

Services of the School Library Materials Center in the High School

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When North Central High School in Washington Township, adjacent to Indianapolis, was established in 1956, a statement of its educational philosophy was prepared, and reads as follows: "To give each student an unexcelled opportunity to grow according to his needs, interests, and abilities, in academic achievement, social poise, worthy use of leisure time, vocational preparation, responsible citizenship, and physical development." In accordance with this philosophy, the school library was planned and organized as an instructional materials center where a variety of materials and media would be available to enrich the curriculum, to challenge the students, to provide recreational opportunities, and to facilitate student use of every medium.

During the next seven years, new materials were added continuously to the library, and its services were expanded greatly. However, rapidly increasing school population resulted in overcrowded conditions in the library as well as in the entire school. Consequently, a new seven million dollar building was constructed and opened in September 1963.

The librarians were invited to assist in planning the library in the new building. Visits were made to other libraries, and frequent consultations were held with the architect and school administrators. Early in the planning stage, the decision was made to follow the subject divisional plan for the library, because it was generally agreed that this type of physical arrangement would best suit the needs of students and faculty and be more adaptable to modern methods of teaching. According to Dr. Harold Gores of the Educational Facilities Laboratory, "Educational change has architectural consequences." Careful planning and preparation paid dividends, and now the new library, in full swing, is literally "a librarian's dream."

Composed of fifteen rooms, the library suite is located in the center of the first floor, to the right of the main entrance to the building and adjacent to the teachers' lounge and general offices. In a glass-enclosed lobby are a charging desk, an elongated card catalog four drawers high, filmstrip and slide cabinets, Reader's Guide table, and three sound-proof listening booths. Behind the charging desk is a magazine stack room which provides ample space for

storage of back issues of periodicals. Adjacent to this room are a large, well equipped work room and a librarian's office.

The materials collection is housed in five rooms separated by glass partitions, each room seating from fifty to sixty students. Curricular needs determined the division of materials into separate areas for: social science, pure and applied science, and the humanities. A large browsing room with informal upholstered furniture serves recreational needs by housing fiction, story collections, biography, paperbacks, newspapers, magazines, and recordings. The fifth area, in a central location, is a general reference room where encyclopedias and general reference books are shelved. Vertical files are also in this room. Other facilities which make up the library suite are a classroom, conference room, teachers' reading room adjoining the faculty lounge, audio-visual workroom and office, dark room, and recording room.

So far as possible, the plan has been to provide in each subject area room all of the materials for the subjects included. Periodicals, recordings, reference books, reserves, and dictionaries are in each room; and eventually listening tables will be provided with record players and tape recorders, for individual listening with ear-phones.

Unexcelled and luxurious physical facilities, important as they are, however, do not make a library. The materials and services provided for students and faculty are paramount, and these the librarians attempt to supply to the best of their ability. Books, the chief stock-in-trade of all libraries, are geared to a preponderantly academic, college preparatory curriculum. Numerous adult and college level books are provided for the large number of serious, mature students. Many teachers assume an important role in book selection, particularly in science, social studies, foreign language and English; and are continually on the alert for new and additional library materials to enrich their curricula, to challenge the developing minds, and to inspire students to greater achievement. They regularly check such book selection sources as ALA Booklist, Library Journal, Book Publishing Record, Saturday Review, and the professional journals of their own teaching fields, and make recommendations for purchase. The librarians depend almost entirely upon the teachers of chemistry, physics, mathematics, and foreign language for the selection of materials in these subjects. These teachers attend summer workshops and seminars, and take advanced courses in which they learn of new materials useful in their teaching. Students, likewise, make frequent suggestions and requests for books and periodicals such as The Wall Street Journal, National Observer, and Great Books of the Western World. For the accelerated students, of whom the school has many, and those who participate in the Advanced Placement Program, the librarians have an especially important challenge in providing materials to meet their needs.

