the two."

IV. Impact of underfunding on library resources

Outdated book collections

"For a school population of 1,840 full-time students, I find it discouraging that the budget allocated equates to less than $6.00 per FTE student. We are situated in a community where the public library is at some distance and for many students we are their access point and support when completing assignment work. The average age of our reference collection is 1987 (that's 20 years old!) and the average age of our regular collection is 1998. In a school, in a district, in a province which is touting improved literacy, I think that these stats speak loudly."

"We learn to our sorrow after every visiting expert, without more library time we cannot keep up with the latest materials, or choose wisely for the most part. I don't see this changing, as the district is still in love with technology and seems to think that putting a kid in front of a computer is just as good as what the library used to do."

"Our biggest lack is in the area of clerical support. We have many boxes of books awaiting processing, and the backlog keeps growing. Between my library technician and I we cannot staff the library full-time and must rely on volunteer help to keep the place running."

Technological literacy

"Technology is my biggest, biggest roadblock right now… How can we teach information literacy without computer/internet access??? I have four computers in my library, so there is hardly any online information literacy instruction happening."

"I truly believe that librarians are in the perfect position to introduce students and teachers to all those great web tools out there, like podcasting, wikis, blogs, screencasts, video podcasts, and social networking sites. Yes—social networking! I believe there is great potential in creating social network sites in the context of education (for an example, check out library). These things require multimodal literacies from the students and appeal to their 'digital native' minds. The students will be highly

motivated to use these things and the teachers will receive high-quality output from their students. Especially struggling students. It's a no-brainer to me that ICT has to be taught in the library by a professional teacher-librarian. These new social web tools are too tightly integrated in the new forms of knowledge and changing nature of information. It's our expertise. But I don't have the tools to do all those exciting things…."

Staffing concerns

Library clerks
"The library staffing is bare bones. It appears that no value is put on the resources or the resource personnel in this district."

"Since I do not have any clerical time, I must spend part of my time doing clerical jobs such as signing out books, shelving, mending materials, etc."

"Clerical worker is also office secretary. Although she tries hard to get to the library it often doesn't happen, or she is busy answering phones or other office work."

"The trained Library clerk is in the Library 15 hours a week. The office secretary should be in the Library about 3 hours a week. However, this does not happen consistently. In fact, this year, as a result of staffing changes, it has not yet happened."

"My clerical time is at 2 hours per week but the secretary must remain at the office so the clerical time is non-existent."

"I am lucky to have clerk time but her time in the library can be cut at anytime by the principal if she is needed in the office."

Library technician/assistants
"We have been grateful for the new library technician in our library. It does make me suspicious though about whether long-term plans are to eliminate the teacher-librarian position for economy. We are a very poor district, with a rapidly-declining student population."

"My library time was cut to 34% in September. The time was increased to 54% the last week of October. The big worry now is the superintendent who believes library technicians are the answer."

"Several qualified T-Ls no longer work in libraries because their time was so severely cut. We have an abundance of untrained T-Ls filling miniscule library assignments in small schools."

"Our library tech is retiring at the end of the year and in the last few years, when our library techs retire, they replace them with unskilled and untrained TAs. We hope this doesn't happen to us."

"A big problem our district is facing is staffing shortages, which greatly affect our library assistant's times. There is rarely a replacement if they are sick, and they are sometimes re-assigned to the office if there is no one to replace an absent secretary."

Principals/Vice-principals
"We also have 3 or more principals whose admin time is not full-time and have been told to 'cover the library' completely untrained. Many are floundering; those of us who are experienced give them all the help we can via e-mail and phone—the library co-ordinator job also disappeared several years ago."

"At this point, our principal is in charge of the library operation… The principal has no library training and the day-to-day running of the library is left to parent volunteers."

"We have had the principal acting as the librarian for several years, but none of the three principals who were in the position actually had any training and did very little actual library work. One did try to do a little work with the students, but gave release time for me to get the cataloguing done as I was much faster at it."

Teachers

"The library has full-time coverage, which is great. The problem is that the coverage for the time I am not here is done by teachers on staff who need another block to maintain a full-time contract. The staff will change every semester. I can have as many as 6 new teachers in the library in a year. My frustration is the time involved in training each teacher for 1 block a semester."

"I would like to express my concerns around teacher feelings toward administration in the library. Though I understand and respect that there are matters that merit concern, I also feel that diminishing the value of administration in the library is short sighted."

