Wyoming School Library Survey 2023-24
Summary: K-12 public school libraries
July 2024

Periodically, the Wyoming State Library conducts a voluntary survey of school libraries to collect basic information on staffing, budgets, student use of the library and other measures.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the consistency of the surveys. However, the 2023-24 survey saw a 55% response rate, higher than in previous years. This could be due to any number of factors, including staffing changes as a result of the pandemic

In staffing, the report includes those FTEs designated as Computer/Network -- Library-Media Technician (CNT) by the Wyoming Department of Education, as those FTEs are reported as library FTEs in the Common Core of Data. Staffing data is obtained from the WDE rather than reported by schools for the sake of consistency.

Collecting instructional time continues to be a challenge, as the data provided is often inconsistent with the amount of library media specialist staffing reported by the Wyoming Department of Education.

A large body of research has shown that a strong school library program – with sufficient staffing, collections, and budget – is associated with higher student test scores. Much of that research, conducted in more than 20 states, has been

compiled by Library Research Service on their website at https://www.lrs.org/data-tools/school-libraries/impact-studies/.

Research shows that higher test scores correlate with:
1. The size of the school library staff
2. Full-time/certified school librarians
3. The frequency of library-centered instruction and collaborative instruction between school librarians and teachers
4. Size or currency of library collections
5. Licensed databases through a school library network
6. Flexible scheduling
7. School library spending (Lance, et al., 2001; Baxter & Smalley, 2003).

This report gives summary data by grade level. Individual school details and prior years' surveys are located on the Wyoming State Library's statistics page at https://library.wyo.gov/services/wyoming-libraries/library-statistics/.

Questions about this survey may be directed to:

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Response rate and reported LIM/LMA staffing

WDE K-12 schools by State School ID	
Total WDE schools in state by NCES number	342
Schools reporting data	148
Response rate	**43.3%**

WDE K-12 schools with LIM and/or LMA staffing, by State School ID	
Total WDE schools in state by NCES number	342
Schools with LIM/LMA staffing	314
Percentage with LIM/LMA staffing	**91.8%**

WDE K-12 schools with LIM staffing, by State School ID	
Total WDE schools in state by NCES number	342
Schools with LIM staffing	121
Percentage with LIM staffing	**35.4%**

LIM: Library Media Specialist
LMA: Library Media Aide

The Wyoming Department of Education assigns each school a separate State School ID. In 2023-24, the WDE listed 342 public K-12 schools. In some cases, a single school building houses multiple schools. For example, a K-12 school may have three separate School ID numbers for the elementary, middle and high schools, yet still be one unified school. This complicates calculating a response rate, as it is not known how many non-responding schools are co-located.

Going by State School ID, 148 schools with libraries responded to this year's survey, for a response rate of 43.3%.

Out of 342 schools, 314 (91.8%) have designated LIM or LMA FTEs. Only about a third (35.4%, 121 out of 342) of the WDE schools are assigned Library Media Specialists FTEs. This is by WDE ID number, and not by building, so students in co-located schools or in

districts with LIM staffing assigned at the district level may still have access to a Library Media Specialist. However, it should also be noted that in many schools, the LIM hours assigned are spread out over multiple schools and the hours assigned may be minimal.

One of the challenges of this survey is that the respondents can vary from year to year. Although there is some discussion of trends in this report, please note that changes may simply be due to using a different survey sample.

Participating school libraries

Type of school	Total	Enrollment	
		Average	Median
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	13,674	651.1	528.0
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	1,006	251.5	246.0
K-12 [4 resp.]	773	193.3	144.5
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	11,725	533.0	612.5
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	2,172	310.3	256.0
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	23,696	263.3	290.5
Total [148 resp.]	**53,046**	**367.1**	**273.3**

The 148 schools that responded serve 53,046 students – 59% of the state's entire Oct. 1, 2023 K-12 enrollment of 90,297.

Staffing

Type of school	Main contact holds library/media endorsement		Total Library Staff			Library Media Specialists			
	Number	Percent	Total FTE	Students per FTE	AVG FTE per school	Total FTE	Students per FTE	AVG FTE per school	% LIM of total FTEs
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	14	70.0%	22.24	614.84	1.06	11.42	1197.37	0.54	51.35%
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	1	25.0%	3.31	303.93	0.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%
K-12 [4 resp.]	1	25.0%	4.38	176.48	1.10	1.00	773.00	0.25	22.83%
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	13	61.9%	25.01	468.81	1.14	11.70	1002.14	0.53	46.78%
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	4	57.1%	5.32	408.27	0.76	3.50	927.50	0.50	65.79%
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	53	60.9%	78.86	300.48	1.88	17.15	1,381.69	0.19	21.75%
Total [148 resp.]	**86**	**60.1%**	**139.12**	**381.30**	**0.94**	**44.77**	**358.42**	**0.30**	**32.18%**

