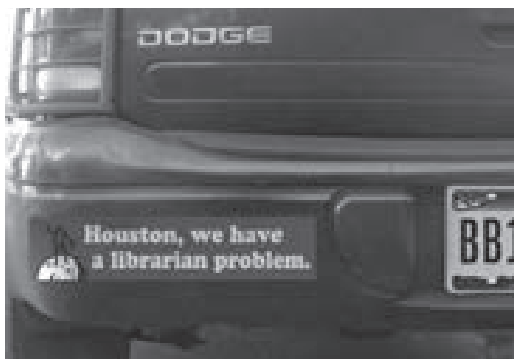


Houston School Librarian Numbers Shrink Further

School librarians are currently an endangered species in Houston—and the future doesn't look very bright. Decisions on librarian staffing levels are left to the principals, with no mandates at the district level for certified media specialists. The result? A dramatic decline in the number of these professionals serving in Houston, according to the Texas Education Agency (TEA).



Nearly 43 percent of school librarians have disappeared from the Houston Independent School District (ISD) since the 2009–10 school year, when 168 certified media specialists held the position in schools, statistics from the TEA show. For the 2013–14 school year, that number has dropped to just 97 certified media specialists serving

all of the district's 282 K–12 schools.

The Houston ISD is a “decentralized district,” explained Denisse Cantu, a member of the Houston ISD media relations department. That means decisions on how schools are staffed by certain positions are left up to the principals, and certified librarians are just one of many of these types of jobs.

“Principals oversee their budgets, which are funded on a per pupil basis,” said Cantu. “Schools are not required to employ certified librarians.”

Maribel Castro, who worked as a Houston ISD library coordinator and served as president of the Texas Library Association in 2011, is now the instruction and electronic resources librarian for Lubbock Christian University. She said she worries that with a decentralized district, principals will rarely allocate funds for school librarians over other literacy-related choices.

“Some [principals] are going to support their library and some are not,” Castro said. “A principal will invest \$20,000 on accelerated readers because they're looking for a magic bullet to raise reading scores, but they won't invest in an individual who can improve children's literacy through books. This is not really a matter of funding but a matter of priority.”

Interview

Meghan Doherty

Meghan Doherty, author of *How Not To Be a Dick*, speaks with *Library Journal's* Books for Dudes columnist Douglas Lord about her recent release.

Did you write this for dudes in particular?

I use the term *dicks* as slang for being a jerk. People can be dicks to each other regardless of gender.

Did a particular person inspire you?

I had a very passive-aggressive boss, who was not the best communicator. One night I came home really late from a particularly rough night at work and wrote an email to my editor at Zest Books, “How's this for a book idea: ‘How Not To Be a Dick!’”

Is it intended for “young people”?

Technically, the book is meant for “young and new” adults—say ages 18-plus. It gave us a great opportunity to talk about current issues—such as SnapChat and bullying—and still reference *Willow*.

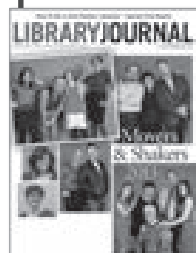
What's next?

I have another book in the works about my love of television. Besides that I just want to be on *The Colbert Report* and meet Nicolas Cage. A girl can dream, right?

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Know a Mover & Shaker? Of Course You Do!



Library Journal is counting on you to nominate the 2014 “class” of Movers & Shakers, 50 individuals who are changing the face of libraries and library services—whether they work in libraries (of any type) or elsewhere. You know people just like them: everyday librarians who do extraordinary work every day. Nominate them now!

Nominations due November 2: libraryjournal.com/movers

People

John Bew, a Reader in history and foreign policy at the War Studies Department at King's College, London, UK, was appointed to the Henry A. Kissinger Chair in Foreign Policy and International Relations at the Library of Congress's John W. Kluge Center. He will be in residence for nine months.

Steven J. Dick, science historian and author, began his term as the second Baruch S. Blumberg NASA/Library of Congress Chair in Astrobiology at the Library of Congress's John W. Kluge Center. He will be in residence for one year.

