

Library and Information Services in Small High Schools: New Schools Require New Models

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this project is to 1) determine how the library and information needs of students and teachers in small high schools differ from those in a comprehensive high school environment, 2) identify the unique role that teacher-librarians play in the teaching and learning environment of small high schools, and 3) investigate the most effective ways to align the library program in terms of governance, space, and services in order to meet the teaching and learning needs of small schools. During the period from May 2005 to October 2005, the primary activities completed included a series of 12 interviews and 18 site observations, development of a codebook for data analysis, launching a public website to describe the goals, outputs, and outcomes of the project, and developing two models based on initial review of data. These activities signaled a shift in project priorities from recruitment and planning to data collection. The project is currently on schedule. Significant outputs at this stage of the research include creation of a codebook for qualitative data analysis, producing a public website to describe the project and provide contact information to external audiences, and the development of two models to provide a framework for further data analysis. Future planned outputs include submitting a manuscript to *School Library Media Research* (SLMR) and a proposal to speak at the annual conference of the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) in 2006. Beyond dissemination of research findings, desirable outcomes of this project include the extent to which Teacher-Librarians adopt identified best practices and whether the Teacher-Librarians form a community of practice to promote collegial interaction while implementing best practices that position the library and information services program as a highly visible, critical component of the teaching and learning environment.

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A. Project Purpose

Dividing large high schools into smaller schools is an important educational reform with major implications for library programs. Small schools provide an improved learning environment that results in increased academic achievement, lower dropout rates, and improved parent, teacher and student satisfaction with schooling. The small schools approach has the support of the United States Congress, the Department of Education, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Changing the size and nature of high schools also requires a change in the library program of those schools. **If the teaching and learning environment is changing, then school library services must also adapt to the meet the needs of that new environment.**

The teaching and learning approaches championed by advocates of small high schools include:

- Teachers personalizing instruction to facilitate student inquiry and to meet the needs of individual students,
- Flexible curriculum focused on independent research,
- Standards-based learning with intensive, integrated instruction to help students meet standards, and
- Student demonstration of learning through projects, exhibitions and performance-based assessments.

Teaching and learning in a small high school requires that the library and librarian provide a rich infrastructure of information skills instruction and services, reading and literacy advocacy, information and technology services, and resources management.

Little attention has been given to the needs of small schools in terms of library and information services, systems, and resources, the role of teacher-librarians, or how to deploy library and information infrastructure effectively. This proposed project will determine:

1. How do the information and library needs of students and teachers in small schools differ from those in a comprehensive school environment?
2. What is the unique role that teacher-librarians play in small schools in terms of providing information, reading advocacy, and teaching information literacy, and how do these roles contribute to a successful conversion to small schools.
3. What are the most effective ways to align the library program (functions, governance, staffing, budget, systems, physical space, collections, and direct impact on teaching and learning) to meet the teaching and learning needs of small schools.

The purpose of this project is to determine the library and information needs of students and faculty in small high schools. This project will create, implement, document, evaluate and disseminate models of best practices and exemplary library and information programs in multiplexes of smaller high schools. The underlying assumption is that effective library and information services are essential for the successful education of adolescent students in small high schools.

B. Project Activities: May 2005 – October 2005

During the second half of the first year of the project, priorities for the project team shifted from recruitment and planning to data collection. The team conducted a large number of site visits (30) that enabled us to perform multiple observations and interviews at each high school. The data collected consists of field notes, memos, and interview responses. During this initial phase of data collection, the team began to construct a codebook to categorize and compare observations across sites.

Data collection

From May 2005 to October 2005, the team conducted a total of 18 site observations. Each of the participating school libraries was observed three times. The site visits were scheduled at different times in the school day (between 9:00am and 3:00pm) and were three hours in duration in order to capture the full range of activities that occurs in each library. During the observation a member of the research team documented the physical attributes of the library and the behaviors of the teacher-librarian, the students, and the classroom teachers. The observation notes describe:

- The physical layout of the library (e.g. room dimensions, table and computer placement, signage, and displays).
- The behaviors of the teacher-librarian (e.g. helping, directing, managing, and instructing).
- The number of classes and students using the library
- The type of work the students are doing, student use of library resources and their interactions with the teacher-librarian and classroom teachers.
- The classroom teachers' use of library resources and their interactions with both students and the teacher-librarian.

