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## Extended Services Offered by the Media Center

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## Extended Services Offered by the Media Center

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### Abstract

There are several school media centers in the nation today that offer extended service to their students. Extended services are offered by the professional media personnel during hours beyond the regular school day. The extended services may be offered before and after school, evenings, Saturdays, during school vacation periods and also during summer vacation periods.

EXTENDED SERVICES OFFERED BY  
THE MEDIA CENTER

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A Research Paper  
Presented to  
Mr. Greve of the Graduate School  
University of Northern Iowa

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
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EXTENDED SERVICES OFFERED BY  
THE MEDIA CENTER

There are several school media centers in the nation today that offer extended service to their students. Extended services are offered by the professional media personnel during hours beyond the regular school day. The extended services may be offered before and after school, evenings, Saturdays, during school vacation periods and also during summer vacation periods.

There is a need in many schools today for extended services because of the change in the educational process the past several years.

During the late 1950's the pace of educational change quickened. The changes in philosophy and practice produced new demands and opportunities, but often led to new difficulties in gaining access to and use of media materials.

Among the educational changes are: new objectives emphasizing achievement in discipline-oriented subject study; increased individual responsibility for learning; new patterns of organization; new teaching roles and modes; changes in the size and composition of groups; development of nongraded classes; the emergence of a more mature and more demanding student body; and the steady development of new products of educational technology.<sup>1</sup> All these changes in the school

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<sup>1</sup>Lawrence McGrath, "Student Access to Libraries and Library Resources in Secondary Schools," (University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science, Occasional Papers,) December, 1969.

influence the school media center.

Secondary schools have been described as moving from a "textbook oriented" to a "materials oriented" curriculum. The emphasis has shifted from group instruction to individualized independent learning, and other practices which have as a goal the development of each student to his maximum potential. It is estimated that in the secondary school, students will spend forty per cent of their time in individual study activities. The media center will be the center of most of this activity.<sup>2</sup>

This recent increase in student demand has caught many school media centers wholly unprepared. There is not sufficient copies of specific titles, and other reference materials assigned by teachers; there is not enough staff to aid in the use of reference materials assigned by teachers; and there are too few hours that the media center is open for student use.

Some of these inadequacies are further amplified by Report No. 1 of Deiches Fund Studies of Public Library Services, Students and the Pratt Library: Challenge and Opportunity.

The Report shows that:

1. Almost two-thirds of the library service to students both in number of books supplied and number of hours of use comes from the public library. School libraries supply only approximately one-third of the library needs of the students

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<sup>2</sup>Federic R. Hartz, "Planning School Libraries for Independent Study," Clearing House, 40:144, November, 1965.

2. Analysis of student library use indicated that present day teaching at the secondary level assumes the availability of a substantial subject collection containing extensive holdings of both books and magazines. School libraries do not serve this function except to a limited extent and would not do so even if doubled in size.

3. Approximately three-fourths of the student readers express a preference for using the public library. In order of importance, the reasons for this preference are: (1) more adequate collections in the public libraries; (2) more suitable hours of service; and (3) fewer restrictions and controls.<sup>3</sup>

The media centers in the schools must be equipped with materials needed by the students and these materials must be readily accessible to the student. Money must be made available so that many of the problems facing the media centers will disappear in the next decades. Complete involvement by the media staff in the educational objectives, planning and programs of the school will be essential.

In the past decade some of the discrepancies pointed out in Report No. 1 of the Deiches Fund Studies of Public Library Services have been relieved with governmental support to the school media centers. The Elementary and Secondary Educational Act, especially Titles II and III have made funds available for media centers. A small percentage of the schools throughout the nation offer extended hours to their students.

An open media center permits potential use; extended hours make possible increased potential use. School policy and school organization may stimulate and insure or deter and prevent the realization of the potential. The total organization of the school, including educational objectives, curriculum

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

content, teachers' attitudes and teaching methods, teachers' expectations of students, course structure and student scheduling affects the role of the media center and influences its effectiveness. In some schools today, students are required to take five subjects during a six period day. This does not provide a student with much time to use the media center during the school day. Therefore to deal with some of the access problems of students, the media center should be open evenings and Saturdays to accomodate the user.

The Standards for School Media Programs (1969) recommend in a section entitled, "Accessibility of Materials," that optimum use of material be facilitated in many ways:

"The media center is open at all times of the school day before and after school. In order to expand services to students and teachers and to obtain greater returns from the school's investment in materials and equipment, these hours are being extended to include evenings, Saturdays, and vacation periods.

