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BUILDING BETTER WORKING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HIGH  
SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS AND SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY  
COORDINATORS

by  
Jennifer Lynn Sedlock

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
Master of Arts Degree  
of  
The Graduate School  
at  
Rowan University  
May 11, 2006

Approved by

Advisor

Date Approved May 11, 2006

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## ABSTRACT

Jennifer L. Sedlock

### BUILDING BETTER WORKING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS AND SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY COORDINATORS

2005/06

Dr. Marilyn Shontz

Master of Arts in School and Public Librarianship

The impetus for this study came from numerous conversations regarding the frustrations colleagues had when communicating with their technology coordinators and/or technology services. In many ways, technology and technology-integration within school media centers are just as important these days as traditional curriculum and teachings. Embracing this fact is essential to a successful school library media program, especially those programs whose main goal is to produce the next generation of information-literate, life-long learners. By analyzing the results and open-ended responses of a survey presented to New Jersey high school library media specialists, guidelines were proposed on how to establish and maintain a better working relationship between the school library media specialist and the technology coordinator.

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## CHAPTER 1

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Technology services in schools and school library media centers provide much needed technology, software, equipment, training, and support. However, there may be a disconnect between school library media specialists and the technology coordinators who serve the school. This disconnect can result in a lack of communication between the media specialist and the technology services area, which can stifle students' access to new technologies and prevent students from learning information literacy skills needed to succeed through lifelong learning.

Educators know that all students must successfully demonstrate skills set by state, county, and school curriculum standards. The publication, *National Educational Technology Standards for Students* (1998), presented by the International Society for Technology Education stated in its introduction:

To live, learn, and work successfully in an increasingly complex and information-rich society, students must use technology effectively. Within a sound educational setting, technology can enable students to become: capable information technology users; information seekers,



analyzers, and evaluators; problem solvers and decision-makers; creative and effective users of productivity tools; communicators, collaborators, publishers, and producers; and informed, responsible, and contributing citizens. (p. i)

New Jersey's high school students will be able to achieve this if good working relationships and communications exist between school library media specialists and technology services. Are high school library media specialists communicating with their technology coordinators in order to provide the best technologies available to their students? Are high school technology coordinators communicating and providing the necessary services and support to their school library media specialists? Many school library media specialists see technology, and those associated with it, as either a threat or one more thing added onto an already exploding list of things-to-do (Anderson, 2005). What many school library media specialists do not realize is that they should develop a working relationship with the technology staff and embrace that relationship, for the sake of their students (Joiner, 2005).

### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine high school library media specialists' perceptions of the levels of communication between school library media specialists and technology coordinators in high schools within the state of New Jersey. This study also discovered if the type of communication led to

better technology services, support, and relationships which can, in turn, develop more information literate students who will be successful lifelong learners.

This study resulted in the development of guidelines proposed to facilitate building working relationships between high school library media specialists and technology coordinators in hopes of creating a successful school library media program in regards to technology.

### Research Questions

The hypothesis considered was that the high school library media program depends upon successful communications with and working relationships between the school library media specialist and the school technology coordinator. Questions that were considered included:

1. What were the perceptions of the high school library media specialists about communications (such as public relations)?
2. What were the attitudes of school library media specialists toward technology coordinators?
3. In what ways did high school library media specialists communicate with their technology coordinators in order to provide the best technologies available to their students? How often did this communication occur?
4. What did the average communications between the high school library media specialist and the technology coordinator consist of? Were the communications between the two positions primarily for management or instruction? How successful were the communications?

5. Were there high school library media programs in New Jersey that had developed guidelines for communication between school library media specialists and technology coordinators?

Based on the answers to these questions and on the literature search, guidelines were developed for use by school library media specialists on establishing and maintaining successful working relationships with the technology coordinator.

#### Definition of Terms

*Communication* – For the purpose of this study, communication is defined as the cooperation between the technology coordinator and the school library media specialist. Examples of this cooperation can include both formal and informal written and oral formats and working jointly by planning for curriculum, equipment needs, technology needs, and training needs.

*Lifelong/Independent learning* – Unlimited, independent learning throughout one's life as defined by the following standards retrieved from the publication, *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*, created by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) in 1998. Although there are nine information literacy standards, this definition concentrates on the following three:

- Standard 4: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and pursues information related to personal interests.
- Standard 5: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and appreciates literature and other creative expressions of information.
- Standard 6: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and strives for excellence in information seeking and knowledge generation. (p. 8-9)

*High school/high school students* – Schools surveyed within the context of this study include schools housing students from grades 9-12, with no limitations in regards to inclusion or cooperating study with middle schools (grades 6-8).

