

"But what happens when this invention [the book] sits unused behind locked doors, or remains elusive because library shelves are empty?"

What happens when a book sits idle, unread? What happens when we fail to read? Well, we know the answer: the mind remains enslaved to ignorance. The great thoughts of the past are undiscovered. Our horizons remain fixed, limited, surrounded by unknown territory. Our imagination is unengaged. Life itself remains narrow and possibilities remain diminished. And we don't have as much fun, because reading is so pleasurable."

Secretary Rod Paige, U.S. Department of Education
"Kids Read: Kids Succeed" Grant Award, August 11, 2004



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Available in PDF at
<http://metronet.lib.mn.us/survey/survey2004/report.cfm>

Check It Out!

The Results of the 2004 School Library Media Program Census



2004
Executive
Summary

October 2004

Minnesota School Library Media Programs

METRONET • 1619 Dayton Ave. • St. Paul MN 55104 • 651-646-0475

Check It Out!

Every Child Succeeds @your library®

Good school library media programs that have professionally-licensed staff, up-to-date resources, and adequate funding help students succeed in school by:

✓ Teaching Information Literacy Skills

Students learn how to:

- Find information
- Evaluate information
- Apply information
- Communicate information in ways that lead to understanding and knowledge

✓ Providing Professional Expertise to Students and Teachers

School Library Media Specialists:

- Select and organize a collection of resources that supports the school curriculum, enriches student learning, and encourages students' independent reading
- Collaborate with teachers to integrate technology and resources into classroom teaching
- Understand current literacy research and can apply this in classrooms and media centers

✓ Encouraging a Passion for Reading

School Library Media Specialists promote:

- Reading programs for all age levels of students
- School literacy programs
- Love of reading



"What a school thinks about its library is a measure of what it thinks about education."

Harold Howe, former U.S. Commissioner of Education

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Check It Out! Recommendations



- ✓ Increase state and local spending on resources to update all school library media program (SLMP) collections. Collections should meet the standard of current; that is, an average copyright of 10 years old or newer.
- ✓ All schools must provide a high quality, professionally-staffed library media program to insure Minnesota students have access to the information they need and the training to use it. The Minnesota Department of Education must ensure that all schools have a good SLMP.
- ✓ The Minnesota Department of Education must demonstrate its commitment to school library programs and recognize their impact on student literacy and achievement. MDE can demonstrate support by hiring school library development specialists to provide

technical assistance and support to media specialists and administrators as they develop effective library media programs.

- ✓ The Minnesota State Legislature and the Minnesota Department of Education must continue to fund the Electronic Library for Minnesota so all Minnesotans have access to thorough, accurate information for their academic, business, and personal use.
- ✓ The State of Minnesota should adopt quantitative and qualitative standards for school library media programs to insure that all students have high quality school library media programs.
- ✓ Library media specialists and their supporters must develop education programs for various audiences to help increase understanding of what school library media programs do for students.
- ✓ The Minnesota Department of Education should continue data collection and analysis on school library media programs to provide on-going measurement of media programs and SLMP impact on student achievement.

Check It Out! Key Findings

- ✓ Staffing and spending in school library media centers make a difference in student reading scores.

- Schools with above average student reading scores had library media specialists (LMS) who work more hours.
- Students scored higher on reading tests in schools with higher expenditures on media programs.

- ✓ Minnesota School Library Media Programs have collections that are not current and are seriously out-of-date in several subject areas.

- Average copyright date for science books and geography books is 1989.
- The range of average copyright dates for geography books in elementary schools is 42 years: the oldest is 1960; the newest is 2002.

- ✓ 93% of Minnesota Five Star Schools in Reading and Math have a media specialist at least some hours per week.

- 70% have fulltime media specialists; 15% have at least a .5 FTE media specialist. The remaining schools have at least some LMS hours each week.
- Only four of the Five Star schools have no recorded hours for a media specialist.

- ✓ Both professional and support staffing levels are lower in schools where 50% or more students receive free or reduced-price lunch than in schools where 15% or less of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch.