V. What made a difference?—Supports to maintaining existing library services

PAC fundraising

"PAC volunteers work between 15-20 hours a week to keep the library running smoothly. There is a great deal of support for the library at this school, from parents and staff. We have a Grade 6 French Immersion program here. It provides additional resources for the rest of the school."

"I'm lucky to be working in a school where the parents are very involved with their children's education. The PAC gave the library $2,000, and gave me the full amount of the money made during the Book Fair ($2,000). We're also a one-track French Immersion school, which allowed a good funding from the federal government (about $3,200). I also raised some money with the "Adopt a Book" program ($800), with which I bought furniture (carts on wheels)."

"In the old days, the library got the newest, most powerful technology. Nowadays the library has to compete for even book money as budgets get spent on classroom collections of reading materials. Fortunately, our PAC is generous, funding Red Cedar collections in the Grade 5 classrooms and magazine subscriptions both English and French. Perhaps next year they will fund a digital projector for the library."

"I have established close ties with the PAC and am very successful in obtaining funds from them. Many PAC members help in the library in whatever way they can directly or indirectly provide assistance."

Supportive principal and/or school district

"We have a wonderfully equipped and organized library and computer lab. I am in both areas at different times during the day depending on what the classes are working on. I am new to this position, but have lots of support from the district, principal, parent helpers, colleagues, etc."

"Very supportive principal, willing to fund library initiatives and programs. My school is very lucky!"

"I consider myself to be fortunate in my position at this school. The principal is supportive of the library, and she makes our student numbers work towards ensuring an open and fully staffed library."

"Our principal made a decision to retain library and music specialist services, even though student population dropped. The music specialist was given more 'prep coverage' while the TL was given an opportunity to collaborate with other teachers. Teachers and students have benefited from this renewed sense of collaboration, and I feel that the staff has a sense of how important a TL can be when having adequate time to do the job of a TL (not just covering preps)."

"Our District has suffered terrible cuts in TL time over the past few years, particularly in the elementary schools. My job is one of only 2 in our District that are full-time and that is because my principal, a former TL, puts a great deal of importance on library service for students."

"Our principal is amazingly supportive of the library. With 100% time, mine is very much a teaching position; I am able to teach resource-based units, library skills, and work on enrichment/intervention activities with small groups. It is a fantastic job!"

"I feel extremely lucky as I do know many horror stories, but my boss is fab—very supportive, generous and appreciative. My assignment stayed the same even though our student enrolment declined and we had to lose one full teacher."

"I feel very fortunate to work in a school district that provides adequate staffing and funding for libraries."

Supportive community working together to support the library
"The noon-hour supervisor reserves books for me for 20 minutes each day. During early dismissal days for parent/teacher conferences, EAs are available to help with processing. When TOCs have a spare block they are often sent to the library. If I'm not too busy and can supervise, they can be quite helpful with clerical work."

"The PAC was extremely generous last year, supplying $3,000 to update our VHS collection and add many curriculum-related DVDs. It in no way indicates the amount I will receive from them this year."

"A formal library budget does not exist for the school, although the school does earmark $1,200 per year for CanLit book orders for the library, and all office and book processing materials are covered out of the office supply budget. Funds acquired through having international students in our school are being used to spend $8,000 on upgrading the computer equipment in our library (15 refurbished PCs and one laptop and one LCD projector). Also noteworthy is that the school is spending some of their capital funds to renovate our library… This is a school-based initiative due to good support by the school administration."

"This is a wonderful school, awesome support for the school library program from the administration, staff, students and parents!"

Volunteers
"Approx. 200 students stream into the library during a.m. break. Approx. 200 at lunch, 100 students before school. Approx. 25–50 regular students use the library after school. Another 120 students sign into the library during study breaks per day. A dedicated group of 45 student library volunteers help in the library with non-administrative/professional librarian duties (i.e., resource circulation, shelving books and shelf reading)."

"I have two parent volunteers for 3 hours each, four days a week. This is a total of 24 hours of volunteer time in order to keep the Library running. The parents take care of the circulation desk and do all the shelving. Without their help, the Library would quickly screech to a blazing halt."

Adequate T-L FTE time
"I am 1.0 FTE at my school. Prep has been integrated into my job as a TL since I started 9 years ago and will probably always be and really is what I consider to be my job security. I use the time to teach children about literature, library skills, information technology skills and do not consider myself to be a 'prep' teacher during that time."

"The amount of library time for this small school is perfect. I have just enough time to keep the library organized, plan and complete prep. and schedule extra study or research times for classes. The principal did however add a 0.10 to the district allotted time for this year only. Without the extra 0.10 I would be very busy!"