Adam Dodd was appointed Head of the Web Developer Group at the University of North Carolina's Health Sciences Library, Chapel Hill. He has served as Interim Head for the library since July 2012.

Gary Hausman was named South Asian Studies Librarian at Columbia University Libraries, New York. He previously held the same position at Princeton University's Firestone Library, NJ.

Lupe Herrera retired as Circulation Coordinator at the Buda Public Library, TX. She had been with the library for 13 years.

Sonal Rastogi was named Director of the Norfolk Public Library, VA. She previously was Acting Director and has been with the library system since 1995.

The American Library Association's Office for Diversity announced the recipients of the 2013 Diversity Research Grants: **Sung Un Kim**, Assistant Professor, Department of Library and Information Science, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC; **Weiling Liu**, Director, University of Louisville's Office of Libraries Technology, KY; **Lian Ruan**, Director and Head Librarian, University of Illinois Fire Service Institute, Champaign; and **JungWon Yoon**, Associate Professor, University of South Florida School of Information, Tampa.

Send People notices to LJHotline@mediasourceinc.com

Debbie Hall, who retired as a library and technology administrator two years ago after more than 30 years as a librarian in the Houston ISD and who is still a library substitute, agreed that it is a matter of priority but questioned whether centralization would fix it. "I don't think the problem [is] totally...it being a site-based decision," she said. "I think it's the district not having a vision for school libraries. They just use site-based decision-making [as the excuse] to say it's out of their hands."

In Tulsa, New Module Manages Floating

Decision Center, the collection management solution developed by Innovative Interfaces Inc. (III), released new features that will help users manage floating collections across multiple branches. Decision Center, which replaced III Reporter when it went into general release in June, is designed to work with III's Millennium ILS or its Sierra Services Platform.

The new floating collections module will be especially useful addressing "pooling" and "drought" issues that arise when libraries allow patrons to have books sent to their local branch or check out titles from one branch and return them to another. For example, at Tulsa City-County Library (TCCL), a beta tester for III, one branch is regularly inundated with returns of picture books checked out from other branches, said TCCL collection management manager Susan Anderson.

"Every month...they have more picture books turned in at their location than they have shelving for,"

LIBRARY REFERENDA

If you had/are having a referenda for capital improvements and/or operating funds between December 1, 2012 and November 30, 2013, tell us how it turned out at www.libraryjournal.com/referenda.

The results will be included in *Library Journal's* feature in April 15, 2014.

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she said. "Right now, we are manually moving those back to other locations, just by staff picking out books to send back." Anderson said that the floating collection features will make it much easier for the branch to determine which books it has multiple copies of and which books have been moved from other locations. TCCL just recently received documentation for the new features and is still in the process of determining how the new lists and reports generated by the system will be integrated into its existing workflow, Anderson said. "But it's definitely going to assist us. No one needs five copies of *Green Eggs and Ham*. Those are prime, easy targets for moving to a new location."

The new floating collection management tools will help TCCL maximize the use and availability of its collection by identifying where different titles, authors, and genres will be most in demand, she hoped.

"Some Westerns are more popular in one location than another, but that doesn't mean a Western isn't going to land in a location where the demand is not very high," Anderson explained. "I'm hoping it will also help us identify things that have landed at a place where demand is not great, and we can move those back to where they will check out more."

Even prior to the launch of these new tools, Decision Center had already proven helpful for analyzing trends at each of TCCL's 24 branches, Anderson added.

"We've been looking at collection size and use and trying to make sure collections are optimally sized for that location and [curated] for the interests of that neighborhood," she said. "We hadn't been able to do that type of analysis before. There's simply no way to do that, really—compare, call number by call number, what's getting used the most."

Information about these trends

had been primarily anecdotal, she explained. The Decision Center reports generate figures that can reveal or confirm perceived trends, help support a branch's request for materials, or launch discussions that lead to a

deeper understanding of those branch-by-branch trends, Anderson said.