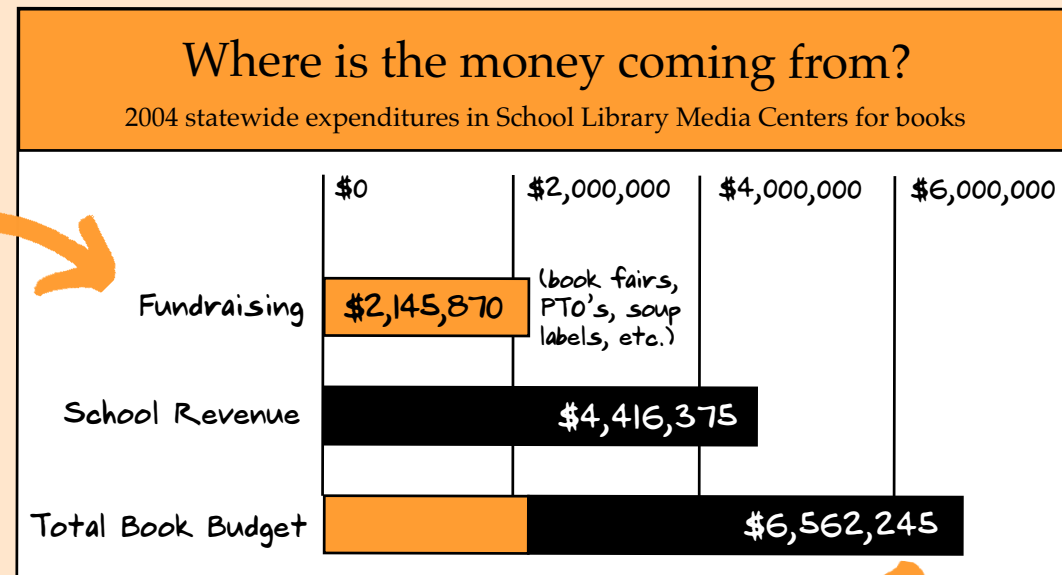
- Of schools with 15% or less students receiving free or reduced price lunch, 79% have at least 1 FTE licensed media specialist and 54% have at least one FTE support staff.
- In schools with a 50% or greater percent of students receiving free or reduced-priced lunch, only 56% had 1 FTE licensed media specialist; 30% of these schools had at least 1 FTE support staff person. 16% of these schools had no licensed media specialist.

- ✓ Minnesota School Library Media Program spending for books has decreased significantly since 2002.

- Schools lost an average 29% of the per pupil amount spent on books since the 2002 Census.
- High schools lost 37%, dropping from an average of \$11.29 in 2002 to an average of \$7.12 per pupil in 2004.
- In all school library media programs that reported budget figures, per pupil spending is much less than the cost of one book.

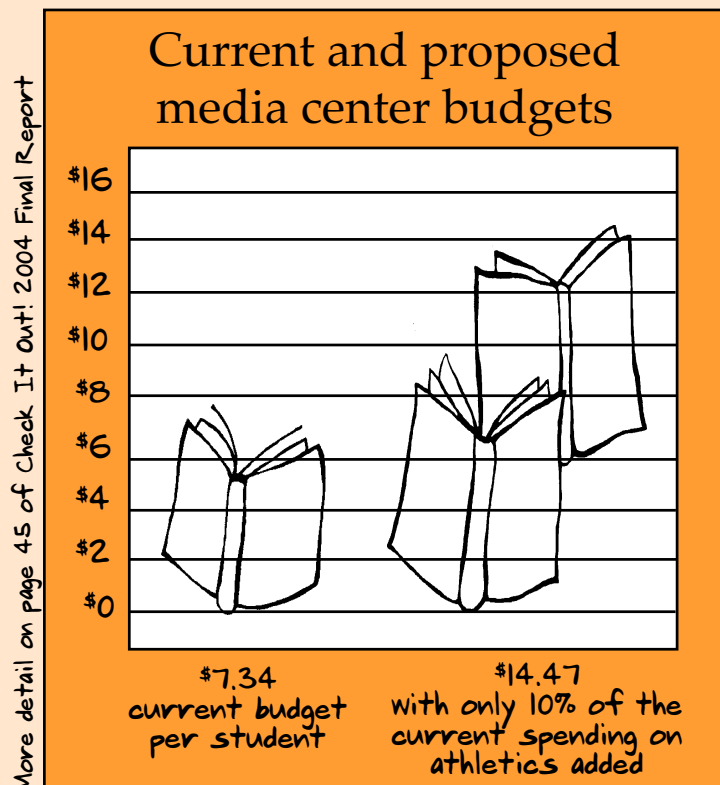
How Do Minnesota Media Centers Stack Up?

One third of book budgets come from fundraising! (And, in some schools it's 100%)



Or about \$7.34 per pupil.