Strong areas of concern have begun to emerge from preliminary analysis of the observation data. These areas fall into three distinct categories:

- **Teacher-librarian roles** – Participants appear to fill an array of roles within their schools: gatekeeper to information resources, technician, reading advisor, curriculum consultant, monitor of student behavior, student confidant, and Internet guide. However, not all of these roles position the teacher-librarian well for having maximum effect on student learning and achievement in the small learning community environment.
- **Student assignments** – The assignments that students bring to the library set the stage for their research experience. The data suggests that communication of expectations and assignment goals between the teacher-librarian and the classroom teacher is often lacking. The goal of small learning communities to nurture the development of independent researchers needs to be supported by assignments that enable the teacher-librarian to provide focused instruction and resource provision.
- **Layout of the library** – Participating school libraries exhibit a variety of physical layouts. The positioning of computers, tables, bookshelves, and teaching areas directly influence the behaviors of the various actors in the library facility. Bookshelves or displays that obstruct sight lines and computer monitors that are hidden from adult view are just two examples of spatial layouts that invite non-scholastic activities such as sleeping or instant messaging. Such behaviors may diminish the image of the library in the minds of students and teachers as a learning environment.

Site observations provided basic description about typical activities and interactions occurring in the school library. Observations of the behavior of students, teachers, and the teacher-librarian provided some insights about the nature of instruction taking place in the school, student usage of library resources, teachers' expectations about how the library contributes to student learning, and the level of engagement the teacher-librarian has with both students and teachers. To obtain more detailed information about stakeholder perceptions, attitudes and feelings, the research team also conducted 12 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with teacher-librarians and school principals between May 1 and July 1, 2005. The early placement of these interviews helped contextualize subsequent observations of activities and interactions taking place in the library.

Teacher-librarian interviews:

All six of the teacher-librarians recruited during the initial project phase were interviewed by a member of the research team between May 1 and June 15, 2005. The goal of these conversations was multifold: 1) to acquire additional background and baseline data on the teacher-librarians and library programs; 2) to understand the perceived roles of the teacher-librarian within the school community; 3) to identify support

structures for the library program, real or perceived, within the school community; and 4) to elicit the librarian's activities and goals related to student achievement and program development. These interviews were conducted at the school sites one to two weeks following the first site observation. Interviews lasted between one and two hours, and were based on an approved protocol included with this report (see Instrument A in the appendix).

Principal interviews:

The principal of each participating multiplex school was interviewed by two members of the research team between June 15 and July 1, 2005. These interviews had two goals: 1) to triangulate the data gathered from the teacher-librarian interviews regarding program goals, roles, activities, performance, and support structures; and 2) to gather the administrator's thoughts on the school conversion process itself, and how the process is affecting library services, personnel, governance, and policy. These interviews were conducted at the school sites after the initial library observation and teacher-librarian interviews described above. Interviews lasted between 30 and 40 minutes, and were based on an approved protocol included with this report (see Instrument B in the appendix).

To further develop trust with our informants, this initial set of interviews was not audio recorded. Two interviewers took separate notes which were then compared and collated. Coding and analysis of this data is ongoing. Follow-up interviews will be held annually to provide a sense of how the small school conversion process is affecting the library program and teacher-librarians.

Emerging Themes:

Although the data analysis process is ongoing, certain themes have emerged in our conversations with these key stakeholders in the small school conversion process. We have identified a number of commonalities and contradictions within each of these informant populations, as well as tensions that exist between and among stakeholder groups.

- Within the teacher-librarian group there are significant differences in how they characterize their roles and responsibilities. The diversity of activities within the group permits us to work with a rich array of practice translations, which in turn will strengthen the models that we derive from our analysis of the school library programs. This also suggests that our best practices will require the development of contextually-specific interventions to affect practice.
- Affective concerns, contextual tensions, and teacher-librarian self-efficacy appeared closely linked with role selection, program goals, and the overall tenor of the library program. The construction of the teacher-librarian's identity within the context of the transforming school will be an area of in-depth analysis.

- Principals are often unaware of library policies and practices, despite having ready opinions regarding the effectiveness of those practices and their place within the school community. Principal perceptions of support and collaboration within the school community were, in some contexts, at odds with the teacher-librarians' perceptions of the same. Communication and governance practices within the school community directly influenced many of these perceptions and/or misperceptions.
- Certain contradictions exist within the transforming schools between key stakeholders, including teacher-librarians, school leadership, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) funding the transformation process. These inconsistencies derive from goals, procedures, and perceptions of the process itself that do not perfectly align. Governance for the individual schools or academies, and professional development were major points of departure. Both of these areas, particularly the former, directly influence the school library program.

The research team will continue to follow these emerging themes in the coming months with additional data collection that will add a third and fourth set of stakeholders to this equation: classroom teachers and students.

Model Building

Based on the initial data obtained, the research team has begun to identify conceptual models of the ways in which the library and information needs of small high schools differ from those of traditional, comprehensive high schools. First, the conversion process to a small learning community environment creates opportunities for the library program to make a unique contribution to the administrative and teaching staff in terms of research, planning, communication, and professional development. Beyond the conversion process, the library program is integral to sustaining an authentic, personalized learning environment that promotes the development of critical thinking skills. In this way, the library program is a vital contributor to the ultimate success of small schools reform.