These branch profiles require upfront work, but, ultimately, they help the TCCL better understand what moves where, whether a branch has

Fit for the Library: Clemson Students Study on Bikes

The Cooper Library at Clemson University, SC, has a new addition that may seem out of place at first glance—a study hall filled with stationary exercise bikes. The space isn't being taken over by the phys ed department, though. The bikes are FitDesks, specially equipped cycles with attached desktops, and they're part of a new study by Clemson psychologist June Pilcher on the effects of exercise on productivity and learning.



"I think there's a little resistance to moving while you work," Pilcher said. "There's an idea that you either exercise or you study and think, and that's the thing I want to study. I want to help people see that we can study and work while moving at a slow pace."

When Pilcher talks about studying the effects of exercise, she's not talking about the strenuous exercise that likely springs to mind. Instead, she wants to gather information about what she calls low-level exercise. "It's not focused on riding as hard as you can," said Pilcher. "We tell people not to break a sweat, just naturally move your legs."

Previous studies in retirement-age subjects suggest that this sort of light exercise helps to slow cognitive decline and increase feelings of well-being. With data she gathers from the FitDesks, Pilcher is hoping to learn whether those benefits could translate to increased productivity during work and study. While she doesn't have an experimental design set yet, the introduction of the FitDesks is helping her gather information on how they're used. When they climb onto a FitDesk to study, students scan their ID cards, letting Pilcher know who is using the desk, how long they're using it, and how often. She hopes that information, along with surveys of individuals, will provide the first batch of raw data that she can use as a foundation for more refined studies, which she expects to begin as soon as January 2014.

Clemson dean of libraries Kay Wall said she jumped at the opportunity to assist with Pilcher's research, which she felt was a very good fit for Clemson's physically active student population. "We like to be a place where we're partnering with our faculty doing research," said Wall. "And this was different, but it was exciting."

FitDesks were chosen because they're less expensive than options like standing desks attached to treadmills and take up less space. The bikes fold for storage. And they're surprisingly easy to study on, said Pilcher, who uses one at home. "I can type on my computer, or iPad, I can read easily," Pilcher said. "I probably wouldn't try to write a manuscript, though students have reported some success with that."

So far, ten FitDesks live in a study hall at the library, another three at the Academic Success Center. While some students have been reluctant to combine biking and studying, enough have tried them that Pilcher is hopeful they'll catch on—she's even had students request bikes be placed in other areas of the campus.

Students using the bikes have reported some early positive results to Pilcher. One said he used to fall asleep while studying, which the FitDesk helped him to conquer. Pilcher is not surprised. "Our ancestors never sat at desks," she said. "We were never designed for this."

the right percentage of materials and space devoted to adults versus children or media versus print, and analyze whether usage of the collection matches up well with the usage of the building, Anderson said.

“Is that the way people use that building? Or do we need more meeting space and computers? Or do we need more large print at these locations? We have to keep in mind that these things change over time, and

sometimes they change rapidly,” she explained.

Jacksonville PL Partners with UNF on Tutoring

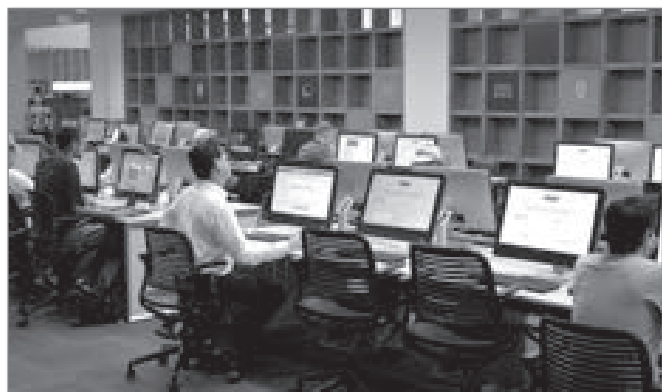
It started out as a small pilot program to enhance literacy skills and help prevent summer slide of elementary school children. But when word spread about the successful summer tutoring initiative at the Southeast Regional Library, Jacksonville, FL, the classes grew, averaging nearly 75 students per class. The eight-week standards-based literacy program was the brainchild of Anita Haller, librarian senior, in partnership with Katrina Hall, an expert in children’s literature and teacher of education at the University of North Florida (UNF).