This extended program is, however, dependent upon certain conditions. The geographic location of the school must be one that students can reach safely and easily. The location of the media center in the school should make it possible to keep the center open within reasonable limits of maintenance costs and adequate security measures after regular school hours."<sup>4</sup>

If these standards were met in the school systems, the student would not need to go to the public library for materials needed in his school assignments. The school media center would be able to provide the student with

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<sup>4</sup> American Association of School Librarians and Department of Audiovisual Instruction of the National Education Association, Standards for School Media Programs, (Chicago: American Association of School Librarians and Washington, D.C.: National Education Association), 1969, p. 23.

materials needed for assignments. The public library can take its place in providing complementary material.

To keep up with the changing educational needs of the rapidly increasing numbers of secondary students, media centers need to make effective use of all existing resources and to expand these resources. Unfortunately, the resources are not being used to their fullest extent. Some of the reasons for this are:

1. Limited hours of opening in school and in some public libraries.
2. The necessity for students to leave school on the bus as soon as the official day is over.
3. Increased enrollments which necessitate double sessions, eliminating periods when students might use the media center.
4. Lack of space for the sheer numbers of students and materials.<sup>5</sup>

Extended school library service is the "Golden Utopia," where library resources are available to all students whenever they need them. Media specialists are the most single factor in extending media services. The media specialists leadership in this area is needed or extended services will never develop.<sup>6</sup>

A media specialist contemplating any type of extended service needs to do some thinking. First, the media specialist must thoughtfully examine the service that is now being provided and its relation to the nature of the school. Each media center must develop its own program, keeping in mind the

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<sup>5</sup>American Library Association, Student Use of Libraries (Chicago: American Library Association, 1964), p. 57.

<sup>6</sup>Ester Baker, "The Golden Utopia Becomes a Reality," Illinois Libraries, 47:306, April, 1965.



best possible service to students.

Several questions should be asked and answered before deciding whether a particular school district should offer extended services to its students. Answers to the following questions can provide the basis for an intelligent decision.

1. Do students need media materials to complete the assignments they are given?
2. Would students use the school media center if extended services were offered?
3. What portion of the student body rides the school buses?
4. If they wish to, can students easily reach the school after regular school hours?
5. Can arrangements be made to staff the media center if it were open additional hours?<sup>7</sup>

A questionnaire designed to be administered to all students will supply answers to the first four questions. The media specialists must also be sure that he obtains information about the following items:

1. Student's year in school.
2. Student's course of study.
3. Student's need to use media materials after regular school hours.
4. Student's willingness to use the school media center instead of the public library if the school media center were available.
5. Frequency of student's use of public library materials.
6. Student's opinion of the most convenient media hours.<sup>8</sup>

With the results of such a questionnaire, the media specialist will know in what direction to proceed.

Some schools answered the above questions and found a need for extended services. These schools extended the

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 307

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.,

services by opening evenings, Saturdays and during summers. Some schools met with success while others failed. A few examples of schools that extended their services are summarized on the next few pages.

The Patrick Henry Intermediate School in California extended library services to a student body of seven hundred. The fifth through eighth grade is contained in this school. There were no public libraries in the immediate area. The school library was open with a professional librarian available and volunteer parents to supervise on Wednesdays from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. The average attendance was forty students with the range of students attending from twelve to seventy-nine on a given night.<sup>9</sup>

The beginning of this worthwhile experiment took the initiative of an interested parent. The parent pointed out to the library supervisor the fact that many students could not complete necessary school assignments during the regular school day.

The library supervisor realized that the school library facilities were not being used fully when closed to the students during the evening hours. An informal survey of the parents in the area convinced the supervisor that additional school media services would be desirable.

The school principal assisted in publicizing the project by sending a letter to the parents of each of the students.

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<sup>9</sup>V. Downes and P. Koerpernik, "School Library Open Tonight," California School Libraries, 35:3, January, 1964.

The project was publicized by notices in local newspapers, PTA bulletins, posters made by students and parents, and announcements on the public address system.

The program offered by the school library was generally thought to be successful. A great deal of the success of the program was due to the presence and cooperation of the parents. Excellent school-community relations was implemented before the program was initiated and this provided for a successful program.

A strong trend toward opening school libraries at night is emerging in California, according to data compiled in a statewide survey of school libraries conducted by the Department of Education.

In some communities, night time service in school libraries has been initiated at the request of local public libraries. Public libraries in many urban areas have become concerned in recent years about the overwhelming number of students that come to public libraries at night seeking materials, services, and study facilities.

In other communities evening school library service has been started because of the lack of public libraries for students to use.

The following report was completed by Marvin Howell, Coordinator of School Library Research for the Department of Education in California. The survey of extended hours was conducted in 1963-1964.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Marvin Howell, "Should School Libraries Be Open at Night?" California Education, 2:3, June, 1965.