Table 1 illustrates the Conversion Process Model which is an analytical tool for identifying behaviors and actions that the teacher-librarian can take to position the library program as an integral player in the conversion process. NGOs funding small schools conversion, most notably the Gates Foundation, have recently expressed dissatisfaction with the pace of reform. One reason for this dissatisfaction may be the lack of scrutiny given to the conversion process and the factors that may inhibit or catalyze that process. In speaking with principals and teacher-librarians, we have identified a cycle of distinct stages within the conversion process that appear to follow a similar pattern at each of the six sites. Using the Conversion Process Model we have begun to identify factors that may inhibit or catalyze the four stages of the conversion process.

In the model, the rows represent these phases, and the columns represent the roles of the teacher-librarian and functions of the library program within the school.

Table 1: The Conversion Process Model

Stage	Role/Function		
	Information Literacy	Reading Advocacy	Content Delivery
Research: Planning, Teaching & Learning, and Governance			
Design and Negotiation			
Implementation: Structure and Teaching & Learning			
Sustaining			

The four critical stages of the conversion process are:

Stage 1: Research – Administration and faculty need information about the conversion process in terms of models, current practice, and pedagogy in the small schools environment. Primary effort is placed on data gathering and assessing feasibility and efficacy of current practice.

Stage 2: Design and Negotiation – Once the decision to begin the conversion has been made, administration and faculty plan a desirable and feasible structure for the new school environment. This process involves negotiation about issues of governance, workload, and placement of students and staff.

Stage 3: Implementation – As the new plan is implemented, the school goes through a series of “trials” as the administration and faculty determine what’s working and what needs to be modified.

Stage 4: Sustainability – Following the initial implementation, administrators and faculty move from experimentation to repetition of what practice has proven successful in terms of creating a strong teaching and learning environment.

The three fundamental functions of the library services program are:

Information Literacy Instruction – Integrate instruction on information literacy into curriculum by working with classroom teachers and identifying information

sources to use with innovative pedagogy such as team teaching, problem-based learning, and block scheduling.

Reading Advocacy – Serving as a resource for reading material, advising students on what to read, and taking a lead role in promoting reading among students *as well as faculty and administration*.

Content Delivery / teacher-librarian as CIO – In addition to the traditional responsibilities of collection management of print and digital sources, this function also includes managing access to professional literature for both staff and administration during the conversion process, participating in decision-making about the use and implementation of information technology within with the school, and preserving information about the conversion process itself in order to establish a collective memory for the organization.

The model serves both as a diagnostic, analytical tool and a prescriptive tool for identifying best practices. Based on observations and interviews, the team can use the model to determine where a school library program is performing highly and acting as a major player in the conversion process as well as where more effort or planning needs to be applied in order for the Teacher Librarian to be fully engaged with students and faculty. Likewise, the model can be used to identify and classify which best practices are appropriate for a given stage of conversion.

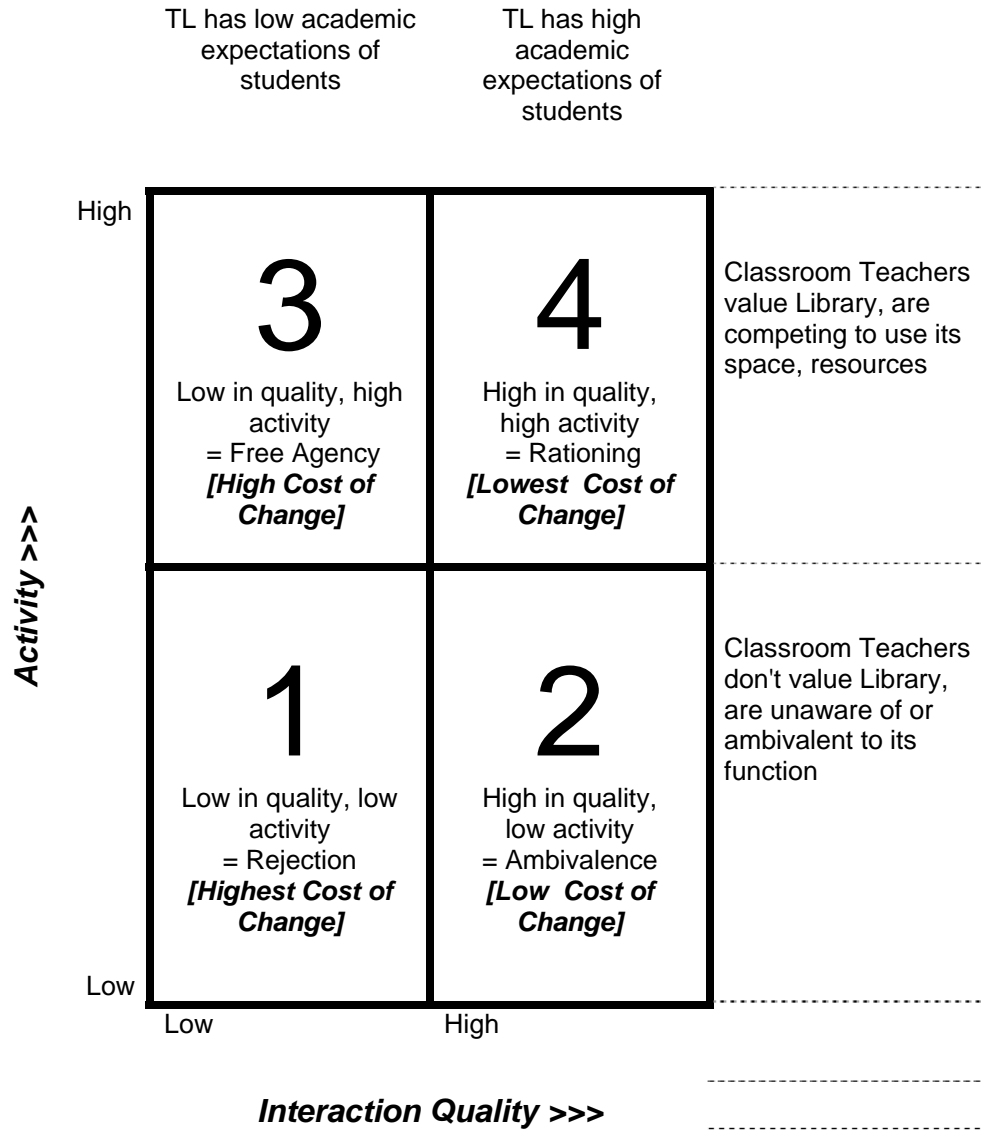
The second model is designed to assess the difficulty, or “cost,” that is required for the library program to transition into a vital contributor in a small schools learning environment (see Table 2 on the following page). The model plots the quality of interactions between the teacher-librarian against the volume of interactions. The model suggests that a vibrant, visible school library program requires both high volume and high quality, and that raising the quality of interactions (driven by the teacher-librarian’s engagement with the curriculum and collaborative relationships with classroom teachers) is more difficult than increasing the volume (driven by size of staff, facilities, and policies on use and access).