For these students, as well as for the average and below average, a variety of materials and media are used. As previously stated, periodicals are provided in each subject area room, and duplicated in the browsing room. Subject cards for the catalog are made, on colored stock, for vertical file material in order to facilitate its use. A special vocational information area is maintained in one room, where all such materials are brought together and are easily accessible. Likewise, one corner of the browsing room is set aside as a College Information Center, containing catalogs, directories, year-books, and books on college guidance. Here also are the sound filmstrips which have been made to give prospective students information about the colleges. A Counselor sound filmstrip projector with ear-phones is provided in the library, as well as in the Guidance Center. Counselors frequently recommend these materials to students. Librarians work closely with counselors and meet with them, on occasion, to keep them informed about new materials.

Other types of materials provided in the library are films, filmstrips, recordings, instructional tapes, dictation discs for shorthand, slides, maps, and pictures. These are all centrally housed and are cataloged (with the use of colored cards to designate type of material).

The Foreign Language Department, perhaps more than any other, uses a variety of materials, most of which are requested by teachers. The Circling the Globe with Speech records in French, Spanish, German, and Russian are used both in the library and in the classrooms. Other materials used are: Latin tapes, colored slides of many countries, colored costume cards, recordings of folk music and literature, pictures, and color prints of foreign art. Language laboratory tapes, films, and filmstrips are also used.

For Social Studies, books, recordings, and filmstrips are correlated with the curriculum. An extensive collection of maps, globes, pictures, histograms, charts, and graphs are used. Many quality paperbacks in Social Studies are requested by teachers. Some of these are the Berkshire Series in European History, Problems in European Civilization, Problems in American Civilization, and Ann Arbor Paperbacks. The new Life History of the United States, with its accompanying records, has been enthusiastically received.

In this school the Mathematics Department makes extensive use of the library. One advanced course has no textbook and depends largely upon library resources for its content. The teacher frequently brings the class to the library for exploration and free and assigned reading. Some of the better students are excused from class to do independent study in the library. Many paperbacks, selected by teachers, are used by this department. Among these are the series: Exploring Mathematics on Your Own; School Mathematics Study Group, Thinking with Mathematics, and Topics in Mathematics.

Recordings for Music History and Appreciation courses are provided, as well as records for personal enjoyment and recreational

listening. For the Art Department, a set of 600 colored slides of great art masterpieces was purchased to be used in Art Appreciation. The Art Department also provides the library with loan exhibit collections from the local Art Institute. These exhibits afford a good opportunity to promote books related to the subjects exhibited.

Chemistry and physics teachers use many books to supplement the text. The PSSC Physics films and Chem. Study Chemistry film series are rented each year and are integrated with the course of study. Plans are being made to tape lectures given to large groups by teachers participating in team teaching, and to have these tapes available in the library for individual study, review, and make-up work by absentees.

The English Department, traditionally one of the largest users of library materials, has requested many paperbacks which will provide multiple copies of the classics, without too much strain on the library budget. Many recordings of poetry and poetic form, Shakespearean plays, American, English and World Literature are used, as well as filmstrips, pictorial literary maps, and pictures. A special service supplied by the library is to send blank tapes to the Purdue University Audio-Visual Center to have copies made of their literary programs broadcast by the university radio station. These tapes are kept in the library and used by English teachers. A recent acquisition is the set of the Encyclopedia Britannica Humanities films, which are integrated with the curriculum in the English Department. To supplement these films, librarians suggest books and other materials.

Team teaching is done extensively in this school and affords an opportunity for the use of a multiplicity of library materials. This type of teaching, particularly in science and mathematics, lends itself especially well to the use of the overhead projector. Many projected materials are made and filed in the library. A full time audio-visual specialist, added to the staff this year, works with teachers in the preparation and use of all types of visuals, graphics, and classroom materials. Part of his time is devoted to teacher-demonstrations and in-service training, working with individuals and groups and in cooperation with department chairmen.

