

FAST FACTS

Recent Statistics from The Library Research Service

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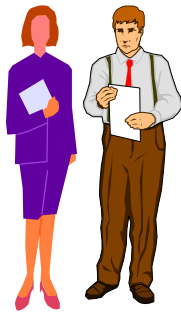
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The Status of School Library Media Programs in Colorado, 1994-97

- 1994-97 Highlights**
- Overall staffing static. Endorsed library media specialists cut. BOCES/contract staff spread thin.
 - Book collections holding in size, but periodical collections declining.
 - Reduced spending and inflationary prices of books and periodicals mean aging collections.

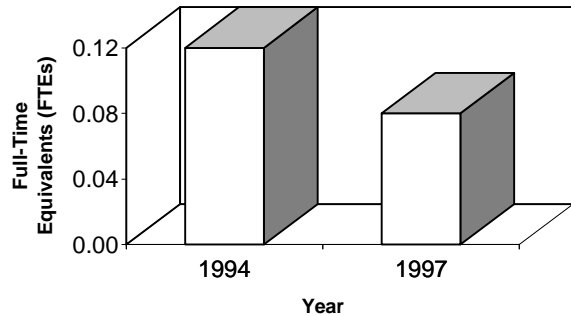
Library Media Staffing



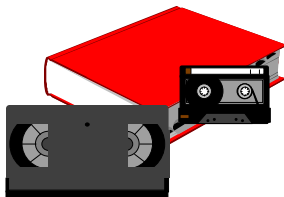
The practice of librarianship is becoming de-professionalized in Colorado schools. From 1994 to 1997, the number of library media staff per 100 students dropped only slightly from .31 to .30 full-time equivalents (FTEs). During the same interval, the number of endorsed library media specialists per 100 students for the typical school library media program fell from .12 FTEs to .08 FTEs—a **33 percent cut**. Library media specialists have been displaced by other staff, such as library

media aides—who are not endorsed—and BOCES and contract library media staff—who may or may not be endorsed. In 1997, the statewide total hours per typical week for BOCES and contract staff was 61 hours. Barely 1.5 FTE statewide, these staff served 65 schools. That amounts to 56 minutes of “professional” staff attention per typical week to the library media program in each school.

FTE Library Media Specialists Per 100 Students



Library Media Collections



Since 1994, library media programs in Colorado schools have introduced an increasing variety of non-print resources without sacrificing books. Between 1994 and 1997, the number of volumes held per student has remained constant at 18. During the same interval, periodical subscriptions

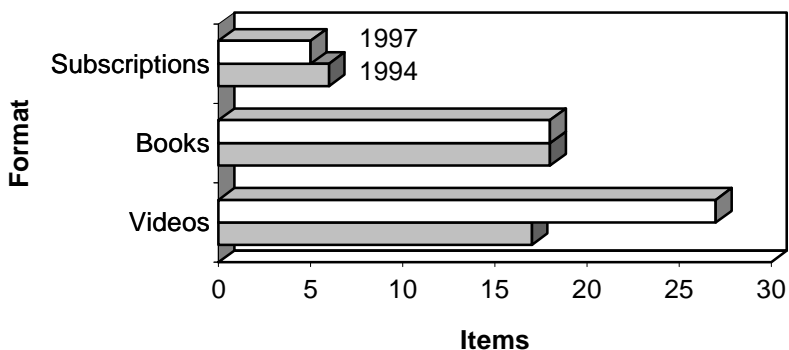
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per 100 students has dropped from six to five—a **17 percent cut**. At the same time, other formats have become more prevalent: Statewide, video collections have grown from 17 videos per 100 students to 27—a **59 percent increase**. Likewise, computer software collections have grown from 5 software packages per 100 students to six—a **20 percent increase**.

Volumes Per Student and Subscriptions & Videos Per 100 Students

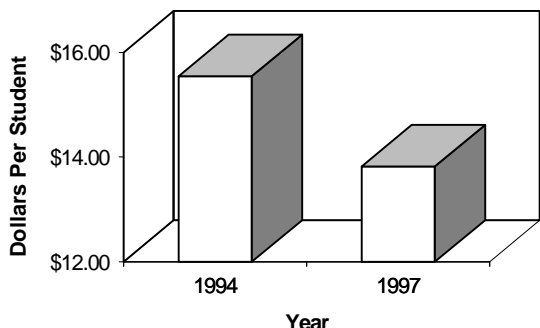


Library Media Expenditures



From 1994 to 1997, library media expenditures per student fell from \$15.54 to \$13.82—an **11 percent drop**. Per student expenditures on books in particular declined from \$10.72 to \$9.09—a **15 percent drop**—while expenditures on

Library Media Expenditures Per Student



non-print materials per student went from \$2.47 to \$1.44—a **42 percent drop**.

Though the latter drop may reflect counter-inflationary price trends for some non-print formats (video prices fell 15 percent and audio cassette prices one percent), the same cannot be said for waning book spending. Between 1994 and 1997, the average price of a school library book increased almost 13 percent.



In 1997, the average elementary book costs \$21.65 and the average secondary book \$39.37—thus, this year, the state’s library media programs were able to purchase only about one new book for every three to four students.

Indeed, the drop in book expenditures, coupled with book price inflation, implies that, in many school libraries, the 18 books per pupil reported in 1997 may actually be the same 18 books reported in 1994.