Terms:

Quality of Interaction: Assessments of the impact of library services on student learning, articulated in terms of instruction, collaboration, programs, and facilities.

Volume of Activity: Assessments of how “busy” the library is during/before/after the school day, including class visits and drop-in use.

Table 2: Cost of Change Model - Quality of Interaction vs. Volume



Descriptions:

Square 1: Interactions between students and the teacher-librarian are of low quality, and there is limited library activity. The teacher-librarian is not serving students or teachers well and does not have a clearly articulated program that reaches students. Negative behavior and limits on access to facility make the library an unwelcoming place for school and personal information needs. The culture of the learning environment at the school may limit library use. The library is not making an impact on teaching and learning.

Square 2: Interactions between students and the teacher-librarian are of high quality, but the volume is limited. The teacher-librarian is skilled, but the library is somewhat isolated from the school population, perhaps as a consequence of the shortage of human resources needed to expand the reach of the program. The library is making minimal impact on teaching and learning, or helping only a *select* segment of the school population, rather than a broad segment. Program may suffer from a lack of articulation or recognition in the school. Operations may be closely akin to a public library.

Square 3: Interactions between students and the teacher-librarian are of low quality, but there is abundant activity. Overpopulation, understaffing, and/or a lack of control transforms the library into a venue for socialization rather than a venue for scholastic activity. The library may be used as a “release valve” by teachers, or a place where students can escape or “cut class.” It may be hard to tell what impact, if any, the library is having on teaching and learning. The school library may have significant non-academic value.

Square 4: Interactions between students and the teacher-librarian are of high quality, and the library is regularly in use. Due to traffic volume, librarian may resort to rationing space and materials to accommodate the greatest number of staff and students. The expectation for library use is academic, not personal, and the curriculum of each small learning community will drive the collection development policy. The librarian will have a well articulated program that extends beyond the library facility.

These two models provide a conceptual framework for categorizing indicators of program performance and identifying areas of need for a given program’s future growth.

October 2004 – April 2005 (previously reported)

The primary project activities during the first six months of this grant involved the creation of a project team, the recruitment of subjects and development of instruments and protocols for data collection. The team did begin some data collection activities in April, putting the project ahead of schedule.

Recruitment

In October 2004, principals at three of the high schools who had first committed to being part of the research project at the time of proposal indicated that they would have to withdraw their high school from participation. The most common reason was that the conversion process to small schools had proceeded slower than anticipated, and that these schools would not be beginning their conversion until near the end of the grant

period. The first major activity of the project was to recruit replacement schools for the subjects that were withdrawing.

One research team member, Bryce Nelson, took the lead in making contacts and investigating the potential level of interest among high schools converting to small schools in the Puget Sound region. His extensive experience and familiarity with schools and staff around the area contributed to the success of the recruitment effort.