The program was designed with a twofold purpose: to provide reading assistance and activities to engage the imagination and build literacy skills in children K–5 and to tap into the enthusiasm, skills, and fresh ideas of 27 tutors, who, as UNF undergraduates in elementary education, could gain class credit and valuable hands-on experience toward their professional teaching careers.

Working with four or five students in a group, tutors made informal assessments and developed individualized activities based on standards in the areas of sight words, concepts of print, phonemic awareness/alphabet knowledge, comprehension, fluency, and writing. Parents were pleased with their children’s progress and saw tangible results. One parent said her child began writing original stories and poems. Others saw improvement in their offspring’s handwriting and vocabulary.

A public library tutoring partnership is a first for UNF. While the undergraduates in the Methods and Resources for Literacy Development course found real-life application for their teaching concepts, Hall said el-

Branching Out



San Antonio Public Library (SAPL) Central Library went superdigital on October 24 with the opening of the 12,800 square foot **Connect at Central** (pictured) technology space. Supported through a federal Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) grant, the new area has 100 desktop computers, plus laptops and Google Nexus 7 tablets for in-library checkout, in addition to a public training space. The teen area offers 18 new iMacs along with upgraded furnishings, and a “technology test drive” element incorporates iPads and other tablet devices to support digital literacy and highlight the library’s 36,000-item digital collection. The \$1.5 million grant also encompasses technology upgrades at SAPL’s 13 branches.

The Cuyahoga County Public Library broke ground on October 18 for the new 15,000 square foot **Orange Branch** in Pepper Pike, OH, to replace the existing facility. The \$6 million building is designed by HBM Architects, with construction management from Regency Construction, and will feature a sustainable plan, public meeting spaces, high-speed broadband connectivity, and

dedicated teen and children’s rooms. With an expected completion of fall 2014, the new branch covers the communities of Orange, Pepper Pike, Moreland Hills, Hunting Valley, and Woodmere.

The renovation and expansion project at the **Bridgeport Public Library (BPL)**,

NE, which began in July, will more than double the size of the 2,610 square foot facility. The \$200,000 effort is also making use of staff and community volunteers for some of the work. The addition involves remodeling the adjacent former city hall into the library’s children’s section, according to the *Star Herald*. The city hall building, which was provided by the City of Bridgeport, had been in need of interior upgrades, e.g., lighting systems and wiring. Breaking through a wall to join the two structures made the most sense, eliminating the need to relocate BPL. The library is expected to be completed before the end of the year.

Kennesaw State University (KSU), GA, broke ground in mid-October for the new **Horace W. Sturgis Library**. Built in 1981, the 104,000 square foot facility will gain 1,600 square feet of space, along with a new front entrance, according to the *Marietta Daily Journal*. Design for the 18-month, \$4.4 million project is by McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture and will include electrical, ventilation, and plumbing work, plus repurposing of the first and ground floors to accommodate better KSU’s 25,000 students.

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Photo courtesy of San Antonio Public Library.

elementary school students gained knowledge in the number of sight words learned, concepts of print, the alphabet, and letters/sounds; writing ability; and comprehension as measured through graphic organizers. Overall, the pilot program was deemed a huge success, and the Jacksonville Public Library and UNF are already planning their next tutoring program.

Apollo May Sell Part of McGraw-Hill Educational

Less than a year after purchasing the struggling textbook, reference, and professional business of McGraw-Hill (now known as McGraw-Hill Financial), the private equity firm Apollo Global Management (AGM) may be looking to slim down its purchase. Reports indicate the management group is shopping the professional components of McGraw-Hill Ed-

ucational (MHE), which focuses on publications and digital resources for workers looking to improve their skills and continue their education.

