



Winona Area Public Schools Media Center Collection Assessments January 2006

Because Student Achievement is the Bottom Line

Introduction

A high school student searching for a book in the high school media center finds *How to Play Girls Basketball*, c1951; another looking in the space sciences collection discovers *Conquest of the Moon*, c1953. Students looking for biographies find no books that are appealing. A third grade student researching the bald eagle finds only one book that is current; the other available book has black and white photos, is damaged, and describes the eagle as endangered.

5th grade teachers see an increasing need for easy to read books that meet the interest and ability needs of their students but do not appear childish. Another middle school teacher indicated a need for completely updating the European geography materials.

Parents attending a workshop at Winona Senior High in February were concerned by the condition, and currency of the collection. "My favorite," one parent said, "was the book with a spider squished between the pages. It was probably fossilized." Another said, "These are the books I read in junior high! Where are the newspapers?" The parents all wanted their sons and daughters to have access to a quality collection.

These scenarios are not unique; they illustrate what happens daily in Winona Area Public School Media Centers where book collections are out of date, inadequate, of poor quality, and do not meet the recreational and curricular needs of Winona's students.

School media centers are one of the largest single investments a school district makes in the education of its children. Collections serve all learners, all staff, and potentially all curriculum areas. Winona's media centers have been neglected at a time when there is an expectation for improved reading and literacy skills. The district also needs to meet the state standards which require students to access and use information in multiple formats including print.

Media program impact studies in numerous states including Minnesota document a high correlation between access to quality media center collections and student achievement.

- *In Minnesota student reading achievement in Minnesota elementary and secondary schools is related to increases in school library media spending.*
- *The larger the budget for books and electronic resources of a Minnesota elementary school media center, the higher a student's reading achievement. There is a statistically significant relationship between higher reading scores and larger school media center budgets at the elementary level. (Check it Out! The Results of the School Library Media Program Census, Metronet, January 2003 and October 2004.)*

Additional studies explain the value of a quality collection

- The extent to which books are borrowed from school libraries shows a strong relationship with reading achievement. (*Impact of School Libraries on Student Achievement.*” *Research Developments*: Newsletter of the Australian Council for Educational Research.No.10 (2003): 4. *School Libraries Work*, Scholastic Research Foundation Study, p.10)
- In Ohio 100 percent of the students who took part in a recent research study indicated that the school library, its services and school librarians have helped them with their learning. More than 13,000 students from Grades 3-12 throughout the state participated in the study, *Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries*, which sought to understand how students benefit from school libraries and to quantify the school library’s relationship to student learning. (*Student Learning for Ohio School Libraries: The Ohio Research Study* <http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning/default.asp>)
- *The Power of Reading* documents the correlation between reading and better reading comprehension scores, improved writing style, and improved grammar. “The more students read, the better they achieve.” Collection size is one of the most important predictors of academic achievement, especially in reading.” (Krashen, 1993, 2004)
- McQuillan concludes “quality and amount of reading materials count; students who have access to quality libraries read more.” (*The Literacy Crisis, False Claims: Real Solutions*, 1998)
- “Increasing expenditures for school media materials has a correlation with achievement regardless of economic status or education levels in the community.” (Colorado Impact Studies, 1993, 2000)

Planning for Improvement: 2001 - 2006

Data Collection 2001

WAPS media staff began conducting collection assessments in 2001. The first district wide assessment in 2001 showed these average dates for district collections:

Elementary: **1978**

Middle School: **1980**

Senior High: **1970**

Changes in Education and Publishing

- No Child Left Behind and Minnesota academic standards are creating greater expectations and demands for improvement in reading scores and reading non-fiction. For example, 4th grade students will read biographies of scientists.
- There is a greater need for easier or below level reading materials for students of all ages.
- There are more ELL students who need age and ability appropriate materials.
- Our world has changed.
- Publishers are publishing books that are more inviting and appealing; they are correlating books to standards.
- There is an upswing in reading; studies point to an increased interest in reading books and magazines, especially among young adults.

- Findings from a survey administered in late 2005 to over 600 students across participating high schools suggest that students. . . are reading more for fun as well as for class. They also suggest that students are talking more about books and reading with family and friends. . . These behaviors are strongly associated with higher reading and academic achievement. (*Adolescents Read*, New York Life Foundation, January 2006)
- Students at Winona Middle School rushed into media center to check out books at the end of the fall 2004 New Book Preview Week. They were clearly excited about the new, attractive books that had been on display. A family reading night is planned for this spring.

Changes in Winona

- The late Mr. Ben Miller donated \$11,900 to the elementary media centers. His generosity provided 912 new books for elementary readers.
- PTA organizations continue to contribute funds to elementary media centers. In some situations PTA contributions are the only money the school has to purchase new books.
- Schools such as WK sponsor a “donate a book to the media center” to honor a child’s birthday.
- The district adopted the Houghton Mifflin reading curriculum with a substantial list of recommended reading correlated with each unit in grades K-5.
- There is increased staff, parent and community concern about the quality of the high school media center collection.
- A Winona Middle School student wrote a letter to the Editor of the *Winona Daily News* stating that a need for newer media center books was a reason to support the referendum.
- District funded Media Center budgets have declined.
- Average book prices continue to increase: Results of the newest annual survey are:

	2003	2004	2005
Hardcover (children's and YA titles)			
Average price (all titles)	\$19.18	\$19.31	\$20.52
Preschool to grade four	\$17.45	\$17.51	\$18.92
Grade five and up (fiction)	\$16.77	\$16.84	\$16.85
Grade five and up (nonfiction)	\$22.99	\$23.25	\$24.92
Paperback (children's and YA titles)			
Trade paperbacks (excluding mass market)	\$20.26*	\$18.88*	—

(*School Library Journal*, March 1, 2005)

Data Collection 2006

In February 2006 WAPS Media staff worked with a representative from the Follet Library Book company to conduct a same-day copyright analysis of the collections in the seven automated WAPS media centers. This process provides a global view of our collections. Data provides:

- Average copyright dates for each section of the collection
- A list of age sensitive titles
- A comparison of the collection with Standard Core Collection recommendations
- A process for determining costs to update the collection with recommended materials from core collections and new publications

District Copyright Date Averages		
	2001	2006
Elementary	1978	1982
Middle	1980	1985
Senior High	1970	1971

WAPS Elementary averages: Goodview, 1980; Jefferson, 1988; Madison, 1981; Rollingstone, 1982; WK, 1983. Central Elementary School is not included because the collection is not automated. WALC is not included because WALC does not have a Media Center. State averages: Elementary 1988

Additional Collection Assessment Information		
Elementary	Middle	High School
The average copyright date of materials in Winona's elementary collections is 1982, or 12 years older than the recommended average age of 10 years. The <u>quantity</u> of the books in the Winona Elementary Media Centers is greater than the recommended numbers, but the <u>quality</u> and <u>currency</u> is less. More than 90% of the collection is aged.	The Media Center was aggressively weeded prior to the move to the new building and budgets have been acceptable. Yet, the average copyright date of 1985 is still 10 years greater than the recommended average age of 10 years. For example, two of the heaviest areas of the curriculum, geography and astronomy, are 93.57% and 90% aged.	Data reflects the availability of Federal funds in the 1970's and the subsequent decline in funding. 50% of the collection has a copyright date in the 1960's and 1970's. 82.83% of the social problems and services materials are aged. Less than 3% of the collection is newer than 2000. 97.26% of the geography materials are aged.

Collection analysis details, age sensitivity

District Overview: Aged Titles		
Area	Acceptable age in years	Percent Aged
Political Science	10	90.03
Computers, Data	3	92.50
Communications, Transportation	5	95.61
Astronomy and Allied Sciences	5	87.80
Geography, Maps, Atlases	5	94.84
Life Sciences, Biology	5	92.96

The gap in years between the average date of the collection and the calendar year remains greater than the recommended state standard.

Minnesota State Standards: Collection Recommendations		
Minimum	Standard	Exemplary
There is a current * collection of at least 10-15 print items per student, a selection of periodicals. . .	There is a current * collection of at least 15-20 print items per student, a selection of periodicals. . . Resources are specifically chosen to support curricular needs.	There is a current * collection of over 20 print items per student, a selection of periodicals. . .
* Current is defined as the collection having an average age of not greater than 10 years, acknowledging that some areas will need more current materials and some areas will have older materials. (<i>Minnesota Standards for Effective School Library Media Programs</i> . Minnesota Educational Media Organization and Minnesota State Library Agency, 2000)		

How did we get this way? Budgets and Budget History

Budgets have not kept up with needs. Book prices have increased and available funds have been reallocated towards other needs including technology. There have been no capital funds so budgets traditionally used for books have been used for hardware. In one elementary school dollars budgeted for media center resources were used for laser printer cartridges. High School money intended for books and magazines was used to purchase toner cartridges, projection lamps and other instructional materials. Only one daily newspaper is available in the High School Media Center; magazine subscriptions are all donated. Elementary media centers receive very few, if any, magazines and no daily newspapers.

General Fund Book Budgets: District Totals	
1973-1974	\$17,523.36
2000-2001	\$17,664.00
2002-2003	\$22,793.00
2003-2004	\$27,995.69
2004-2005	\$25,148.00

- Current money per pupil: \$6.55 (State Average, \$7.92)
- Books local dollars will purchase per pupil: .3
- Elementary and High School budgets are below state averages. No local money is used for books at the High School. The Middle School budget is slightly higher. (*Check it Out! The Results of the 2004 School Library Media Program Census*, METRONET, October 2004)

Conclusion and Recommendations

Winona's students cannot consistently find quality, current books to meet curricular and recreational needs. The lack of current, quality information in copyright relevant areas is especially a problem. Copyright sensitive areas include government, economics, social services, commerce, communications, transportation, astronomy, earth science, life science, medical sciences, medicine, physical geography and cultural studies.

Another result of having old books is that the collections lack diversity. Our world has changed since 2001. If our students are to be citizens of a larger world they need access to materials that reflect the realities of today. Additionally, new cultures and ethnic groups make up our student population.

Collection development is an ongoing process that includes continuously selecting new materials to meet recreational and curricular needs. 10% of the collection should be replaced each year. We need a major increase in funding to begin developing quality collections that meet the changing curricular needs of students, are inviting appealing, and carefully selected.

While all the media centers collections need to be updated, the Senior High especially needs attention. After a necessary and thorough weeding the collection is decimated. When students begin using the new media center fall of 2006 a current, quality collection must be available to support and enhance curriculum, activities, and program development. New, appealing resources will help make the media center a place where kids want to be.

The budget proposal developed was based on purchasing two new books per student. The budget proposal was then further developed to include money for repair and supplies. The final budget proposal is attached.

***Winona Area Public School students deserve
quality Media Center collections!***

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