How Many Oregon School Libraries Meet the Requirements of Oregon's Fully Funded Quality Education Model?
2008 QEM School Libraries Report

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Background
This analysis attempts to determine how many school libraries in Oregon met the Fully Funded Quality Education Model (QEM) requirements for a quality school library during the 2006-07 school year. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) provided the staffing and expenditures data, as reported by every Oregon public school.

The Oregon Quality Education Model was first conceived in 1999 by then-Speaker of the House, Rep. Lynn Lundquist, who formed the Legislative Council on the Quality Education Model. Lundquist sought to establish an objective and research-based link between student achievement and the resources devoted to Oregon schools, to be used as a guide in future efforts to adequately fund Oregon schools. In 2001, the Legislative Assembly created the Quality Education Commission (QEC) as a permanent body to update and improve the Quality Education Model. The QEC produces a report every two years, and these can be found on the ODE website at http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1950.

The QEM presents three prototype schools - an elementary, middle, and high school - and their suggested resources in terms of staffing, materials, equipment, and other operating expenses. The resources suggested for each prototype school define, in the judgment of the Commission, what it takes to provide a quality program of instruction that will result in high levels of student achievement.

The QEM also includes suggestions about the resources necessary to have a quality library in each of the prototype schools. These resources are staffing by certified school library/media specialists, staffing by support personnel, and expenditures for library materials, more specifically print and electronic books and periodicals.

Minimum Criteria for Quality School Libraries
The following table summarizes the minimum criteria for quality school libraries as set forth in the 2006 QEM Report and the 2006 Policy Model, as interpreted by the State Library. See Appendix B, Interpretation and Methodology, for further explanation.

QEM Prototype (2006-07 School Year)	*Certified Library/Media Specialist*	*Library/Media Support Staff*	*Library/Media Center Materials (Books & Periodicals, Print & Electronic)*
Elementary School	0.5 FTE	0.5 FTE	$21 per student
Middle School	1.0 FTE	1.0 FTE	$25 per student
High School	1.0 FTE	1.0 FTE	$27 per student

Results and Comparisons

School Libraries That Met QEM for the 2006-07 School Year

After the analysis as described in Appendix B, we determined that only 46 of the 1,263 Oregon school libraries, or 3.64%, met the 2006 Fully Funded QEM requirements for quality school libraries in the 2006-07 school year. Appendix A lists those schools by level and school district.

Met 2006 Fully Funded QEM (=Met Staffing and Expenditures Minimums)

Elementary	*Middle*	*Jr. High*	*High School*	*K-12*	*Alt./Other/Charter*	*Total*
38/711	**6/170**	**0/29**	**2/214**	**0/23**	**0/116**	**46/1263 = 3.64%**

These school districts are to be commended for the proportion of their school libraries that met the Fully Funded QEM criteria for the 2006-07 school year.

- Beaverton School District: 28 of 31 elementary schools, 5 of 8 middle schools, and 2 of 6 high schools met the QEM criteria.
- Neah-Kah-Nie School District: Both elementary schools, or 2 of 4 schools total, met the QEM criteria.
- Woodburn School District: 2 of 4 elementary schools and 1 of 2 middle schools met the QEM criteria.

School Libraries That Met the Staffing Requirements of the QEM

While 3.64% of school libraries in Oregon met both the staffing and the materials expenditure requirements in 2006-07, the table below shows the number and percentage of schools that met the staffing requirements alone.

Met Fully Funded QEM Staffing Criteria, Yearly Comparisons

School Year	*Elementary Staffing*	*Middle School Staffing*	*Jr. High Staffing*	*High School Staffing*	*K-12 Staffing*	*Alt/ Other/ Charter Staffing*	*# Met Staffing*	***% Met Staffing***
2002-03	198/686	21/172	6/30	62/202	0/24	0/25	287/1139	**25%**
2003-04	159/719	16/174	4/30	54/206	0/24	0/65	233/1218	**19%**
2004-05	123/716	36/170	3/30	59/215	0/24	0/91	249/1246	**20%**
2005-06	121/710	10/170	4/29	57/ 213	0/24	1/103	193/1249	**16%**
2006-07	**115/711**	**20/170**	**0/29**	**55/214**	**1/23**	**0/116**	**191/1263**	**15%**

The small decrease in the number of elementary schools meeting staffing requirements nearly matches the increase in the number of middle/jr. high schools meeting staffing requirements. However, there is a clear trend since 2002-03 of fewer schools overall meeting the staffing requirements of the QEM.