FTE data obtained from the Wyoming Dept. of Education. LIM = Library Media Specialist, LMA = Library Media Aide

Among respondents, 86 (60.1%) report that the main contact holds a library media endorsement. Looking at all WDE schools, not just survey respondents, 193 have library aide FTEs (56.4%), but no library media specialist FTEs, although some of those schools have access to LIM staffing at the district level. As noted above, in some schools where there is LIM staffing assigned, it is minimal. Among the 148 respondents, 62 have no LIM staffing assigned

WDE data are used here because they are the most comprehensive and consistent data. Individual schools have staffing arrangements for their libraries that are not accurately reflected in these numbers.

Collection expenditures

Type of school	Total collection expenditures	Average collection expenditures			Expenditures per student		Dependence on grants for collections		
		Print	All other	TOTAL*	Print	Total Collection*	None	Supplements budget	Heavily dependent
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	$104,690	$5,319	$868	$6,543	$10.45	$12.85	95.2%	4.8%	0.0%
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	$4,750	$1,583	$0	$1,583	$5.82	$5.82	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%
K-12 [4 resp.]	$18,200	$4,250	$300	$4,550	$21.99	$23.54	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	$125,905	$5,564	$1,063	$6,627	$10.32	$12.29	59.1%	36.4%	4.5%
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	$28,760	$4,000	$109	$4,109	$12.89	$13.24	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	$258,529	$2,829	$274	$3,115	$10.71	$12.10	34.9%	33.7%	31.3%
Total [148 resp.]	**$540,834**	**$3,613**	**$449**	**$4,097**	**$10.79**	**$12.26**	**48.6%**	**31.4%**	**20.0%**

Out of 148 respondents, 132 provided total collection expenditure data, and 130 provided data specifically on print purchases. On average, schools spent $10.79 per student on print materials, down from $12.18 in 2021-22. Total collection spending was $12.26 per student, also down from $14.32 in 2021-22. This could be attributed to more spending on electronic resources, which is more common since pandemic times.

It is not certain whether budgetary pressures are affecting collection quality and currency or whether other factors are involved. Since the schools responding are not consistent year to year in this survey, it may simply be a different sample. If schools are moving to more electronic resources, it is possible that those are purchased at the district level and do not show up in school-level collection budgets.

Almost half of libraries reported that their collections are completely funded by their school or district and that they do not rely on outside fundraising. Of the respondents, 31.4% report that they supplement their budgets, while 20.0% reported that they are heavily dependent on grants or other fundraising to maintain their collections, most at the elementary level.

Physical collections

Type of school	Total print items held	Average collection size				Average age Dewey 6xx	
		Print materials	Median print per student	Audio-video	Periodical subs	Median copyright	Median age
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	160,835	9,461	15.7	391.6	7.1	2008	16
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	20,188	6,729	25.3	10.0	2.8	1991	33
K-12 [4 resp.]	68,119	22,706	114.5	910.0	14.3	1998	26
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	242,179	12,109	19.2	614.6	3.6	2006	18
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	88,245	14,708	36.9	136.7	8.3	2011	14
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	1,086,370	13,928	38.6	74.2	1.1	2006	18
Total [148 resp.]	**1,665,936**	**13,015**	**34.3**	**218.2**	**3.0**	**2007**	**18**

Reporting schools held over 1.5 million print items during the 2023-24 school year. The median for all reporting schools was 34.3 items per student.

Libraries were asked for the average copyright date for items in the Dewey 600s (Technology & Applied Science) range. This range was chosen because the science and technology fields change rapidly. The median date was 2007, or 18 years old at the time of the survey. A 2007 science book would miss many recent developments.

Currency of materials is one factor that has been associated with higher test scores, but it is also difficult to assess in an increasingly electronic environment. Anecdotal information indicates that nonfiction research is moving from print to electronic sources, particularly in the upper grades. In addition, it doesn't account for items with older copyright dates that are still valuable and should be retained. Nonetheless, older materials can contain outdated data and misinformation.

Library computers

Type of school	Student computers in library			Schools where each student issued laptop or tablet
	Number	Average computers per library	Average students per computer	
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	191	10.6	78.1	100.0%
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	22	5.5	65.5	100.0%
K-12 [4 resp.]	26	6.5	58.3	75.0%
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	109	5.7	116.9	90.9%
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	53	7.6	41.0	100.0%
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	226	2.7	30.2	98.9%
Total [148 resp.]	**627**	**4.6**	**65.0**	**97.2%**

Survey respondents reported a total of 627 student computer workstations in their libraries, a number that has been dwindling through the years. This is an average of 4.6 computers per library and a median of 65.0 students per computer. Likely, part of the decrease in library computers is due to the pandemic, when schools issued personal devices so students could work from home. In the 2023-24 school year, 97.2% of schools reported issuing each student a laptop or tablet, an increase from 94.3% in 2021-22.