"I am so pleased to be able to have a whole day in the library this year. In the past, I have not been able to keep up with all that's involved with running a library, so this year I hope to see a difference."

District resources
"We are very fortunate in [our district] to have a wonderful group of people in a central building who provide us with assistance with our inventory, processing, and purchasing! What a great improvement from the past when we were overwhelmed with trying to run a library, teach, purchase material, and then catalogue it all!"

"I am new to my library position this year, but things were well-defined and supported before I came, and have continued so far. [Our] school district has added a T-L helping teacher this year and she is awesome. The district has sponsored a wonderful Pro-D opportunity in September for all T-Ls in the district and put on a New T-L workshop that was extremely helpful to me."

"While we do not have library tech support in the school, the district has three techs who provide support from a central location. They process books that I send to them, print overdue notices, keep the database current and accurate, and assist me with any questions that I have for them."

Advocacy efforts

"After completing my first year as the Teacher-Librarian, I submitted a detailed annual Library report to the principal and vice-principals in June 2007. It included information about all the 'invisible' services which the Library provides as well as information about collection development, curriculum support, information literacy, AV support, etc. This report included information I'd collected about the budget per student in other secondary schools in our district. This report was a positive advocacy step and resulted in an increased awareness by the administration of T-L's role. I received additional budget money and the practice of 'borrowing' my Library Technician to complete other tasks for the administration/school no longer occurs. I was very pleased by the outcome, to say the least!"

VI. Recommendations for how to improve conditions in school libraries

Increase FTE time for teacher-librarians

"I definitely believe that for a school to be completely effective and functional, there needs to be a full-time librarian. Literacy is a basis of all education and it is difficult to provide every grade level and the many other needs in a part-time schedule. Any educator's role has no boundaries and there are so many things to do within the provided time."

"I know budgets are tight for a small school, but I would love to see a teacher-librarian who was working with the teachers to help develop research skills, to add an accelerated reading program, to update the stacks, and many other tasks. As one of the classroom teachers, I am encouraging a love of books, not just fiction, but all genres, and a teacher-librarian would really enhance that."

"There should be a minimum staffing ratio for T-Ls set by the district. Putting T-L time with resource time as incremental staffing means that staffs and principals must choose which program will receive more time. How can we decide that one is more valuable than the other?"

"Library staffing is quite fragmented—like to see restoration of full-time positions dedicated to the library and not seen as a prep teacher."

Increase T-L time for programs to enrich learning and literacy

"I would like more point time and an increase in my budget in order to implement programs that would highly benefit student learning, especially in the area of information literacy. The potential of the library is great but not met."

"With our school goals centered around literacy, I would really like to see more time allocated to the library."

"Definitely under-budgeted!! And it is necessary to have more time in the library to do enriching, co-operative units with other staff members."

Improve technical and clerical support for libraries

"More technical support so the TEACHER-librarian can spend more time actually teaching."

"Clerical help is needed. CUPE could continue/begin to let the district know/remember that clerical help is needed in the elementary school library."

"An increase in library staffing is necessary to keep the library running smoothly…."

"Dedicated clerical staffing to support the AR program is overwhelming and requires."

Upgrade library collection

"Update Collection—the average age of our collection is 1987."

"Resources to purchase fiction for young readers: The general fiction does not have as much general fiction that is of interest to young readers as it needs to have to build a community of readers or to motivate them towards increased literacy."

"Budget is needed to: 1. Top up and keep current in curricular areas. 2. Purchase enough books to keep up with evolving interests of students. 3. Supply resources recommended by researchers and workshop presenters so teachers can become involved in new strategies."

Improve access to technology

"Need better access to technology at elementary level (not only for upper grade levels—equal opportunity!)."

"We need updated computers and a new printer."

"We need a new printer, new computers, and a faster server."

Continue lobbying efforts to maintain and improve funding

"I think the BCTLA should be advocating for T-L admin. time. There's got to be some direction."

"We need support and PR from the BCTLA and BCTF to continue THROUGHOUT the year to ensure that we stay at the least the same levels of staffing and budget that we are now at in this province and at best IMPROVE it—in a province that makes literacy its mandate."

"It is…difficult to do a good job without a provincial mandate validating the library as a cornerstone of learning and the T-L as an equal educational partner. I sense that the pendulum swing for more teacher-librarian time as media specialist and as teacher collaborator may be slowly moving towards a partial glimpse of the golden age of the 1980s. News from some provinces sounds promising and vigilance/lobbying cannot be left unattended."

2007-2008

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