*Information Literacy* – Eisenberg, Lowe, and Spitzer (2004) studied numerous definitions of the phrase “information literacy,” and concurred that all definitions were validated by the following quote from the American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy:

To be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.

(p. 11)

For the purpose of this study, *information literacy* also signifies the following standards derived from *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*:

- Standard 1: The student who is information literate accesses information efficiently and effectively.
- Standard 2: The student who is information literate evaluates information critically and competently.
- Standard 3: The student who is information literate uses information accurately and creatively. (AASL & AECT, 1998, p. 8)

*List\_serv* – For the purpose of this study, a *list\_serv* is an electronic mailing list, available through the Internet, generally directed at a specific interest group.

*School library media specialist* – The *Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science* notes that a school library media specialist is a librarian trained to deliver services in a school library media center. The school library media specialist also:

...supports the curriculum through collection development, teaches research and library skills appropriate to grade level, assists students with reading selections appropriate to reading level, helps classroom teachers integrate library services and multimedia materials into instructional programs, establishes standards of behavior for the library, and assists students [administrators and teachers] in developing information-seeking skills and habits for lifelong learning. (Reitz, 2004-5)

For the purpose of this study, the school library media specialist has acquired the appropriate education and school media specialist certification as required by the state of New Jersey, or is in the process of completing coursework to gain this certification.

*Successful library media center program* – For the purpose of this study, successful library media center programs “provide and support equitable, transparent, and quality access to technology” (Anderson, 2005, p. 16) and also provide current information and technology in a variety of formats. (Anderson, 2005)

*Technology* – For the purpose of this study, the definition for “high technology” provided by TechWeb (2005):

Refers to the latest advancements in computers and electronics as well as to the social and political environment and consequences created by such machines.

(TechEncyclopedia, 2005, high tech, ¶ 1)

*Technology Coordinator* – Hofer, Chamberlin, and Scot (2004) identify a technology coordinator as a “school- or district-based... director who [has] the responsibility of overseeing infrastructure, equipment, purchases, and integration” and a technology integration specialist as “a school-based position whose primary concern is empowering teachers to harness the power of technology integration for student learning” (Hofer, Chamberlin, & Scot, 2004, Feature, ¶ 1). For the purpose of this study, these two meanings were combined to define the technology coordinator as: a school- or district-based administrator

who has the responsibility of overseeing infrastructure, equipment, purchases, and integration of technology into the district, and who is also focused on empowering teachers and school media specialists to harness the power of technology integration for student learning. (Note – the technology coordinator, for purposes of this study, is not the person who teaches computer skills directly to students.)

*Technology plan* – A written policy used to classify, attain, execute, and assess a library’s technological systems and services. This plan determines purchasing information, support, education, and goals in relation to the long-term success of a library’s technology program (Reitz, 2004-5).

*Technology services (department)* – For purposes of this study, a school-wide department, led by a technology coordinator, that provides wide array of technologies, support, and service to the administration, teachers, and school library media center (Loertscher, 2002).

### Assumptions and Limitations

Specific and easy-to-understand questions were asked of survey participants to of receive reliable information regarding the attitudes and perceptions of high school library media specialists towards communication and cooperation with technology coordinators.

For the purposes of this study, survey participants and research were limited to the attitudes and perceptions of the school library media specialist only. The results of this study did not include opinions or research from the technology

coordinator viewpoint. In addition, because the survey was delivered electronically, the respondents were limited to those who had access to and used the Internet, as well as to those who selected to participate in the survey.



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## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Literature discussing the working relationship between high school library media specialists and technology coordinators was limited. Much of the literature that was available described the relationship as unfavorable, and offered few suggestions on how to establish and maintain a good connection. Sharon Joiner even stated that “some librarians, frankly, see their technology chief as the least likely person in the entire district with whom they would share a cup of coffee” (Joiner, 2005, p. 42). This chapter reviews literature that discussed school library media specialists’ attitudes toward technology and toward communication with other members of administration to provide insight into the basis for much needed relationships with the technology coordinator.