Earlier this year, AGM purchased MHE, which was formed in 2012 when the publisher decided to build a fence between its educational division, which publishes textbooks and other educational resources for kindergartners and college students alike, and its financial information arm. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) filings regarding the decoupling of the companies suggested the educational portion of McGraw-Hill's business had been struggling in recent years. The company posted a \$200 million profit in 2010; by the end of 2012, it represented a \$62 million loss for the company. Separating the textbook business from the company's financial information divisions, which include the credit rating agency Standard & Poors,

set the stage for MHE to be acquired by AGM early this year, for around \$2.5 billion. As part of the deal, the original company changed its name to McGraw-Hill Financial.

The move marked a refocusing of both businesses, allowing MHE to drill down on educational services, said spokesperson Brian Belardi. "One hundred percent of the investment in the company now goes to education," Belardi said. Since the sale, MHE has set up a new research and development hub in Boston and acquired the e-learning resource company ALEKS in June, moves Belardi said the company wouldn't have been able to make while dividing its attention between education and financial services.

A potential sale of McGraw-Hill Professional—which focuses on learning tools for midcareer professionals looking to hone their job skills or garner new certifications, rather

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than traditional textbooks and school resources—would likely include the subscription-based medical reference service AccessMedicine, which provides medical students and doctors around the world with access to resources like *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*, as well as annual publications like *Current Medical Diagnosis and Treatment*. The professional wing also produces both print and digital study guides for tests like the GRE and SAT, as well as language resources and some of the company's textbooks for subjects such as engineering and business.

According to the company, the potential sale of McGraw-Hill Professional was brought about less by a desire to shed the properties than as a response to some interested suitors and may not occur.

News in Brief

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Rare Book & Manuscript Library received the archives of Gwendolyn E. Brooks, Illinois Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner. The collection spans six decades and includes manuscripts, early poetry and prose, and correspondence.

The Fort Worth Library, TX, received a Municipal Leadership To Promote Educational Alignment for Young People Grant from the National League of Cities. The money will fund a project to align schools and early learning programs for children pre-K to third grade.

Publisher Elsevier, a provider of scientific, technical, and medical information products and services, expanded its digitized Legacy Collection. It now includes over 9,500 books in 15 subject areas.

Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library, New York, acquired the archives of Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev

Neverwhere Still in High School Library

Neil Gaiman's best-selling urban fantasy novel *Neverwhere* is still available to students at the library at New Mexico's Alamogordo High School (AHS), despite recent news reports that the book had been "banned" in the district, the school's media specialist, librarian Vicki Bertolino, told *Hotline*. Although a parental challenge in mid-October caused the book's temporary removal from the high school's English curriculum, *Neverwhere* will continue to circulate under Bertolino's watch, she said.

The district also called for public comment ahead of its planned review of the book's literary merit.

Kathy Wallis, who teaches both

(1891–1953). The collection includes music manuscripts, correspondence, and the papers of his wife, singer Lina Llubera (1897–1989). Additionally, Columbia University's Center for Digital Research and Scholarship launched the Women Film Pioneers Project, an online collection of over 150 career profiles of women from the silent movie era.

The University of Oregon, Eugene, purchased the 121-box collection of novelist Ken Kesey, with the help of fundraising and donations. The archive includes manuscripts, journals, artwork, photographs, correspondence, and personal papers.

NBC Universal has partnered with Midwest Tape to include new content on hoopla, the library's streaming digital lending service. The deal adds nearly 500 movie titles alone to the more than 300,000 videos, audiobooks, and music albums that hoopla lets patrons access through their electronic devices.

English and film at AHS, said the school is incorrectly handling the challenge by suspending the book, since the child of the complaining parent had immediately been provided an alternate assignment by the English department. "I am sorry our school administrators did not stand up and support the material the way we all would have expected them to do," she said. "[I]t makes our school and our town appear as if we are fine with suspending the use of a book that is used by middle and high schools across the country and around the globe. We are not fine with it, and we want people to know that."