Technology and electronic resources

Type of school	Percent of schools where						
	Library lends laptops	School has website	Library has web page	Library has links to WYLDCAT	Library has links to GoWYLD	Databases purchased locally	Remote access local databases
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	42.1%	94.4%	72.2%	50.0%	77.8%	18.8%	25.0%
Junior/senior high (6-12) [6 resp.]	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
K-12 [4 resp.]	33.3%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Junior high/middle (5-9) [14 resp.]	63.2%	95.2%	75.0%	55.6%	78.9%	42.1%	46.7%
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	16.7%	100.0%	57.1%	28.6%	28.6%	16.7%	0.0%
Elementary (K-6) [62 resp.]	26.7%	100.0%	37.6%	32.9%	48.0%	35.2%	45.5%
Total [114 resp.]	**34.3%**	**98.6%**	**50.4%**	**48.0%**	**54.3%**	**32.2%**	**40.6%**
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	**47**	**138**	**69**	**61**	**69**	**38**	**41**

Almost every school that responded has a website: 98.6% of libraries reported their school has one, but only half (50.4%) report having a library-specific web page. More libraries link to the GoWYLD resources (54.3%) than to WYLDCAT (48.0%).

Every student in Wyoming has access both at school and remotely to the GoWYLD databases. A little over half of respondents said electronic resources are also purchased locally through the school or district budget: 63.4% of those schools with locally-purchased databases have remote access to those resources for students.

Only 34% of libraries reported loaning laptops, which is consistent with past years.

Scheduling and instruction

Type of school	How are classes in the school library scheduled?			Average typical weekly instructional hours
	All flexibly scheduled	Mixed flex/fixed	All at fixed times	
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	81.0%	19.0%	0.0%	5.79
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.00
K-12 [4 resp.]	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	15.75
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	66.7%	27.8%	5.6%	8.97
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	0.0%	28.6%	71.4%	11.75
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	4.7%	1.2%	94.2%	7.65
Total [148 resp.]	**26.4%**	**11.4%**	**62.1%**	**7.88**
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	37	16	87	

One of the items noted as having a positive correlation on test scores is flexible scheduling. None of the responding senior high schools or junior/senior high school had all their classes scheduled at fixed times. Fixed scheduling is more often used at the lower grades with 94.2% of K-6 schools having all their classes at fixed times.

Student learning is greatly enhanced by instruction from a qualified teacher-librarian. "Average weekly instructional hours" is a data element that attempts to discern how much library staff time is spent in formal instruction. This is a difficult data element to collect, as it is often misinterpreted. However, it is an important enough measure that it has been retained for the survey. This data does not necessarily include collaborative instruction time where teacher-librarians go into classrooms.

Professional environment

Type of school	Training outside the district is supported	On what committees do library staff participate?				Library advisory committees		
		Curriculum	Technology	School improvement	Parent/teacher organization	Faculty/ admin	Student	Student on faculty committee
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	83.3%	20.0%	26.3%	30.0%	0.0%	29.4%	17.6%	0.0%
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%
K-12 [4 resp.]	75.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	60.0%	10.0%	35.0%	31.8%	22.2%	20.0%	5.0%	5.0%
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	66.7%	42.9%	14.3%	57.1%	42.9%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	80.2%	13.8%	32.9%	28.0%	31.7%	23.5%	7.2%	4.9%
Total [148 resp.]	**75.9%**	**17.0%**	**30.9%**	**29.5%**	**25.0%**	**23.7%**	**8.3%**	**3.8%**
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	101	23	43	41	33	31	11	5

Over 75% of libraries report they have support for staff to attend training opportunities outside their district. Less than a quarter of library staff (17%) reported having a role on technology committees, a key area for district leaders, particularly as AI becomes more ubiquitous.

About a quarter of schools reported having library advisory committees: 23.7% have faculty/administration advisory committees, though that number may increase as book challenges become more common.