#### Background

Joiner (2005) explained that the relationship between the technology coordinator and school library media specialist was especially important, as both positions have common tenets and goals within the administration of the school. These goals may include: flexibility when serving students and staff; familiarity with the curriculum in order to provide necessary and better resources; public

relations and leadership skills when working with teachers, staff, and other members of administration; and creation of an environment that promotes the success of the students (p. 42-43). *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (1998) noted that in addition to the above common tenets and goals:

Three basic ideas – collaboration, leadership, and technology – underlie the vision of library media programs.

These ideas provide unifying themes for guiding the effective library media specialist and for infusing all the activities, services, and functions of an effective, student-centered program. (AASL & AECT, 1998, p. 47)

Joiner also stated that as members of administration, both technology coordinators and school library media specialists have a “natural link” and should strive to combine their programs for ultimate success (Joiner, 2005, p. 43).

The main focus for both positions should be the success of the students through services they each provide. According to Joiner, technology coordinators are responsible for providing the best tools (networks, capacity, hardware, and software) possible to the school in order for students and staff to access and use the reliable information and programs that help carry out the goals and responsibilities of the school library media specialist (Joiner, 2005). Loertscher (2002) stated that, “together, both specialists are poised to partner with teachers in the effort to enhance learning” and noted that a good working relationship between the two is a “win, win situation” (p. 37).

## School Library Media Specialists' Attitudes toward Technology Coordinators

As noted previously, the literature provided little positive insight into school library media specialists' opinions and attitudes toward their school technology coordinators. Mary Alice Anderson (2005) stated that even though the technology coordinator, technical support staff, library support staff, and the school library media specialist are ideally all part of the same "tech team," school library media specialists do not feel as if they are always on the same side of the scrimmage line, which creates a discord between the two administrators. Anderson provided a few of the most common complaints from school library media specialists regarding technology coordinators:

- Not allowed to add content to Web site
- Not allowed access to servers (could not pass security)
- Locked out of network management area (thus having to rely on the coordinator to fix, which may cause a delay)
- Depending upon coordinators who are not always able to get the job done in the time needed

(Anderson, 2005, p. 109)

This type of relationship is obviously not effective in providing the best access to information and technology to help achieve the collective goal of preparing successful students for the "information age" (Gardner, 2004, p. 48).

## School Library Media Specialists' Attitudes toward Technology

Anderson agreed with Joiner, but also mentioned that even in this advanced technological society, many school library media specialists still see technology (and, as an extension, technology coordinators) "as a threat; [and] others see it as just one more thing to do" (Anderson, 2005, p. 14). Anderson noted that up-to-date technology is an integral part of a school library media program's existence, and as studies by Keith Curry Lance and David Loertscher (as well as others) have shown, there is a positive correlation between a high-tech environment, a strong school library media program, and student academic achievement (Anderson, 2005).

In his technology guide for principals and superintendents, David Loertscher (2002) stated that technology was not a fad that would disappear any time soon. In fact, principals and administrators are paying attention to the technology abilities of new school library media specialist candidates, as well as making sure their current specialists are keeping up with advancements in technology through professional development, technology journal subscriptions, seminars, etc. Anderson (2005) stated that these administrators want school library media specialists that are "tech-savvy" (p. 16) and who are willing to work with technology coordinators in order to fulfill the following *National Educational Technology Goals*:

1. All teachers and students will have modern computers in their classrooms.
2. Every classroom will be connected to the information superhighway.

3. All teachers in the nation will have the training and the support they need to help all students learn through computers and the information superhighway.
4. Effective and engaging software and online resources will be an integral part of every school curriculum.

(Loertscher, 2002, p. 37)

Loertscher (2002) noted that the high quality information-and-technology-rich school media center as well as the professional school library media specialist who is a true leader (p. 7) should also play significant roles in fulfilling goals three and four.

Regardless of how some school library media specialists feel regarding technology, many are now paving the technology road for their schools. Sally Brewer and Peggy Milam recently completed *School Library Journal's* first technology survey, and published the results in June 2005. Using the information from responses of 1,571 K-12 school library media specialists from the United States, the surveyors noted the following statistics:

- 67% help plan technology programming
- 95% provide instruction to students
- 84% provide instruction to teachers
- 60% collaborate with teachers to integrate technology into the classroom
- 66% have a library Web site
- 72% have designed the library Web site
- 31% manage their school's Web site
- 70% have a Web-based OPAC

(Brewer & Milam, 2005)

Interestingly, results of Brewer and Milam's survey showed that school library media specialists were also taking on technology-administration roles: more than two-thirds of the responding school library media specialists claimed that they served on technology committees within their schools; 50% of those assisted with creating various acceptable technology usage policies; and 30% of respondents also held positions within their district technology team (Brewer & Milam, 2005). The Kentucky School Media Association Board of Directors conducted an online survey (regarding professional development needs) in Kentucky in 2003, that determined, among other things, that 34% of the responding school library media specialists also held the position of their school's technology coordinator (Gardner, 2004). Sharon Joiner (2005) encouraged school library media specialists to incorporate technology as "another of the many hats" they wear (p. 43) which will, ultimately, turn technology and technology literacy into academic achievement.

