



**East Lansing**  
Public Schools

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Historically, the District building libraries were treated as separate facilities, each falling under site-based management and maintained by their building principals. Their budgets were managed at the building level and Parent Council involvement was varied by building.

In 2007, the recommendation was made to merge the Data Services department with the libraries to achieve the following goals:

- Bring uniformity and direction to each library
- Recognize the technology component in contemporary media centers and staff
- Establish the libraries as a conduit for technology initiatives and information literacy
- Make technology hardware & peripherals more accessible to the staff
- Establish consolidated management

A later 3-5 year District library/media center plan reinforced those goals with the following items:

- Fairness and equity in expenditures for all libraries and media centers
- Central management to allow for planned and purposeful professional development of library staff
- Central management to also allow for better utilization of resources and a consistent approach to technology integration within the media centers

At the time, both ELHS and MacDonald Middle School had certified Media Specialists on staff. A few years later, the Media Specialist at MMS retired and the position was not filled. With only one certified Media Specialist remaining in District, it was necessary and appropriate to make her accessible to all of the paraprofessional librarians and to have her serve in a supervisory capacity to assist in re-training and organizing the district library staff. Previous to the libraries being centrally managed, there were no coordinated meetings or trainings for the library paraprofessionals. We now have regularly scheduled monthly meetings to ensure that our library paras are informed, trained, and work as a team to problem-solve and cohesively address issues.

As a result of site-based management and the diverse needs of eight school buildings, the quantity and quality of the book collections was also varied. In 2014, we centrally managed the budgets of the libraries ensuring that the allocated percentage of per pupil funding would make it to their respective libraries, and equity would be at the forefront of purchase planning. We have inventoried our collections, weeded out old and unused books, and have begun stocking our shelves with appropriate content, especially as it applies to our curriculum. We migrated from aging reference books on the shelves to an online database where the content is extensive and up-to-date. This move saved the District money by eliminating costly reference materials that age rapidly. Online databases are contributing factors in freeing up shelf space in our libraries.

Due to the various financial needs in each building and the limited budgets, our libraries have historically sought out alternate funding sources. Parent Councils, book fairs, and other activities have contributed to the support of our libraries. In 2015, the ELEF awarded an \$18,000 grant to our libraries. This generous donation purchased 1,500 books at the average cost of \$12.00 per school-quality book. We are also evaluating the allocated per pupil funding for 2016-17 to determine if an increase for the libraries is feasible within the District's budget.

In the last five years tremendous gains have been made in our District library/media center model. We are constantly fine-tuning our vision for the future. We have a tremendous staff of librarians. This is a role that has also undergone tremendous change, largely because of the technology bond and the ever-increasing element of technology within the media centers, buildings, and profession.

We recognize there is always room for improvement. We strongly encourage the involvement of our parents, Parent Councils, and our communities to help craft the vision for the future of our libraries and contribute to information literacy and a love of reading for all our ELPS children.