Policies

Type of school	% of schools that have		% of libraries that have policies for				
	Library policies & procedures manual	Scheduled policy review/revision	Internet/network acceptable use	Collection development	Challenges to holdings	Copyright	Resource sharing & ILL
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	90.0%	61.1%	100.0%	85.0%	100.0%	68.8%	58.8%
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	0.0%	33.3%	100.0%	66.7%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%
K-12 [4 resp.]	100.0%	50.0%	100.0%	66.7%	100.0%	66.7%	100.0%
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	80.0%	61.1%	100.0%	90.0%	90.0%	84.2%	82.4%
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	57.1%	33.3%	100.0%	66.7%	71.4%	42.9%	42.9%
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	91.1%	37.8%	94.0%	93.7%	91.0%	51.3%	78.7%
Total [148 resp.]	**85.6%**	**44.7%**	**96.4%**	**89.3%**	**90.7%**	**57.7%**	**73.2%**
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	113	55	134	117	117	71	90

Policies and procedures allow the library media center to operate effectively and to help library staff deal with different situations that may arise, such as book challenges. However, only 85% of libraries indicated they have a library policies and procedures manual, and only about half of those respondents have regularly scheduled policy review and revision.

Of the respondents 89% reported having collection development policies and 90% have policies for challenges to holdings. Both of these numbers are increases from 2021-22. Not having these two policies in place could prove problematic if and when challenges are brought to the libraries.

Student use

Type of school	Average 1st semester circulation	1st semester avg circ per student	Average typical weekly use:				
			Classroom sessions	Students in sessions	Independent users	Total visits	Visits per student
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	2,047	3.9	9.1	190.0	251.4	418.2	0.7
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	907	3.5	5.3	81.5	58.8	140.3	0.6
K-12 [4 resp.]	2,145	12.6	14.0	131.0	63.8	194.8	0.8
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	3,639	6.5	11.9	249.0	216.4	465.4	0.9
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	4,479	18.4	15.3	215.5	103.9	288.6	1.1
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	5,286	20.6	15.6	267.5	54.1	300.2	1.2
Total [148 resp.]	**4,312**	**11.0**	**13.9**	**242.4**	**107.8**	**332.2**	**0.9**
TOTAL USE	**547,628**		**1,989**	**32,724**	**14,775**	**47,499**	

Full-year circulation can only be estimated for any survey that ends before the school year does, so the Wyoming School Library Survey uses 1st semester circulation instead. On average, each student checked out 11 books in the 1st semester. Circulation figures are usually higher where schools serve lower grades, with K-6 schools checking out 20 books per student.

Library media centers see an average of 14 classroom sessions a week. More than half of total student visits are in classroom sessions, rather than students working independently. Total visits reported were 47,499 with an average of 0.9 visit per student per week.

Library availability

Type of school	Average weekly hours open	% of schools where library is open		
		Before school	After school	Neither
Senior high (9-12) [21 resp.]	38.2	85.7%	80.0%	14.3%
Junior/senior high (6-12) [4 resp.]	34.0	75.0%	100.0%	0.0%
K-12 [4 resp.]	40.8	50.0%	50.0%	25.0%
Junior high/middle (5-9) [22 resp.]	37.6	95.5%	90.9%	4.5%
K-8 & K-9 [7 resp.]	35.4	71.4%	71.4%	0.0%
Elementary (K-6) [90 resp.]	31.9	44.4%	36.7%	52.2%
Total [148 resp.]	**34.0**	**60.1%**	**54.4%**	**35.1%**
TOTAL HOURS	**4,934.5**			

A typical school library is open 7 to 8 hours every school day, with the average weekly hours for reporting libraries working out to 34. More than half of libraries are open before or after the scheduled school day, allowing students greater opportunity to use the library independently. Libraries that are only open during school hours make up 35% of total respondents, an increase from 2021-22, and are primarily those serving K-6 students.

Notes on the data

Additional data sources

Enrollment and staffing numbers are obtained from the Wyoming Dept. of Education (WDE). Although schools can indicate that they serve Pre-K students, only students in K-12 are counted in the enrollment figures.

Circulation data for schools participating in the WYLD system is available to the Wyoming State Library. Where WYLD-participating schools responded to the survey but did not provide circulation numbers, those were pulled from the automated system.

Imputations

In some cases it is necessary to impute data – to estimate a number when the real number is uncertain or unknown. Data that has been imputed is shaded in the spreadsheet. Where possible, schools were contacted to confirm information. Non-responses have been indicated as NA. Actual numbers of schools reporting for each data element are indicated at the beginning of the tables.

Among the rules were used to impute data are these:

- Where a range of numbers was given (e.g. 18-20), the midpoint is used as that data element.
- Dollar amounts are rounded to nearest dollar.
- Where line items were provided, but not the total, the line items were summed for the total.
- Where an estimated amount was given, that number is used.
- Where print budget and total budget matched, and non-print budget was not reported, non-print was imputed to zero (0).

- Where symbols such as >, <, + were used with a number (e.g. 40+ hours), the symbol has been deleted and the number used.

Calculated fields

Where some libraries did not respond to a specific question, averages, percentages and totals were based only on responding libraries.