### School Library Media Specialists' Attitudes toward Communication

There was a great deal of literature available that supported and provided effective communication strategies and techniques for use between the school library media specialist and principals, teachers, or parents. Overall, school library media specialists often take as much opportunity as possible to communicate with administrators (mainly principals), teachers, and parents (Brewer & Milam, 2005). In contrast, few technology coordinators "who lead, join

teachers and library media specialists in enhancing learning through technology” (Loertscher, 2002, p. 65). It is essential that communication occur in order to provide a successful learning environment for students.

In 1998, Drs. Marilyn Miller and Marilyn Shontz presented a follow-up report to their 1996 study of the technologies that responding school library media centers utilize. The study illustrated that “high tech” school library media centers (which, in the 1996 study were media centers that utilized an automation circulation system and an online public access catalog, spent more money on technology, and enhanced their school curriculums by integrating more technology) had school library media specialists that spent more time planning and communicating with principals and teachers (4.19 hours per week) than specialists in non-high-tech libraries (2.90 hours per week) (Miller & Shontz, 1996; Miller & Shontz 1998). Out of the 365 high-tech libraries that responded to the survey, the following statistics about communication activities were generated:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| a) Face-to-face formal meetings at least once a week (with principal)  | 24% |
| b) Face-to-face formal meetings at least once a month (with principal) | 30% |
| c) Face-to-face formal meetings 3-5 times a year                       | 30% |
| d) Teachers meeting at least once a month                              | 72% |
| e) Written memo/information communication at least once a week         | 54% |
| f) Written memo/informational communication monthly                    | 24% |
| g) Written memo/informational communication 3-5 times a year           | 17% |
| h) Newsletter at least twice a year                                    | 29% |



i) Annual report	41%
j) Phone conversations as needed	48%
k) E-mail as needed	28%

(Miller & Shontz, 1998, p. 31)

According to these statistics, school library media specialists did make it a point to maintain some levels of communication with principals and teachers.

Loertscher (2002) stated that teachers and school library media specialists team together to successfully:

- plan goals and objectives of the unit;
- complete preparations for the unit;
- jointly teach the learning objectives;
- utilize technology to achieve learning objectives;
- assess learning and the learning process;
- assess the materials, information, and information technology used.

(Loertscher, 2002, p. 9)

Ultimately, the bottom line of successful communication should be that “when two professionals are delivering a quality learning experience, the odds of success are doubled” (Loertscher, 2002, p.9). The same should hold true when the school library media specialist and the technology coordinator communicate.

Unfortunately, effective communication strategies between these two administrative positions were not laid out as clearly in the literature as were

strategies for communication between school library media specialists and teachers. However, Hartzell suggested that:

...association with and support from people at upper levels in the hierarchy enhance a person's credibility and leverage with co-workers; a strong relationship with the *principal* can help you become more visible while it aids in the development of alliances.

(Hartzell, 2003, p. 93)

This statement could easily exchange *principal* for *technology coordinator* and have the same meaning and effect for the role of the school library media specialist when communicating with the technology coordinator.

### Suggestions for Building Working Relationships

Much of the literature provided many suggestions to be used in forging a successful working relationship with administrators (i.e., principals), teachers, and other support staff. In regards to creating and maintaining a relationship with technology coordinators, most of the literature stated that school library media specialists should "work with information systems or technology support staff" (Anderson, 2005, p. 109), and "become involved with school technology planning" (Gardner, 2004, p. 48), but offered few concrete guidelines on how to make that possible. As working with the technology services department and becoming more involved is sometimes easier said than done, the results of this study provided proposed guidelines for establishing and maintaining a successful

working relationship between the high school library media specialist and the technology coordinator.