The recruitment process involved four steps:

- Telephone calls to both the school librarian and principal of a local high school to describe the purpose of the project and determine level of interest and suitability of site.
- Meeting on site with the school librarian and principal to review the details of the project, the nature of activities and staff involvement required, and the benefits the high school would receive as a result of the project.
- The Principal signs a memorandum of understanding outlining the details reviewed during the meeting and also identifying the rights of the participants
- The Principal submits a letter of consent expressly stating the school's interest and willingness to participate in the project.

Recruitment activities took place between October 2004 and January 2005 until six high schools had been recruited to participate in the study. While the proposal indicated five high schools would participate, six high schools were solicited in case of possible attrition occurring during the three year period of the project.

The final pool of high schools reflects a variety of socioeconomic levels. Three urban schools, two suburban schools, and one rural school are represented in the sample. Table 3 presents a summary of descriptive statistics for each school.

Table 3: Descriptive Characteristics of Participating High Schools

School	Type	# of Students	# of Learning Communities	# Years in Conversion ^a	Library Staff (FTE)
A	Urban	1100	2 ^b	3	1
B	Urban	1050	1 ^b	2	1
C	Urban	750	3	2	3
D	Suburban	1,600	5	2	2
E	Suburban	1,900	6	2	2
F	Rural	1,700	7	2	3

^a This column indicates how much time has elapsed since the comprehensive school converted to a small school, multiplex environment.

^b Conversion process is ongoing, with more learning communities or academies to be added.

Instruments and Protocols

Data collection for this project involves extensive review of the literature, gathering documentation created at each of the participating sites, observations at each site, and meeting with subjects from a large number of informant groups. A substantial effort was dedicated to creating interview schedules, survey questionnaires, observation protocols, creating an observation schedule, creating a file for entering data for statistical analysis, and developing a codebook for content analysis of interview and focus group data. Each instrument and protocol is subject to internal review to ensure compliance with regulations governing the protection of study participants. The Human Subjects Division at the University of Washington provided substantial feedback on how to administer a complex project of this nature that includes a large number of different observations (including observations in the workplace) and the participation of adolescents as research subjects. Under their guidance, we received approval to begin data collection in March 2005. Table 4 outlines the type of informant groups, the types of observations planned, frequency, and the projected number of subjects in each observation.

Table 4: Informant Groups and Frequency of Observations

Informant Group	Data Type	Data Format	Method of collection	# Persons per site	Collection Frequency (per year)	What we hope to learn
Principal	Verbal/narrative	Field notes, audio recording	Interview	1-2	2X (Aut, Sp)	Opinions of library program value, use and impact on teaching and learning
Classroom Teacher	Verbal/narrative	Field notes, audio recording	Interview	20	2X (Aut, Sp)	Value and perceptions of library services and resources
	Statistical/Narrative	Survey	Internet (Catalyst tools)	60	1X	Value and perceptions of library services and resources
	Verbal/narrative	Field notes, audio recording	Focus group	60	1X	Perception of library in context of school community
Students	Verbal/narrative	Field notes	Observations in situ	30-60	4X (2 Aut, 2 Sp)	Library use, resource selection, information behavior
	Verbal/narrative	Field notes, audio recording	Focus group	20	1X	Value and perceptions of library services and resources
	Statistical/Narrative	Survey	Internet (Catalyst tools)	200	1X	Value and perceptions of library services and resources

Teacher-Librarian	Verbal/narrative	Field notes	Observations in situ	1	4X (2 Aut, 2 Sp)	Library use in teaching context, student interaction
	Verbal/narrative	Field Notes and Audio Recording	Focus Group	1	12X (4Aut, 4Win, 4Sp)	Incident of library use, salient contact with user groups
	Verbal/narrative	Field notes, audio recording	Interview in situ	1	3X (Aut, Win, Sp)	Perceptions of library services, types of library use, relationships with students and staff, strategic vision of library

Data Collection

On April 22, 2005, the six teacher-librarians from the participating high schools met with the research team to formally launch the data collection phase of the project during a day-long seminar meeting. This first event had multiple purposes:

- To introduce the Teacher-Librarians to the concept of participatory action research and the types of activities that would be taking place over the next three years, and also to introduce the entire research team to the Teacher-Librarians
- To conduct a focus group discussion regarding the role of library services in small high schools and the conversion process, enabling the research team to learn about the varied experiences of each participant and determine potential bias or environmental factors that might influence each informant's perspective.
- To present and discuss the online tools that would be provided to facilitate communication between participants and the research team: a project listserv, a project website specifically dedicated to meeting the needs of the Teacher-Librarians, and an online survey that would be used periodically to gather responses and opinions.
- To demonstrate the use of the Personal Response System (PRS), a remote handheld unit system for conducting surveys that will enable gathering data from students anonymously.

The focus group discussion yielded a rich dataset of responses, opinions, and personal history of each site that forms a platform for the site observations, Teacher-Librarian interviews, and principal interviews scheduled for May and June 2005.