Bertolino, AHS librarian for the past three years and a former English teacher at the school, confirmed that AHS has long had policies in place for parents to be able to challenge any books, materials, or learning activities; if an objection is made, a teacher will immediately offer an alternate title or activity. But the library had not been directly involved in the challenge for *Neverwhere*, she said, and she had not been asked to remove it from the library or set it aside until its upcoming review. "I'd never had anybody challenge any of the books here in the library," Bertolino said.

The Kids' Right To Read Project (KRRP) has already urged the district to retain the book. And as of October 18, a Change.org online petition, created by local resident Melissa Wilde, had begun to circulate asking for the book's return to the AHS curriculum.

Ami Jones, youth services librarian at the Alamogordo Public Library, said she has "high hopes" that a review of the book will result in its retention at AHS. "The administrators are catching a lot of flack at the moment for 'caving,' but please keep in mind they are just reviewing the book—part of the process many schools have in place when a book is challenged," she wrote in comments on SLJ.com.

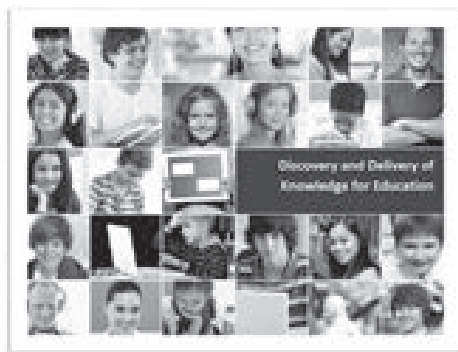
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“They have to balance rights and concerns of parents with the needs of students and educational merit.”

No official date has yet been announced for the book’s districtwide review, nor have the committee members been publicly named. Calls to the district were not returned.

Survey: School Libraries Boost Student Literacy

The 2013 Australian School Library Survey, conducted by Softlink on behalf of Australia’s school library associations, has again revealed a positive relationship between a school’s literacy results and its library’s resourcing levels, the company announced on October 21. As it has since 2010, the annual survey found that schools with high national average reading literacy scores for its students report higher levels of



school library funding and staffing, while schools with lower scores have lower library funding and staffing.

The study is an examination of key trends and issues impacting school libraries across Australia, especially the ways that a school library’s budget and staffing levels influence students’ overall academic achievement and literacy levels. The study includes primary, secondary, and K–12 school libraries, with representation from public, private, and parochial schools among the respondents.

The survey also found that:

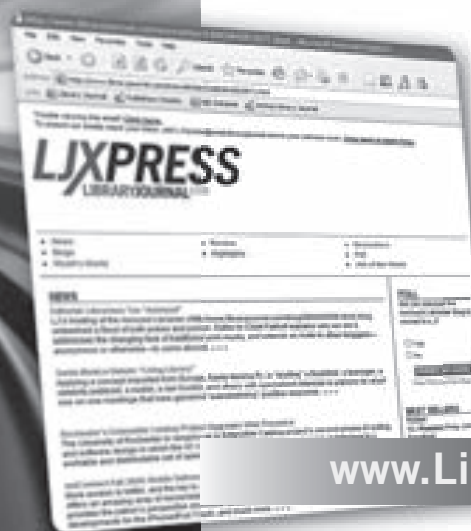
- Approximately 28 percent of schools’ library staffing levels decreased in 2013, while 63 percent of all schools’ staffing levels remained unchanged.
- More than one-quarter of surveyed schools (28 percent) have purchased ebooks in the past year, and 55 percent indicate they will “definitely” or “most probably” purchase ebooks within the next 12 months.
- Approximately 44 percent of teacher librarians say half or more of their student population own a personal mobile device (iPod, iPad, smartphone, or other tablet).
- Up to one-third of all schools encourage students to bring their own digital device for use at school.

More than 800 schools participated in the study, according to Softlink’s COO Nathan Godfrey.

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