Sharon Joiner (2005), however, did provide three basic strategies for school library media specialists to build a successful working relationship with the technology coordinator:

1. Empower teachers to become savvy technology users – serve as an intermediary between teachers and the technology coordinator to meet the technology needs of teachers.
2. Be a worthy and willing partner, resisting the urge to act territorially – albeit one of the reasons that there is strife between school library media specialist and technology coordinators, media specialists can effectively manage the relationship to remain an ally to the coordinator – not a threat.
3. Learn as much as possible, so you can model the successful uses of technology – read, observe, learn, and report; this will make achieving the previous guideline much easier.

(Joiner, 2005, p. 44)

Joiner's guidelines and the study results were used to create more developed and pragmatic guidelines as part of this study.

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## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The following chapter describes the method used to provide research regarding the existing working relationships between school library media specialists and technology coordinators throughout high schools located in New Jersey. Using the research design and data collection described below, guidelines were developed on how to create and maintain a successful and enjoyable working relationship between individuals serving in the two positions.

#### Overall Design and Justification

Because a more pragmatic research approach was needed to determine the current working relationships between New Jersey high school library media specialists and technology coordinators, the Action Research method within the greater Applied Research category was used (Powell & Connaway, 2004). This method allowed the research itself to focus “on problem definition and resolution” (Powell & Connaway, 2004, p. 54) and allowed the results of the study to provide “information that is immediately usable in the resolution of the actual problem” (Powell & Connaway, 2004, p. 53).

For purposes of this study, the method of specific research used to collect the necessary data was the Survey Research method. Powell and Connaway (2004) quoted Kidder and Judd when describing survey research as “the research strategy where one collects contemporary data (p. 84) from all or part of a population to assess the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelations of naturally occurring variables” (p. 60). As the goal of the research study was to survey the current experiences of a large number of high school library media specialists throughout the state, the exploratory survey method used was the Experience Survey. This type of survey gathers and compares the experiences of professionals in a certain field (Powell & Connaway, 2004). Through the Experience Survey, evidence of the need to develop guidelines on how to create a successful working relationship was shown.

The simple breakdown of the research methods used for the purposes of this study is:

- Applied Research
  - Action Research
  - Survey Research
    - Exploratory Survey
      - Experience Survey

(Powell & Connaway, 2004)

## Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

As noted in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to determine high school library media specialists' perceptions of the levels of communication between school library media specialists and technology coordinators in high schools within the state of New Jersey. This study also discovered if the type of communication led to better technology services, support, and relationships which can, in turn, develop more information literate students who will be successful lifelong learners.

One of the study results was the development of guidelines to facilitate building working relationships between high school library media specialists and school technology coordinators in order to help create a successful school library media program in regards to technology. Questions that were considered while developing this study included:

1. What were the perceptions of the high school library media specialists about communication (such as public relations)?
2. What were the attitudes of school library media specialists to technology coordinators?
3. In what ways did high school library media specialists communicate with their technology coordinators in order to provide the best technologies available to their students? How often did this communication occur?
4. What did the average communication between the high school library media specialist and the technology coordinator consist of? Were the

communications between the two positions primarily for management or instruction? How successful was the communication?

5. Were there high school library media programs in New Jersey that had already developed guidelines for communication between school library media specialists and technology coordinators?

### Population and Sample

According to the New Jersey Department of Education's Web site, 380 high schools were eligible to participate in the study by completing the electronic survey. Schools surveyed within the context of this study included schools housing students from grades 9-12, with no limitations in regards to inclusion or cooperating study with middle schools (grades 6-8).

For the purpose of this study, the sample and population were the same. The sample consisted of respondents who were self-selected, as participation in the electronic survey was not mandatory.

### Method of Data Collection and Instruments Used

In order to assess an accurate view of the opinions of existing working relationships between school library media specialists and technology coordinators, an electronic survey was created using SurveyMonkey.com. The survey URL was distributed through the list\_servs (online discussion groups) of: LM\_NET, South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative, Central Jersey Regional Library Cooperative, Highlands Regional Library Cooperative, and INFOLINK:



Eastern New Jersey Library Cooperative. The request for participation in the study was delivered on five occasions through electronic mail to the online discussion groups within a 30-day window from February 16, 2006 through March 16, 2006.

