

How Many Oregon School Libraries Meet the Requirements of Oregon's Fully Funded Quality Education Model?

By Patty Sorensen, School Library Consultant
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Background

This analysis attempts to answer the question of how many school libraries in Oregon meet the Fully Funded QEM requirements for a "quality" school library. The data used for this report's analysis was obtained from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) for the 2005-06 school year, as reported by every Oregon public school.

The Oregon Quality Education Model (QEM) was first conceived in 1999 by then-Speaker of the House, Rep. Lynn Lundquist, who formed the Legislative Council on the Quality Education Model. Lundquist's idea was to establish an objective and research-based link between student achievement and the resources devoted to Oregon schools, to be used as a guide in future efforts to fund Oregon schools adequately. In 2001, the Legislative Assembly created the Quality Education Commission (QEC) to serve as a permanent body to update and improve the Quality Education Model. Updates to the initial report were provided in 2004 and 2006. It is on the ODE website at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/initiatives/qualityed/or-quality-education-model.pdf>

The QEM presents three prototype schools, an elementary, middle, and high school, and their suggested resources in terms of staffing, materials, equipment, and other operating expenses. The resources shown for each prototype school define, in the judgment of the Commission, what it takes to provide a "quality" program of instruction that will result in high levels of student achievement.

The Quality Education Model provides information about the resources that the Quality Education Commission determined are necessary for a quality school library in each of the prototype schools, including staffing by certified school library/media specialists and support staff, as well as expenditures for library materials. The QEM has two sets of criteria. One is termed the Baseline Quality Education Model and the other one is the Fully Funded QEM. Our analysis uses the criteria for the Fully Funded "Quality School" QEM. In this year's QEM Report 2006, the library materials data was combined with other expenditure data into a category called "classroom supplies and materials" instead of being listed as a separate line item. We worked with ODE to separate the requirements for library materials from other classroom supplies and materials.

Interpretation and Methodology

In our judgment, it is a serious shortcoming of the online 2004 and 2006 QEM Reports that they do not set clear requirements for school library/media specialists and support staff in the prototype elementary school and for support staff for the prototype middle and high school libraries. The elementary prototype calls for 4.5 FTE "specialists for areas such as art, music, PE, reading, math, TAG, library/media, second language, or child development," and 6.0 FTE "instructional support staff" that is similarly not designated for any particular roles in the school. The prototype notes that "schools choose staff to best meet their specific needs," thus the QEM is not prescriptive about the specific staffing required for a quality school library in an elementary school. For the purpose of this analysis, we chose to make a conservative interpretation of the QEM, and stipulate

that the prototype elementary school must have at least a 0.5 FTE certified library/media specialist and 0.5 FTE support staff. The prototype middle school in the QEM requires ten FTE support staff and the high school prototype requires twenty FTE support staff but does not designate where those support staff are assigned in the online report. Working with ODE we received clarification that support library positions at the middle and high school levels are designated in more detailed reports from the QEC. Therefore we are using the QEC's more detailed report information that lists one support FTE position in both the middle school and high school prototypes in our analysis.

The following table summarizes the criteria for quality school libraries contained in the 2006 QEM Report, as interpreted by the State Library:

<i>QEM Prototype 2006</i>	<i>Certified Library/Media Specialist</i>	<i>Library/Media Support Staff</i>	<i>Library/Media Center Materials (books, periodicals, etc.)</i>
Elementary School	0.5 FTE	0.5 FTE	\$20 per student
Middle School	1.0 FTE	1.0 FTE	\$24 per student
High School	1.0 FTE	1.0 FTE	\$26 per student

Another methodological decision that had to be made again, in order to apply the QEM requirements to the actual data for Oregon school libraries in 2005-06, has to do with the fact that each of the three QEM prototype schools assumes a specific student population size: 340 students in the elementary school, 500 students in the middle school, and 1,000 students in the high school. This being the case, we had to decide whether to adjust the QEM staffing requirements up or down for schools that were significantly larger or smaller than the prototype schools. Our decision, mostly for the sake of clarity and simplicity, was not to do this. In our analysis, all schools' staffing data were compared to the specific requirements of the QEM, as interpreted by the State Library for each level.

In the 2006 Report, the "library materials" line items were grouped together as one category in the online report. To help clarify what items should be reported under "library materials", we asked the ODE for clarification. The response was:

There are two object categories in our accounting system that make up "library materials."