Long Term Trend of School Library Staffing
The short term look at school library staffing should be seen in the context of the long term trend which has seen the number of Oregon school librarians drop by 52.4 % since 1980 and the number of students per librarian more than double.[ii]

	1980	*2006*	*Difference*
Number of Library/Media Specialists	818	389	**-52.4%**
Number of K-12 students per Library/Media Specialist	547	1447	**+164.5%**

When looking at long term staffing trends, one must recognize that the role of the school librarian has changed significantly. Into the 1990's, school librarians were primarily print-oriented. Today's school librarians have expanded their expertise to include teaching and managing electronic technologies, as well as offering direct reading instruction and support. Their role as the ones who develop students' information literacy skills is ever critical as students face an overload of information.

Concerns about Data Quality
Again this year we found the quality of the data reported to the Oregon Department of Education to be suspect. As a result of consulting – by phone, email, and listserv postings – with staff in various schools and districts about their data sample, the author found errors in the library staffing numbers reported to ODE from numerous school districts. The problems with the quality of the library materials expenditure data were equally as numerous but not as easily verified or corrected.

In an effort to improve the quality of school library data, we continue to urge members of the Oregon Association of School Libraries to take an active role in the process of reporting library information to the Oregon Department of Education. School library data as reported to ODE for the 2006-07 school year is available here: http://www.oregon.gov/OSL/LD/school/index.shtml#QEM_School_Library_Report.

We also recognize that this analysis is not a faultless measure for determining a quality school library. Many factors are not accounted for in the results. For example, a few secondary schools in the state have two or more full-time librarians and one part-time assistant on staff. It is likely that they have a quality program, but because they do not have a full-time assistant, they do not meet QEM requirements. Another illustration involves high schools that have been organized into small schools, which are then recognized as unique institutions by ODE. They may have a librarian who serves the same number of students either way, but on paper her time is split among several schools so she does not register as a full-time librarian at any of the schools and therefore does not meet QEM. Overall, though, the QEM analysis offers a consistent look at the big picture. It serves as an annual snapshot of the state of school libraries in Oregon.

Conclusion

Oregon school libraries have a long way to go in meeting the requirements of Oregon's Fully Funded Quality Education Model. It is obvious from the *Long Term Trend of School Library Staffing* table that a significant disinvestment in school library services in Oregon schools has been occurring for over two decades. It is discouraging that only 3.64% of school libraries met the QEM requirements in 2006-07. We continue to look for an upward trend in the quality of services in our school libraries after the past quarter century of decline.

In 2001 the Oregon Educational Media Association, now the Oregon Association of School Libraries, commissioned a research study by Dr. Keith Curry Lance which showed that Oregon reading test scores are higher in schools with higher quality school libraries.[iii] The relationship between good school libraries and higher test scores was shown even when differences in schools (class size, etc.) and students (poverty, parent's education, etc.) were taken into account. Dr. Lance's research validates the need for adequate staffing and library materials expenditures in every Oregon school.

We hope this report, and the reports we will provide in the future, will serve to encourage awareness and greater support for quality school libraries. Today's students are faced with a wealth of available information which creates an environment of information overload. We are increasingly concerned that the number of school librarians in Oregon continues to decline which does our students and citizens of Oregon a disservice.

The author would like to thank Brian Reeder of the Oregon Department of Education for providing the data and giving additional assistance in the course of this research.

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[i] Reeder, Brian "RE: definition." E-mail to the author. 8 Aug. 2007.

[ii] Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Oregon School Directory. Salem, OR: Supt. Of Instruction, 1980-2007.

[iii] Lance, Keith Curry, et. al. *Good Schools Have School Librarians*. Redmond: Oregon Educational Media Association, 2001.

Appendix A, a list of the schools that met QEM, begins on the next page.

Appendix A

Schools That Met QEM School Library Staffing and Expenditures Requirements

Based on 2006-07 School Year ODE Data	
Elementary Schools	
District Name	*School Name*
Beaverton SD 48J	Aloha-Huber Park School
Beaverton SD 48J	Barnes Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Beaver Acres Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Bethany Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Cedar Mill Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Chehalem Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Cooper Mountain Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Elmonica Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Errol Hassell Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Findley Elementary
Beaverton SD 48J	Fir Grove Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Greenway Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Hazeldale Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Hiteon Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Kinnaman Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	McKay Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	McKinley Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Montclair Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Nancy Ryles Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Oak Hills Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Raleigh Hills Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Raleigh Park Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Ridgewood Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Rock Creek Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Terra Linda Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	Vose Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	West Tualatin View Elementary School
Beaverton SD 48J	William Walker Elementary School
Hermiston SD 8	Highland Hills Elementary School
Neah-Kah-Nie SD 56	Garibaldi Elementary School
Neah-Kah-Nie SD 56	Nehalem Elementary School
Portland SD 1J	Beach Elementary School
Silver Falls SD 4J	Eugene Field Elementary School
Silver Falls SD 4J	Robert Frost Elementary School
Tigard-Tualatin SD 23J	Bridgeport Elementary School
Tigard-Tualatin SD 23J	Tualatin Elementary School
Woodburn SD 103	Nellie Muir Elementary School
Woodburn SD 103	Washington Elementary School
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Middle/Jr. High Schools	
District Name	*School Name*
Beaverton SD 48J	Cedar Park Middle School
Beaverton SD 48J	Conestoga Middle School
Beaverton SD 48J	Highland Park Middle School
Beaverton SD 48J	Meadow Park Middle School
Beaverton SD 48J	Whitford Middle School
Woodburn SD 103	French Prairie Middle School
High Schools	
District Name	*School Name*
Beaverton SD 48J	Beaverton High School
Beaverton SD 48J	Southridge High School

Appendix B, Interpretation and Methodology, begins on the next page.