Schedule of Completion

The project is currently on schedule. Items shaded in gray have been completed.

Table 5: Schedule of Completion

October 1, 2004, to September 30, 2007	2004	2005				2006				2007			
	Aut	Win	Spr	Sum	Aut	Win	Spr	Sum	Aut	Win	Spr	Sum	
Year 1													
Recruit subjects													
Develop instruments and protocols													
Human subjects review and approval													
Initial focus group with Teacher-Librarians													
Interim narrative													
Site observations													
Teacher-Librarian and Principal interviews													
Coding focus group and interview data													
Initial model development													
Interim narrative and financial report													
Year 2													
Focus groups & interviews - Teachers													
Student surveys													
Continuing site observations													
Interim narrative													
Second focus group with Teacher-Librarians													
Coding and Data analysis													
Model testing; identify best practices													
Interim narrative and financial report													
Year 3													
Final focus groups & interviews - Teachers													
Final Student surveys													

Final site observations													
Interim narrative													
Third focus group with Teacher-Librarians													
Coding and Data analysis													
Final model & summary of best practices													
Final narrative and financial report													

C. Project Outputs

Near the end of the first year of this 3-year project, the research team has begun to outline the shape and direction of our first significant outputs in terms of publications and products. These include:

- Project website for the public – This site serves as the public face of the project and provides a platform for sharing findings with a general audience of practitioners, researchers, and funding agencies. As the project proceeds, the site will identify project news, and research products.
URL: <http://smallschools.ischool.washington.edu>
- The Conversion Process Model – An online version of the model is viewable on the project website. On this dynamic page, definitions pop-up below as a user moves their mouse over the model. When completed, each cell will be populated with a list of actions tied to recommendations of specific best practices.
URL: <http://smallschools.ischool.washington.edu/documents/activematrix/matrix.html>
- Codebook – When finished, the codebook will constitute a taxonomy complete with scope notes for categorizing interview responses and observation data pertaining to library programs. While specifically tailored to small schools, parts of the codebook will be generally applicable to any analysis of school library programs. The codebook will be field-tested with over 100 transcripts by the end of this project.
- Research Article Manuscript – The first article we anticipate coming out of this project will explore the ability of the school library program to serve as a catalyzing agent in the small schools conversion process. Unfortunately, the role and functions of teacher-librarians in small schools are largely ignored in the education literature. Library and Information Science literature has failed to discuss the challenges of small schools conversion facing teacher-librarians with any evidence-based research or even anecdotal evidence culled from the field. The result is that the teacher-librarian is not perceived or engaged as an integral player in the conversion process. How can teacher-librarians be leaders in the conversion process and

demonstrate a positive impact on teaching and learning by fulfilling their roles as Information Literacy Instructor, Reading Advocate, and Chief Information Officer (CIO)? This is the primary question that will be addressed in the article.

- Conference Proposals - The research team has identified three distinct audiences for disseminating the results of this project: school library practitioners, school library administrators, non-profit organizations supporting the small schools movement, and information science researchers. Potential venues for presenting project findings will include the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES), and invitational symposia sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- Future outputs that we anticipate as result of this project include additional scholarly manuscripts for publication in the professional and scholarly literature, inclusion in conference proceedings, and further web development to widely disseminate research findings and recommend best practices.

D. Outcomes-Based Evaluation

In February 2005, two members of the research team, Matthew Saxton and Eric Meyers, attended the IMLS-sponsored workshop on outcomes-based evaluation. During this workshop, they began to construct a logic model for evaluating the success of the project. As a research project, the primary outcome of this project will be to discover and disseminate new knowledge. However, the research team hopes that this project will also change the knowledge and behavior of project participants. The following two specific outcomes are desirable for the project to succeed.

1. Teacher-librarians adopt best practices – if the project is successful, the Teacher-Librarian participants will begin to implement some number of identified best practices that will position the library and information services program as a critical component of the teaching and learning environment. In addition, best practices may also be adopted at other small high schools since findings will be disseminated online and the six participants may serve as advocates for the project to other colleagues.

2. Teacher-librarians form a community of practice – if the project is successful, the Teacher-Librarian participants will actively communicate with one another and share information about the achievements and obstacles at each others' schools. Sustaining this form of collegial interaction is a useful venue for sharing ideas, professional collaboration, and continuing professional development.

Beyond benefiting project participants directly, a third outcome sought by the research team is to integrate library and information services into the discourse of the small

schools community. Specifically, we hope to target the school administrator and funding agency audiences.

E. Other Results

No other results are reported during this first year of the project.

F. Additional Comments / Anecdotal Information

Throughout this study, some of our informants provided remarks on this study, its purpose and activities, and their experiences with school reform in general. We include a selection of these informal comments here as they further illustrate the value of this study to educational practitioners and the research community, and represent some emerging themes in our project.