1) Library Books (code 430) described as "Expenditures for regular or incidental purchases of library books available for general use by students, including any reference books, even though such reference books may be used solely in the classroom. Also recorded here are costs of binding or other repair to library books."

2) Periodicals (code 440) described as "Expenditures for periodicals and newspapers. A periodical is any publication appearing at regular intervals of less than a year and continuing for an indefinite period."

For both of these categories, our instructions to school districts are to include books, periodicals, and other materials that are in electronic form as well as paper form.¹

In future online QEC reports we hope that the line items for both support staff and library materials will again be listed separately and not grouped together with other expenditure data. Decision makers need to be given as much information as possible when trying to understand the criteria in the QEC's Reports.

Results for School Year 2005-06

After comparing the data as reported by every Oregon public school for the 2005-06 school year, to the requirements of the 2006 Fully Funded QEM Report discussed above, we determined that only 61 of the 1,249 Oregon school libraries, or 5%, met the 2006 Fully Funded QEM requirements for quality school libraries in the 2005-06 school year. All schools are listed in Appendix A and on the map available on the Oregon State Library's Library Development website at <http://www.oregon.gov/OSL/LD>

Met Fully Funded 2006 QEM

School Year	Elementary	Middle	Jr. High	High School	K-12	Alt./Other/Charter	TOTAL
2005-06	53/710	4/74	0/30	4/213	0/24	0/103	61/1249

The following school districts are to be commended. Many of their school libraries met the Fully Funded QEM criteria for the 2005-2006 school year.

- Beaverton School District: all thirty-one elementary schools, four of their eight middle schools, and one of their six high schools met QEM criteria.
- Neah-Kah-Nie School District: both elementary schools, - and their one high school met the QEM criteria.
- Ontario School District: three of their five elementary schools, and their one high school met the QEM criteria.
- Woodburn School District: three of their four elementary schools met the QEM criteria.

School Libraries that Met the Staffing Requirements of the QEM

While 5% of school libraries in Oregon met both the staffing and the materials expenditure requirements of the 2006 QEM in 2005-06, the table below shows the number and percentage of schools that met the staffing requirements alone.

Met 2007 Fully Funded QEM Staffing Criteria Yearly Comparisons:

School Year	Elementary Staffing	Middle Staffing	Jr. High Staffing	High School Staffing	K-12 Staffing	Alt./Other/Charter staffing	# met staffing	% met staffing
2002-03	198/686	21/172	6/30	62/202	0/24	0/25	287/1139	25%
2003-04	159/719	16/174	4/30	54/206	0/24	0/65	233/1218	19%
2004-05	123/716	36/170	3/30	59/215	0/24	0/91	249/1246	20%
2005-06	121/710	10/170	4/29	57/ 213	0/24	1/103	193/1249	16%

There is a noticeable drop this year in the number of middle schools meeting QEM staffing requirements criteria while both the elementary and high schools meeting QEM staffing requirements held fairly steady.

This short term look at school library staffing should be seen in the context of the long term trend which has seen the number of Oregon school librarians drop by 49.6 % since 1980 and the number of students per librarian more than double.ⁱⁱ

Long Term Trend of School Library Staffing

	<i>1980</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>Difference</i>
Number of Library/Media Specialists	818	412	-49.6 %
Number of K-12 students per Library/Media Specialist	547	1,357	+148 %

When looking at long term staffing trends, one must recognize that the role of the school librarian has changed significantly. School librarians into the 1990’s were primarily print-oriented. Today’s school librarians have expanded their expertise to include electronic technology, teaching and managing electronic technologies, as well as direct reading instruction and support.

Concerns about Data Quality

Again this year we found the quality of the data reported to the Oregon Department of Education to be suspect. In consulting with staff in various schools on their data sample the author found errors in the staffing data reported to ODE from several school districts. It is likely that there are also problems with the quality of the library materials expenditure data. We are continuing to urge members of the [Oregon Association of School Libraries](#) to take an active role in the process of reporting school library data to the Oregon Department of Education, in an effort to improve school library data quality. School library data as reported to the Oregon Department of Education for the school year 2005-06 school year is available at:

<http://www.oregon.gov/OSL/LD/school/index.shtml> .

Conclusion

Oregon school libraries have a long way to go in meeting the requirements of Oregon’s Fully Funded Quality Education Model. It is obvious from the table above that a significant disinvestment in school library services in Oregon schools has been occurring for over two decades. It is discouraging that only 5% of school libraries met the QEM requirements in 2005-06. We continue to look for an upward trend in the quality of services in our school libraries after the past quarter century of decline.