Appendix B

Interpretation and Methodology

Determining Staffing Requirements

Page 22 of the 2006 QEM Report produced by the QEC lists this as the requirement for certified library/media specialist staffing at the prototype elementary school level: "4.5 FTE for specialists in areas such as art, music, PE, reading, math, TAG, library/media, second language, or child development/counselor." The chart on page 25 calls for 6 FTE in instructional support staff but does not stipulate how to allocate those positions. ODE provided a copy of the 2006 Policy Model, a more detailed breakdown of QEM requirements. Under the Elementary School Detail tab, 1 of the 6 instructional support staff is designated for special education and another as secretary. The other 4 positions are not defined. For the purpose of this analysis, we chose to make a conservative interpretation of the QEM requirements and stipulate that the prototype elementary school must have at least a 0.5 FTE certified library/media specialist and a 0.5 FTE support staff member.

The chart on page 26 of the QEC's 2006 QEM Report requires 1 FTE "media/librarian" for the prototype middle school but does not stipulate how to assign the recommended 10 FTE support staff. However, under the Middle School Detail tab of the 2006 Policy Model, 1 FTE "media center assistant" is clearly specified in the instructional support staff category.

The chart on page 27 of that same report requires 1 FTE "media/librarian" for the prototype high school but does not stipulate how to assign the recommended 20 FTE support staff. However, under the High School Detail tab of the 2006 Policy Model, 1 FTE "media center assistant" is also clearly specified in the instructional support staff category.

Finally, each of the three QEM prototype schools assumes a specific student population: 340 students in the elementary school, 500 in the middle school, and 1,000 in the high school. We had to decide whether to adjust the QEM staffing requirements up or down for schools that were significantly larger or smaller than the prototype schools. For the sake of clarity and simplicity, we decided not to make adjustments based on schools' student populations.

Determining Expenditure Requirements

The 2006 QEM Report by the QEC does not specify a minimum per student spending total for library materials, but the 2006 Policy Model does in each of the three prototype school tabs. The 2006 Policy Model accounts for projected inflation and lists library materials expenditures for the 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09 school years.

Line 34 of the Elementary School Detail tab lists the minimum "media center materials" expenditure as $7,158 for 2006-07. Dividing that figure by the prototype school population of 340 students yields a spending minimum of $21 per elementary student.

Line 46 of the Middle School Detail tab lists the minimum “media center materials” expenditure as $12,631 for 2006-07. Dividing that figure by the prototype school population of 500 students yields a spending minimum of $25 per middle school student.

Line 54 of the High School Detail tab lists the minimum “media center materials” expenditure as $27,367 for 2006-07. Dividing that figure by the prototype school population of 1,000 students yields a spending minimum of $27 per high school student.

Previously we asked the ODE to clarify what should be reported under “library materials,” and this was the response:

> There are two object categories in our accounting system that make up "library materials."
>
> 1) Library Books (code 430) described as "Expenditures for regular or incidental purchases of library books available for general use by students, including any reference books, even though such reference books may be used solely in the classroom. Also recorded here are costs of binding or other repair to library books."
>
> 2) Periodicals (code 440) described as "Expenditures for periodicals and newspapers. A periodical is any publication appearing at regular intervals of less than a year and continuing for an indefinite period.”
>
> For both of these categories, our instructions to school districts are to include books, periodicals, and other materials that are in electronic form as well as paper form.[i]

Determining Which QEM Report and Policy Model to Utilize

When we began the 2008 QEM school library analysis, the 2008 Policy Model was available. When we compared per student spending minimums for library materials for the 2006-07 school year, we realized that the amounts listed in the 2006 Policy Model differed from those listed in the 2008 Policy Model for that same school year.

If a school desired to meet the QEM standards for a quality school library during the 2006-07 school year, personnel would have consulted the 2006 Policy Model to determine staffing and spending minimums, as that was the most recent model available at the start of that school year. If the school exactly met the established minimums in the 2006 Policy Model, it would have been recognized as meeting QEM. However, if we used the minimums for that same school year as set forth in the 2008 Policy Model, that same school would *not* have met QEM.

Based on that discrepancy, we decided to use the Policy Model that was available at the start of the school year we are evaluating. In this case, that dictated using the 2006 Policy Model instead of the one issued in 2008.