- ***Librarians perceive themselves as marginalized within the school transformation process.*** Two of our teacher-librarians mentioned during initial visits to their schools that they felt “forgotten” or ignored by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that were guiding and funding the school reform efforts. They linked this, in part, to their physical or academic isolation within the school. In talking with representatives of one such NGO, we found that librarians were indeed not considered an important role player in the transformation process. This anecdotal evidence further justifies our study’s aim to create a “community of practice” among the participating teacher-librarians to reduce the isolation that they experience in their contexts and to support the development and dissemination of best practices.
- ***Teacher-librarians are highly receptive to interventions which may improve their practice.*** All of our participants were enthusiastic about the participatory research aspect of the project. At our April 22nd meeting, which formally launched the data collection phase of the project, each teacher-librarian was provided with a PRS unit to collect data from students and teachers on behalf of the research team. In addition to these data collection activities, the librarians expressed two other positive outcomes of the PRS that they anticipate: 1) the device will spur them to initiate their own action research to improve services within the library; and 2) loaning the device to teachers and serving as the contact/ trainer for its use in curriculum activities will increase the social capital of the teacher-librarians in the school and permit another level of collaboration with classroom teachers.

We will continue to pay close attention to these emerging themes throughout our data collection activities in addition to the more direct themes pertaining to small schools conversion.

Appendices

The following three interview schedules and one observation schedule are indicative examples from a larger set of instruments being used that illustrate the nature of observations and responses the research team will be gathering.

Instrument A: Interview Schedule for Teacher-Librarian

**Library and Information Services in
High Schools with Small Learning Communities**
Interview Questions: Teacher-Librarian

School ID:

Date:

Time:

Procedure: Arrive at school at least 15 minutes prior to scheduled observation. Business-casual attire. Check-in at main office before going to the library. Greet TL on entry, prepare recorder, other materials as necessary. Obtain consent. When you are leaving, thank TL, check-out in main office.

Script: Hello [teacher-librarian]. I'm [name] from the Small School Libraries study with the University of Washington. Before we start, I want to remind you that if there are any questions you don't want to answer, just say so. You can stop or ask that the interview end at any time. If you think a question is too personal, just say you don't want to answer. I'm not looking for anything but your honest opinion. Let's look at the consent form. If you have any questions about it, I can answer them now. [obtain written consent]

When I write my report based on this interview, your answers will be completely anonymous. I may use some of your words, but your name and the name of the school will be kept confidential.

I would like to audiotape our conversation, so I can be sure that I get your exact words. If you do not want me to audiotape our conversation, then I would like to write notes about what you say.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Questions:

T-L Background

- How did you come to work at [High School]?
Probes: education, certifications, teaching experience, other related work

T-L Job Description, Perception

- Describe what it's like to be the T-L at [High School].
- If I were to shadow you for a day, what would I see?
- If you had to describe the [High School] library to someone who had never seen it before, what would you say?
- What do you like most about being the T-L? What do you like least?
(alt: What's the best part of your day in the library? What's the worst part?)

Social Network, Relationships

- Who do you count on for support in [High School]?
- Who do you support in the school community?
- Is there anyone else who relies on the library or you, the TL, for his/her success?

Building level support (if not indicated above):

- What kinds of support does the principal or asst principal provide for the library?
- How do you let the Administration know what goes on in the library?
 - a. Do you provide administration with an annual report?
 - b. Do you publish a statistical summary?
 - c. Is there oversight or review by the admin?

District level support (if not indicated above):

- What kinds of support does the district provide for the library?
- What documentation exists to guide library services in this district?
- How often do you meet with other T-Ls in the district? What do you talk about?

Library and student achievement:

- How do you feel the library helps students meet their academic goals?

Priorities/Critical assessment:

- If you could change one thing about the library, what would it be?
- What are your short term goals for the library/library services (1-2 yrs)?
- What are your long-term goals for the library/library services (3+ yrs)?
- What would you as a T-L like to get out of this project?
- How do you envision this project helping your library?

Wrap-Up:

- Is there anything else that I didn't ask that you would like to tell me?

Thank you very much for your responses to my questions. This will be very helpful.

Instrument B: Interview Schedule for Principals

Library and Information Services in High Schools with Small Learning Communities

Interview Questions: Administrator

School ID:

Date:

Time:

Procedure: Arrive at school at least 15 minutes prior to scheduled observation. Business-casual attire. Check-in at main office. Greet Administrator on entry, prepare materials as necessary. Obtain consent. When you are leaving, thank Administrator, check-out in main office.

Script: Hello [administrator]. I'm [name] from the Small School Libraries study with the University of Washington. Before we start, I want to remind you that if there are any questions you don't want to answer, just say so. You can stop or ask that the interview end at any time. If you think a question is too personal, just say you don't want to answer. I'm not looking for anything but your honest opinion. Let's look at the consent form. If you have any questions about it, I can answer them now. [obtain written consent]

When I write my report based on this interview, your answers will be completely anonymous. I may use some of your words, but your name and the name of the school will be kept confidential.