Eighty junior high and senior high schools were regularly scheduling night library service to students. This was eight per cent of all schools.

At the elementary level, thirteen schools were open one or more nights.

More than five thousand students were serviced at night each week by public schools. The range attending the night openings at schools was from two to one hundred and eighty students per night.

The prevailing practices in school libraries was as follows:

1. Thursday was the night most frequently to be open.
2. The hours of opening ranged from one to four and one half hours per night.
3. School librarians were in charge at sixty-one percent of the libraries.
4. The librarians were paid by the hour - \$5 to \$6 per hour.
5. Parent volunteers or student help was on duty.

The principals and librarians evaluated the success of the night library service. The following are the results:

Excellent	19%	Fair	29%
Good	36%	Poor	16%

Reasons for discontinuing the service in some schools were given:

1. Insufficient use by students
2. Lack of funds for personnel
3. Inadequate library materials
4. Lack of personnel
5. Discipline problems.<sup>11</sup>

This report was written in 1964. Many educational changes have taken place in the past few years that have had a great impact on the use of media centers. These changes were discussed in the opening statements of this paper. The 8% figure of schools in California offering extended hours has surely increased in the last few years.

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 4

The next example of extended hours in a school media center did not meet with success. The Roosevelt High School Library in Des Moines, Iowa offered extended hours to the student body by opening Sunday afternoons from 2-5:00 p.m. The student council requested the extended hours. Attendance was good until the public library in the area, the Westside Branch of the Des Moines Public Library, opened the same hours. The public library is located a mile and half from the high school. The school library decided to close because of lack of attendance. The student council has requested that Roosevelt High School Library be open evenings because the public library is too crowded, but the school library is unlikely to secure the needed extra staff to open the library.<sup>12</sup>

Florida has a state plan that makes possible the use of libraries during the summer. School principals in the county receive from the library supervisor a memorandum each year which encourages a library program for the summer. Not all schools provide a summer library program. The memorandum which describes and encourages a school library program follows:

TO: All School Principals  
FROM: School Library Supervisor  
SUBJECT: Summer Library Program

1. In making plans for the summer enrichment program, we would like to encourage the use of school libraries, particularly in areas where there is no public library service and where the public libraries or branch libraries are too far

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<sup>12</sup>Based on personal correspondence between Charlene Lakin, Librarian at Roosevelt High School, and the writer.

- from the community centers to make regular attendance practical.
2. The program will run for a period of six weeks.
  3. The hours are from 8:15 to 12:15 and 1:15 to 5:15.
  4. The librarians should correlate their programs with other enrichment programs.
  5. A special junior high corrective reading program will be offered as part of the library program.<sup>13</sup>

After thirteen years of experience with the summer library program, Florida librarians continue to examine their twelve month activities and to plan early for the summers to come. Inescapable conclusions are that the summer library program is part of the whole educational effort: the library, summer or winter, exists as a service center and as an agency for enrichment in its own right.

The summer library programs in Florida are well received. Teachers say having the library open during the summer takes the dread out of summer teaching. Children and young people seem to like the informality of the program and the loose organization which fosters variety without requiring daily attendance.<sup>14</sup>

Increasingly, Florida children and their parents, teachers and school administrators realize that school libraries are necessary for academic, personal and cultural pursuits - summer and winter.

Another school that offers summer use of library materials is Archbishop Hoban High School, Akron, Ohio. The summer services were made available because of necessity. There was

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<sup>13</sup>Audrey Newman, "Summer Program for School Libraries, " School Libraries, 10:17-19, March, 1961.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

not enough shelving for the books. A decision was made to permit the student body to take home a carton, armload, or shopping bag full of books for the summer. The response was gratifying. Many boys checked out books required by English classes for summer-time reading, others picked up this or that long novel or trilogy which they had always been hoping to read, yet never found time for during the busy school year.

Summer-time loans were made to those students who could produce a receipt from the Treasurer's Office showing advance payment against next year's tuition. The length of loans varied from six to ten weeks. Overdue fines were a ridiculously low penny a week, in case the family's vacation schedule conflicted with the schedule. The library was open certain mornings and evenings on a given day every week throughout the summer.<sup>15</sup>

Several schools throughout the United States offer extended media hours. The preceding pages have presented a few of these schools and what they have been offering. The schools offering extended hours seem to be successful.

The Office of Education's Statistics of Public School Libraries 1960-61 indicated that at this survey less than 2% of the schools provided library service to high school students in the evening, while approximately 1% offered Saturday service.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Brother John of the Cross, CSC, "Summer-time Stack Problems Solved," Catholic Library World, 38:309, January, 1967.