In 2001 the Oregon Educational Media Association (now the Oregon Association of School Libraries) commissioned a research study by Dr. Keith Curry Lance which showed that Oregon reading test scores are higher in schools with higher quality school libraries.ⁱⁱⁱ The relationship between good school libraries and higher test scores was shown even when differences in schools (class size, etc.) and students (poverty, parent’s education, etc.) were taken into account. Dr. Lance’s research validates the need for adequate staffing and library materials expenditures in every Oregon school.

We hope this report, and the reports we will provide in the future, will serve to encourage awareness and greater support for quality school libraries. Today’s students are faced

with a wealth of available information which creates an environment of information overload. Currently the role of the school librarians working with students to locate, evaluate and use information encompasses both print and electronic resources. We are increasingly concerned that the number of school librarians in Oregon continues to decline which does our students and citizens of Oregon a disservice.

The author would like to thank Brian Reeder of the Oregon Department of Education for providing the data and giving additional assistance in the course of this research.

ⁱ Reeder, Brian "RE: definition." E-mail to the author. 8 Aug. 2007 .

ⁱⁱ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Oregon School Directory. Salem, OR: Supt. of Public Instruction, 1980-2006.

ⁱⁱⁱ Lance, Keith Curry, et. al. *Good Schools Have School Librarians*. Redmond: Oregon Educational Media Association, 2001.

Addendum

Schools that met the QEM's school library staffing and expenditures requirements as interpreted by the State Library:

Based on School Year 2005-06 ODE Data	
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	
<i>District Name</i>	<i>School Name</i>
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Aloha-Huber Park School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Barnes Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Beaver Acres Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Bethany Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Cedar Mill Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Chehalem Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Cooper Mountain Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Elmonica Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Errol Hassell Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Findley Elementary
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Fir Grove Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Greenway Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Hazeldale Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Hiteon Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Jacob Wismer Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Kinnaman Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	McKay Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	McKinley Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Montclair Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Nancy Ryles Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Oak Hills Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Raleigh Hills Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Raleigh Park Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Ridgewood Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Rock Creek Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Scholls Heights Elementary School

BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Sexton Mountain Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Terra Linda Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Vose Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	West Tualatin View Elementary School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	William Walker Elementary School
GASTON SCH DIST 511J	Gaston Elementary School
GLENDALE SCH DIST 77	Glendale Elementary School
HARRISBURG SCH DIST 7J	Harrisburg Elementary School
NEAH-KAH-NIE SCH DIST 56	Garibaldi Elementary School
NEAH-KAH-NIE SCH DIST 56	Nehalem Elementary School
ONTARIO SCH DIST 8	Aiken Elementary School
ONTARIO SCH DIST 8	Alameda Elementary School
ONTARIO SCH DIST 8	May Roberts Elementary School
PORTLAND SCH DIST 1J	Beach Elementary School
SHERWOOD SCH DIST 88J	J Clyde Hopkins Elementary School
SHERWOOD SCH DIST 88J	Middleton Elementary School
SILVER FALLS SCH DIST 4J	Eugene Field Elementary School
TIGARD-TUALATIN SD 23J	Bridgeport Elementary School
TIGARD-TUALATIN SD 23J	Charles F Tigard Elementary School
TIGARD-TUALATIN SD 23J	Edward Byrom Elementary School
TIGARD-TUALATIN SD 23J	James Templeton Elementary School
TIGARD-TUALATIN SD 23J	Mary Woodward Elementary School
TIGARD-TUALATIN SD 23J	Tualatin Elementary School
WARRENTON-HAMMOND SCH DIST 30	Warrenton Grade School
WOODBURN SCH DIST 103	Heritage Elementary
WOODBURN SCH DIST 103	Nellie Muir Elementary School
WOODBURN SCH DIST 103	Washington Elementary School
MIDDLE SCHOOLS	
<i>District Name</i>	<i>School Name</i>
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Cedar Park Middle School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Conestoga Middle School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Highland Park Middle School
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Meadow Park Middle School
HIGH SCHOOLS	
<i>District Name</i>	<i>School Name</i>
BEAVERTON SCH DIST 48J	Beaverton High School
NEAH-KAH-NIE SCH DIST 56	Neah-Kah-Nie High School
ONTARIO SCH DIST 8	Ontario High School
PORTLAND SCH DIST 1J	Madison High School