

## SCHOOL LIBRARIES: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

by

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North Carolina subscribes to the belief that good school library service is basic to good education. This was true in 1942 and many years before. In fact, as far back as 1858 the idea of school libraries was fostered through the office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. It was in 1901, however, that the North Carolina General Assembly made its first appropriation for the purchase of books for free public school libraries in the amount of ten dollars whenever the patrons of a school and a county board of education each donated ten dollars. From this meager appropriation at the beginning of the twentieth century, North Carolina has consistently provided State funds for the maintenance of school library collections and has fostered, through the State Department of Public Instruction, the development of school libraries.

A 25-year study reveals that there has been a phenomenal growth in school libraries throughout the State. Through the years great educational leaders have influenced the development of school libraries in our state. People like Dr. J. Henry Highsmith, Miss Nora Beust, Dr. Louis Round Wilson, Mr. A. B. Combs, and Mrs. Mary Peacock Douglas all have had a part in school library development in North Carolina. Today Dr. Charles F. Carroll, state superintendent of public instruction, and a host of other educational leaders are making their contributions.

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## PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARIES: 1941-66

<i>Number of Library Books</i>				
	Total Volumes	Volumes Per Pupil	Volumes Added	
1940-1941	2,238,456	3.09	272,086	
1965-1966	10,407,829	8.64	1,432,879	
<i>Personnel</i>				
	Librarians	Average Pupils Per Librarian	Library Supervisors	Percent Adm. Employing Supervisor
1940-1941	95	9,150	NR	NR
1966-1967	1,718	689	90	54%
<i>Expenditures</i>				
	All library materials (including audiovisual) and supplies		Library Books	
	Total	Per Pupil	Total	Per Pupil
1940-1941	\$ 310,636	\$0.43	\$ 260,260	\$0.36
*1965-1967	6,518,174	5.41	4,295,000	3.56

\*Does not reflect approximately \$2 million Federal funds committed for books and audiovisual materials ordered before June 30, 1966.

In the 1940's the library collections consisted primarily of books and a few periodicals. Today school library materials include books, magazines and newspapers, maps, globes, charts, pamphlets, pictures, films, filmstrips, slides, professional materials, recordings, models, realia collections, transparencies, and programed materials. As the school libraries have moved toward serving all the students and teachers, the size of library collections has increased tremendously.

Expenditures for library books have increased more than eighteen times since 1941. The number of full-time librarians employed during this period also multiplied eighteen times and the total number of volumes added during the 1965-1966 year was more than seven times the 1940-1941 figure.

The over 10 million library volumes owned at the end of 1965-1966 represents almost 9 volumes per pupil. The state supervisory staff hopes to see, in the future, at least 40,000 volumes in high schools of 1,000 plus students and book collections of at least 6,000 volumes at the elementary level or 10-40 books per pupil.

Through the non-teaching State personnel allotment and through Federally financed programs, schools are adding library positions at a rate beyond supply. For the school year 1966-1967 there were 1,718 school librarians employed in North Carolina, whereas for the school year 1940-41 there were only 95. The evolving staffing pattern for school libraries includes the professional librarian, the media specialist, the library clerk, the audio-visual technician, and the subject specialist.

One of the most promising developments in school library service is the attention being given to system-wide school library programs. This is evidenced through the employment by local boards of education of school library supervisors. In 1966-67 over half of the 169 local administrative units employed library supervisors. There is more vitality, economical coordination, and effective service where there is some form of library supervisor within the school system.

Recognizing the importance of guidance from the state level in July, 1930, a Director of School Libraries was employed by the State Department of Public Instruction. Since then there has been a continuous program of state supervision of school libraries, and, as demands for professional and technical advice increased, the staff expanded: in 1953 an Assistant State School Library Adviser was added; in 1959, two additional assistant supervisors, a librarian, and supporting secretarial staff; in 1961, an Instructional Materials Supervisor.

During fiscal year 1966-1967 a major State Department reorganization evolved which brought together all media services under the Division of Educational Media. This newly created division includes six sections essential to a comprehensive media program: School Library Supervision, Audio-visual Education, Federal Programs, Learning Resources Services, Textbooks, and Television. The staff consists of 34 professional and non-professional positions.

The State staff is concerned with helping local school units extend, expand, and strengthen school library services, instructional television and audio-visual education. Activities include: visits to local administrative units to confer with staff, to conduct in-service workshops and surveys and to assist with planning; participation in state and Southern Association evaluations; revision of standards; publication of bibliographies and other professional aids; evaluation of books and audio-visual materials, cooperation with other agencies concerned with libraries, instructional media, and instructional television.

The impact of Federal legislation on school libraries was becoming quite evident by 1966. Through the coordination of Titles I, II, III, and V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) and Title III of the National Defense Education Act (1958, extended in 1964) with ongoing State supported programs, great strides were made in acquisitions and increased staff. During fiscal year 1966 the following acquisitions and commitments were made utilizing Federal programs:

#### LIBRARY BOOKS

ESEA Title II	536,058 volumes
ESEA Titles I & III	622,000 volumes
NDEA Title III	438,000 volumes
Vocational Educational Act	5,300 volumes

#### PERSONNEL

ESEA Title I—Over 700 library positions were funded for library or instructional materials supervisors, school librarians, and library aides.

#### WHAT NEXT

If the school library is to fulfill its responsibilities, attention must be given to: expanding facilities to accommodate 40-60 percent of the student body, to provide individual study stations and carrels equipped to accommodate the use of projected and audio materials, to provide office-work-storage-production space for evaluating, processing, and producing a full complement of instructional media; to providing library resources in sufficient quantity and appropriate format to meet the needs of all students and teachers; to utilizing library technology in centralizing technical processes and informational retrieval services to students and teachers; and to expanding staff to include adequate professional, technical, and clerical personnel.

More attention will be given to coordinating all library services available to the individual student. Amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Library Services and Construction Act recognize the need for coordination between public and school libraries and require that cooperative planning be done to the end that both services will be strengthened.

The future looks bright for North Carolina school libraries. State, Federal, and local governing bodies are concerned that each boy and girl have access to a library in his school that is an instructional materials center, a learning resources laboratory, a center for independent study, and a push-button electronic center utilizing the newer media. The extent to which these expectations are realized will depend upon the understanding, the imagination, and the cooperative approach librarians and all others concerned.

"Men must read for amusement as well as for knowledge." — Henry Ward Beecher.

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"Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written." — Henry David Thoreau.

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"The book which you read from a sense of duty, or because for any reason you must, does not commonly make friends with you." — William Dean Howells.