<sup>16</sup>Mary Helene Mahar, Statistics of Public School Libraries, 1960-61, Part II: Analysis and Interpretation (Washington, D.C.: Department of Health, Education and Welfare), 1964.

In the Fall of 1970, the State Department of Public Instruction's Educational Media Section, sent out a questionnaire to school libraries which included questions about extended hours. Schools were asked to report the number of minutes opened beyond the school day with the school day defined as running from one-half hour before school to one-half hour after school.

According to the information received on the questionnaire, 637 schools reported being open extra time. This average four hours per week or 48 minutes per day. The figures recorded for Saturday were obviously too frequently carry-overs from Friday to be considered.

A rough count of the schools opened two hours or more per day give the following numbers: <sup>17</sup>

	Elementary	Secondary	Total
Monday	8	19	27
Tuesday	8	20	28
wednesday	8	20	28
Thursday	8	20	28
Friday	4	16	20

Gaver and Jones indicated in their article, "Secondary Library Services: A Search for Essentials," that extended hours of library service were provided in a small number of schools, among them were thirty-four secondary schools within eighteen states. These schools were identified by the state library supervisors as having superior programs of service.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Base on personal correspondence between Betty Jo Buckingham, Library Consultant, State Department of Public Instruction, and the writer.

<sup>18</sup>Mary V. Gaver and Milbrey L. Jones, "Secondary Library Service: A Search for Essentials," Teacher College Record, 68:203, December, 1966.



Statistics that would be released for 1970-1971 public school libraries would show a greater percentage of school libraries or media centers offering evening and Saturday services. The federal aid given to school libraries and media centers has done much to develop the media concept in education.

The educational changes and innovations that are being made in the schools has opened up the possibility of more service by the media centers. The media center is the hub of the school. In order for a student to develop to his fullest potential, he must become involved in the use of materials in the media center. As was stated before with the independent study, programmed learning and many other methods used in education today, students will spend a great deal of their time in individualized activity. Students must have the opportunity to use the materials in the media center beyond the regular school day. In the future, more public schools will be forced into extending media center hours in order to meet the demands of the students.

In some communities night time service in school media centers has been initiated at the request of local public librarians. There has been a concern in recent years about the overwhelming numbers of students that come to public libraries at night seeking materials, services and study facilities. Many public libraries have asked the school to share this load by extending media center hours and services. Some schools started evening service because of lack of public libraries in the area for student use.

There can and should be cooperation between the school media center and the public library to meet the needs of school age children. Many times there is cooperation. For example, in the Montgomery County, Maryland Public Schools, the high schools have loaned large collections of children's books during the summer so these materials can be in the range of children that live long distances from a public library.<sup>19</sup>

Also, in the Montgomery County Schools, the elementary media centers were open during the two month summer vacation in order to ease the public library service to 100,000 youngsters turned loose during the summer.<sup>20</sup>

There must be close cooperation between public and school librarians in order for the students to benefit the most. Maybe both need to be open in the evenings for the students to fulfill their assignments.

In a move which will undoubtedly reoccur in other states, the state of New York's Report of the Commissioner of Education Committee on Library Development 1970 recommended that all library service to children in New York be transferred to elementary school media centers. The following are some of the recommendations:

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<sup>19</sup>Richard L. Darling, "School-Public Relations - More Honored than Breach," Library Journal, 94:261, January 15, 1969.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

1. The elementary school media center should have the responsibility and the capacity to meet all needs of all children except those in health, welfare and correctional institutions.
2. Hours of school libraries should be extended through evenings, weekends, and vacation periods.
3. The school media center should be located in an area of the school easily accessible from the outside. Access and transport should be planned by the school district to permit maximum use of school media resources during evenings, weekends, and vacation periods.<sup>21</sup>

In the near future, the public is going to demand more from the school and school personnel. The tax money that goes into providing for an educational program that is operated seven and half to eight hours a day, five days a week, nine months a year should be used to a better advantage. The schools' administration and teaching personnel are going to be held accountable. A few schools are taking advantage of using the school by offering extended services in their media centers.

The visionary school media center will not materialize overnight no matter how much it is needed. The school media specialist is the one person who can best accomplish the development of extended services. As he works and plans he knows that even though the progress is slow the outcome will be worth the struggle.

Ultimately, school media centers must be staffed and equipped to satisfy the needs of the students they serve. Each school system will want to look at their situation

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<sup>21</sup>"Where Will All the Children Go?" American Libraries, 2:56, January, 1971.

before the system decides to offer extended services. As schools begin to use the innovative techniques in their teaching, the media center will become the focal point of the school and will need to extend its services beyond the regular school day.

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