All of the latest types of equipment for this purpose have been purchased for the audio-visual workroom, a part of the instructional materials suite. These include a dry mount press, primary type-writer, Thermofax copier, Projecto-Printer, drawing board, and all types of lettering devices. Facilities are provided for doing any phase of graphic arts and photography, including air brush, high contrast work, and photo sketching. A copy camera, as well as other photographic equipment, including an enlarger, have been purchased, and a dark room is also included in the materials center.

Another service which the library is planning to provide is making copies of pages from books and periodicals by means of an electronic book copier. Also under consideration is the installation of a Docustat

coin operated copying machine which would enable students to make copies of articles in reference and reserve books and periodicals. This would alleviate the pressure involved when teachers assign the same topic or magazine article to an entire class, and would probably discourage the mutilation of library materials.

For several years the school has followed the practice of inviting well known consultants in special fields to visit the school, and to speak to teachers and students. These lectures have been taped and are available in the library.

The head librarian, who has the status of department chairman, attends the principal's weekly meeting with department chairmen, and is thus better able to keep informed about forthcoming activities and events which might involve the library and in which the library might participate. For example, an announcement was made regarding a special day to be designated as "How to Study Day," when each teacher would stress methods of studying his particular subject, as well as better methods of studying in general. The library forthwith prepared a bibliography, which was distributed to all teachers, and utilized a display case in the corridor and a special exhibit in the library to call attention to materials useful on this subject.

Through the cooperation of the Music Department, the Indiana University School of Music has for the past three years brought a series of operas to the school, given after school for the student body and for adults in the evening. For each of these, the library has arranged displays of materials to give students background information to enhance their appreciation of the opera.

Working with the parents' organization is another important phase of the school librarian's work. In this school, the Triangle Club makes a generous donation to the library each year, and the Library Committee cooperates with the library staff in determining how the money is to be spent. Such things as the Harvard Classics, Great Books of the Western World, and duplicate copies of great literary masterpieces have been purchased in this way, as well as extra items of audio-visual equipment, paintings, and art work. Last year the Library Committee took on the project of mounting and laminating pictures for the library. Currently, they are concerned with having a tea and open house to show the new library to the community.

The library, obviously, provides the usual services such as bibliographies, (sometimes done cooperatively by teachers, students, and librarians), routing professional magazines to teachers, lists and notices of new materials, classroom collections, integrated instruction in the use of the library, orientation for new students and teachers, faculty and departmental meetings in the library, conferences with teachers, assistance with film and filmstrip utilization, book talks, circulation of display materials, and even display letters to teachers. Motivated by the desire to offer students every possible opportunity to use the library, the administration has provided for extended library hours after school and in the evening and on Saturday.

A summer library program is also in operation. This extended school library service helps to relieve the pressure of teen-agers' use of the public library.

This school has been most fortunate in having administrators who are library minded, who encourage experimentation, and who are willing to provide the staff, budget, materials, equipment, and physical facilities so necessary for good library service as it contributes to quality education. While the staff is not adequate for all of the services the library attempts to give, and for the rapidly increasing enrollment, the administration is gradually providing additional staff members, having added three since September 1962. There is now a total of three full-time professionals and two clericals. Also, this year a Coordinator of Secondary School Libraries was appointed, and centralized ordering and cataloging are being instituted. As additional librarians are added to the staff, the administration envisions having a subject specialist for each of the subject area rooms. The community is one which desires the very best educational opportunities for its young people, and is willing to pay for them. This situation offers a great challenge to the library staff.

For the head librarian, it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of a lifetime to come from a school with a traditional "book library," where there was complete separation of printed and audio-visual materials, to establish a new library motivated by the instructional materials center concept. Only by experiencing these two widely differing patterns of school library service can one really become fully aware of the limitations of the traditional school library and judge the efficacy of the newer approach to learning through the use of a wide range of media. Unquestionably the materials center concept provides fuller, richer opportunities for learning and teaching, and contributes to the quality education which we are so earnestly striving to give our young people today.