

# **REINVENTING SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAMS IN THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY**

**A**

**Guide for Principals  
and Superintendents**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Edition**

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## INTRODUCTION

The need to reconceptualize school libraries has never been greater. The rush of technology has caused some to ask, “Is a school library media center needed?” “Is any library needed?” “Isn’t it all on the Internet?” Regular library and Internet users understand the benefits of integrating all forms of information technologies into a full-service organization with a human interface. In schools recently networked and upgraded for extensive technology use, administrators understand that the immense investment must translate into improved learning opportunities — and that key people make it happen! We might demand that teachers raise scores using information technology, but without support, it will not happen.

This volume has been designed as a quick short course for administrators who want to maximize the impact of information technologies and the library media program on teaching and learning. Thus, it concentrates on the program — not the hardware. The book is divided into five main sections that discuss: collaboration with teachers in the design of learning, building avid and capable readers, enhancing learning through technology, creating an information literate learner, and building an information infrastructure.

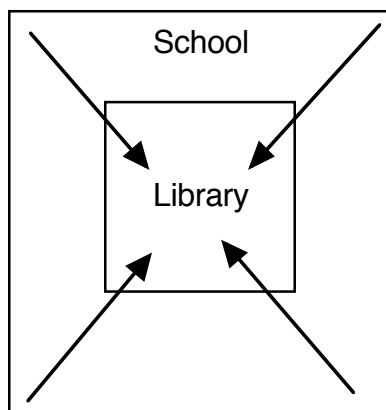
Within each section, pages have been designed in such a way that each can be used as a handout for a workshop, an interview, a planning session, or for a group of parents. Many pages contain checklists to stimulate thinking and planning. Two threads run through all sections — budget implications and assessment.

## A New Vision

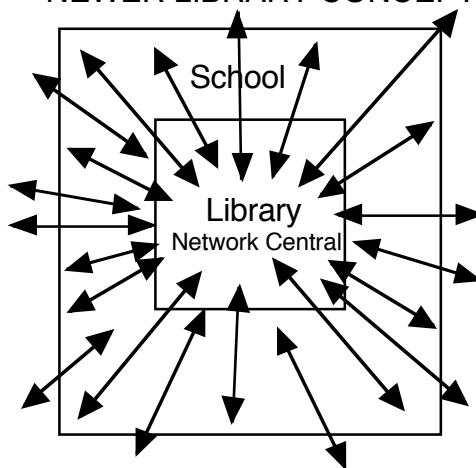
Twice in this century, school libraries have undergone a major redesign. The first was in the 1960s when book libraries had to be rethought to include a new wave of audiovisual devices and software. The second began in the 1980s with the proliferation of the microcomputer, computer networks and the Internet. The first redesign required only a shift in contents. The second requires an entire rethinking.

We have usually thought of the library as the “hub of the school,” a place where everyone comes to get materials and equipment. Now, however, in the age of technology, the library media center becomes “Network Central” with its tentacles reaching from a single nucleus into every space of the school and into the home. Where we once thought of the library as a single learning laboratory, now the entire school becomes a learning laboratory served by Network Central. It becomes both centralized and decentralized at the same time.

OLDER LIBRARY CONCEPT



NEWER LIBRARY CONCEPT



### Traditional

Print rich  
Print and AV oriented  
Centralized (one location)  
Rigidly scheduled  
Single person staff  
A quiet, almost-empty place  
Open during school hours

### New

Information rich in every format  
Multiple technologies  
Centralized / decentralized simultaneously  
Flexibly scheduled  
Professional and technical staff  
A busy, bustling learning laboratory  
Online services 24 hours/day, seven days/week.

With the advent of high technology and sophisticated networks, many schools have approached technology as if it were separate and distinct from “the library.” But after the networks are in and the equipment in place, it soon becomes evident that materials and information merely have new paths to take. The concept of a vast store of materials and information poised to serve teachers and learners remains intact no matter what it is named — the library, the library media center, the information portal, or network central.