I would like to audiotape our conversation, so I can be sure that I get your exact words. If you do not want me to audiotape our conversation, then I would like to write notes about what you say.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Questions:

1. Please share with us the history of how your school came to be a group of small schools. Can you provide us with any documents on this history?
2. Do teachers teach, and do students learn, in ways different from before implementing the small schools? Do you have evidence you can share with us?
3. What is the impact of small schools on the curriculum, and on the need for resources to support the curriculum? Does the library provide resources (e.g., books and online databases) for some of the curriculum?

4. What is the role of the library and librarian in your school? Are those roles changing with small schools?
5. In what ways are students taught information skills? Does the librarian do this?
6. How are decisions made about funding, staffing and using the library and librarian?
7. Do the various small schools have different needs for library time and resources? Do any conflicts arise between the schools?
8. What might the future look like for your high school library program in the context of small high schools?

Instrument C: Interview Schedule for Teachers

**Library and Information Services in
High Schools with Small Learning Communities**
Interview Questions: Teachers

School ID:

TL ID:

Date:

Time:

Procedure: Arrive at school at least 15 minutes prior to scheduled observation. Business-casual attire. Check-in at main office before going to the classroom. Greet teacher on entry, prepare recorder, other materials as necessary. Obtain consent. When you are leaving, thank teacher, check-out in main office.

Script: Hello [teacher]. I'm [name] from the Small School Libraries study with the University of Washington. Before we start, I want to remind you that if there are any questions you don't want to answer, just say so. You can stop or ask that the interview end at any time. If you think a question is too personal, just say you don't want to answer. I'm not looking for anything but your honest opinion. Let's look at the consent form. If you have any questions about it, I can answer them now. [obtain written consent]

When I write my report based on this interview, your answers will be completely anonymous. I may use some of your words, but your name and the name of the school will be kept confidential.

I would like to audiotape our conversation, so I can be sure that I get your exact words. If you do not want me to audiotape our conversation, then I would like to write notes about what you say.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Questions:

1. Please share with us the history of how your school came to be a group of small schools. Can you provide us with any documents on this history?
2. Do you teach, and do your students learn, in ways different from before implementing the small schools? Do you have evidence which you can share with us?
3. What is the impact of small schools on the curriculum, and on the need for resources to support the curriculum? Does the library provide resources (e.g., books and online databases) for your curriculum?
4. What is the role of the library and librarian in your school? Are those roles changing with small schools?
5. In what ways are students taught information skills? Does the librarian do this?
6. How are decisions made about funding, staffing and using the library and librarian?
7. Do the various small schools have different needs for library time and resources?
8. Do you create some of your class assignments with the intent that students will use the school library?
9. How often do you bring your classes to the library?
10. Does your school library have the right materials and enough of the right material for some of your assignments?
11. Do you work with the librarian on collection development for some of your assignments?
12. Should the library collection be different now that there are small schools?
13. What are the strengths of your library?
14. In a small schools environment, has the demand changed for using library space? Has the demand changed for using library resources?
15. What might the future look like for your high school library program in the context of small high schools?

Instrument D: Protocol for Site Observation

Library and Information Services in High Schools with Small Learning Communities Observation Guide - Library

School ID:

Date:

Time:

How to use this guide: The following points are to be used as a framework for field notes when observing small school libraries. Observation 1 will be at least 2 hours in length and may cover all aspects of this guide. Subsequent observations may focus on only one aspect (TL, or student behavior).

Identification: Teacher-librarian=TL, Library technician=TC, Classroom teacher=T, Other adult=A, Student=S or S1, S2, etc.

Procedure: Arrive at school at least 15 minutes prior to scheduled observation. Business-casual attire. Check-in at main office before going to the library. Greet TL on entry, take up position in an unobtrusive place. Indicate when you are leaving, thank TL, check-out in main office.

Library observations:

Entry, signage, door position (open/closed)

Decorative signs

Student work displays

Book displays (include subjects or titles)

Documents to obtain: library floor plan/map (hand draw if not available) – Obs 1 only.

TL observations:

Helping behaviors (e.g. assisting w/ assignment)

Directing behaviors (e.g. showing where a book is shelved)

Managing behaviors (e.g. asking for student passes)

Instructional behaviors (e.g. teaching use of catalog)

Position of TL in library (e.g. in stacks, behind desk)

Other activities (provide descriptions)

Student observations:

drop-in students

classes or groups (purpose, if can be ascertained)

Student behaviors with resources (e.g. book or internet use)

Student interpersonal (e.g. collaborative work, assisting, socializing)

Interaction with TL (describe)

Teacher/Adult observations:

With class or individual, purpose (if can be ascertained)

Interaction with TL (describe)