More on 47 of Check It Out! 2004 Final Report



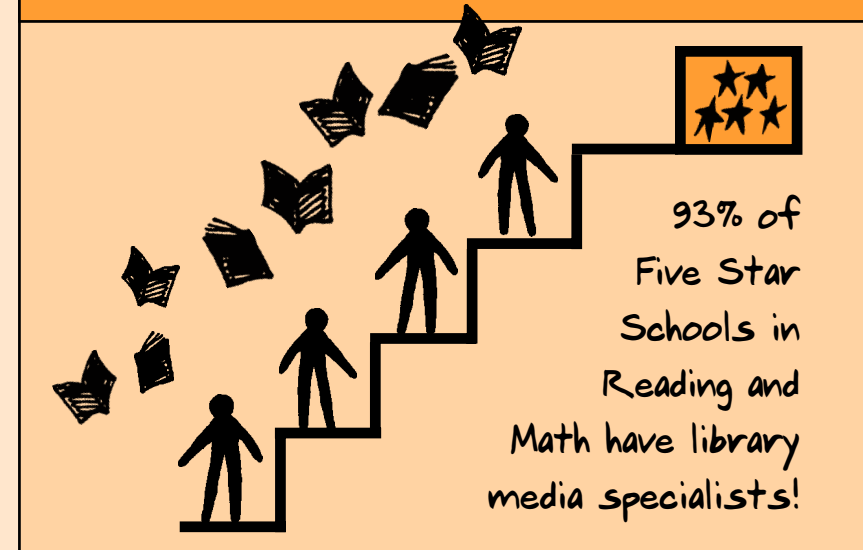
Just think!

If our media centers recieved only 10% of what Minnesota public schools spend on athletics, they would have...
\$14.47 per student
Almost double what is spent now—Wouldn't that be great!

FYI—
Current statewide expenditures on public school athletics*—
\$121,000,000.

*Star Tribune 11/23/03

Schools with higher reading scores have Library Media Specialists that work more hours.



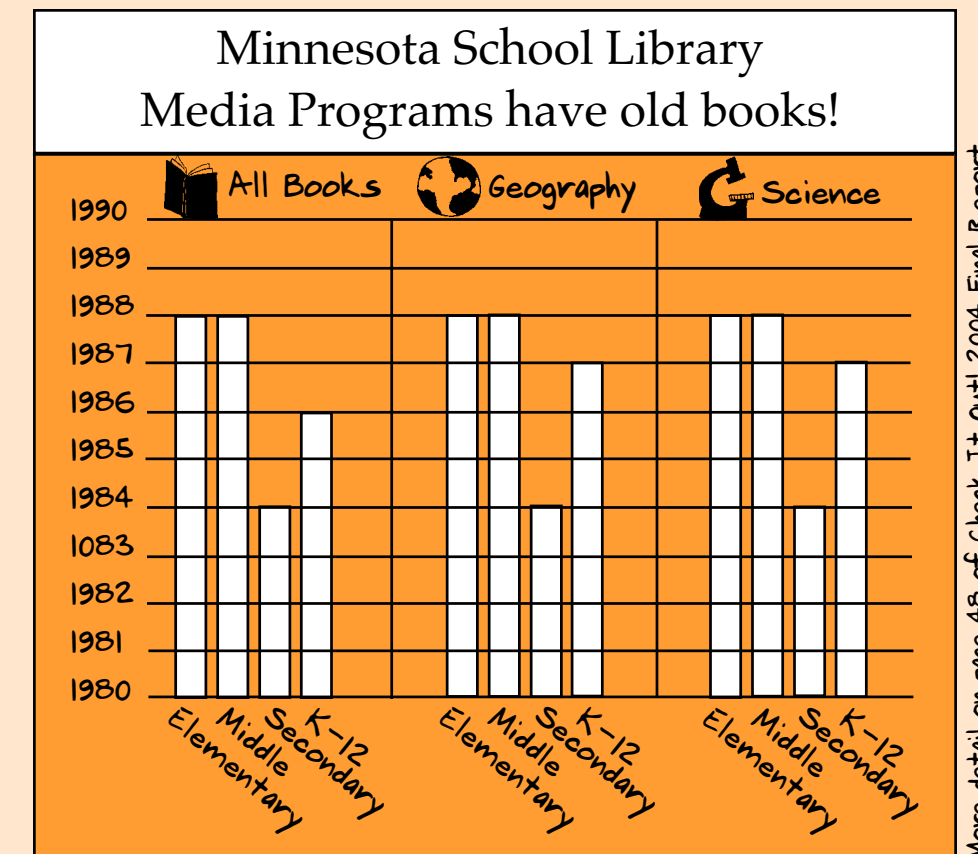
More detail on page 36 of Check It Out! 2004 Final Report

63% of schools with higher reading scores have fulltime library media specialists!

It takes money to keep up-to-date.
Average cost of one book:

- ✓ K-5 = \$19.31
- ✓ 6-12 = \$24.81
- ✓ Reference Books = \$75.00!

At \$7.34 per pupil, that's 10 kids per book!



More detail on page 48 of Check It Out! 2004 Final Report