The fact that population of the LM\_NET online discussion group consisted of national and international school library media specialists was taken into consideration upon release of the request. For this population, the survey was targeted only to New Jersey high school media specialists by conforming to the following format on the subject line of the electronic mail: *SEC: NJ HS Media Specialists/Librarians.*

### Variables

As the purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions and attitudes that high school library media specialists had towards technology coordinators, identified variables were difficult to measure. The factors that were measurable, according to the results of the survey, were as follows:

- Number of school library media specialists that serve in individual high schools
- Number of paid school library media support staff provided by the high school
- Percentage of respondents' schools that provide a school technology coordinator

- Average number of years the respondents have served in K-12 school library media centers
- Average number of years the respondents have served in their current high school
- Average number of students the respondents' high school library media centers serve
- Location of high school library media center by county
- Contact with technology coordinator initiated
- Frequency of contact
- Length of contact
- Discussion items: management and instruction
- High school library media specialists' perception of success of communication

All other results, either through the literature or the provided survey, is based on high school library media specialists' perceptions and attitudes of technology coordinators.

### Reliability and Validity

Reliability of the responses and the validity of the survey itself are extremely important when using statistical data to help portray attitudes and perceptions of one group towards another. As this research survey was distributed via five Internet discussion groups, and when answered, was then delivered and analyzed anonymously, it was difficult to ensure reliability and

validity by relying on the calculated analysis of SurveyMonkey.com alone. Each survey was carefully reviewed and compared with others to ensure reliability and validity. As surveys were returned incomplete, they were immediately removed and electronic statistics were recalculated to ensure no incorrect or misrepresented information was passed through the study.

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## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The online survey provider SurveyMonkey.com was the vehicle used to deliver the questionnaire to interested participants, and was also used to analyze initial raw data upon return of the survey. Upon further review of the initial results, it was determined that a more in-depth investigation of the individual survey responses was needed to eliminate surveys that may not have been completed properly. Further analysis of the data was conducted with the assistance of the Microsoft Excel software, which was also used to create the charts and graphs.

#### Response Rates and Adjustments

According to the *New Jersey School Directory* located on the New Jersey Department of Education Web site, 380 high schools (housing grades 9-12) were eligible to participate in this study by completing the provided survey. It is unknown, using this information, how many of the 380 eligible high schools included a media center or employed a media specialist. Reaching this population and sample of high school library media specialists within these schools relied solely upon their involvement with any one of the five electronic

list\_servs used to deliver the survey link to SurveyMonkey.com. Potential participants were contacted five times through the electronic list\_servs, and were given a 30-day window to complete the survey. The survey opened on February 16, 2006, and closed on March 16, 2006.

According to SurveyMonkey.com, there were 83 surveys submitted for review upon completion of the survey window. This would indicate a 22% response rate. However, upon further review of the individual survey responses, 12 of the 83 surveys were incomplete, and were not eligible for inclusion. These 12 surveys were immediately removed to avoid misrepresentation; the statistics used reflected this exclusion. Therefore, 71 valid surveys were eligible for inclusion in the study, and were used in final analysis. Based upon the 71 surveys received and declared valid from the initial population of 380 eligible schools, the valid response rate for the purpose of this study was 19%.

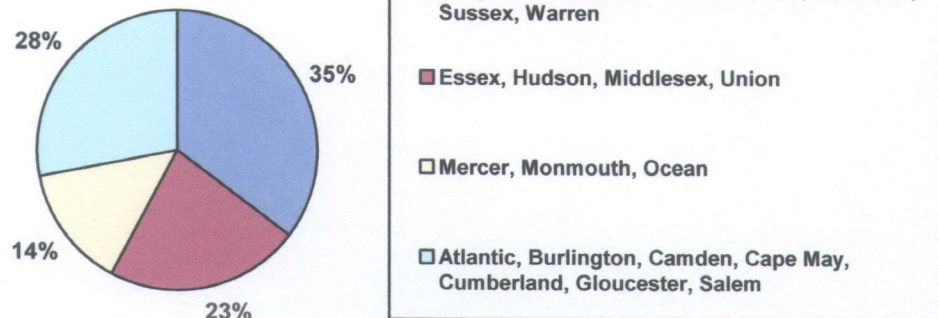
#### Presentation of Results: Demographics

The survey opened and closed with questions related to the location, size, staffing, and years of experience of the high school library media center and specialists. As these variables were constant, current, and unbiased, answering these questions was a requirement to move through and complete the survey.

Initially, it was anticipated that the greatest number of participants would be located in the Southern New Jersey region (Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem counties). Upon final review, the Northern New Jersey region (Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset,

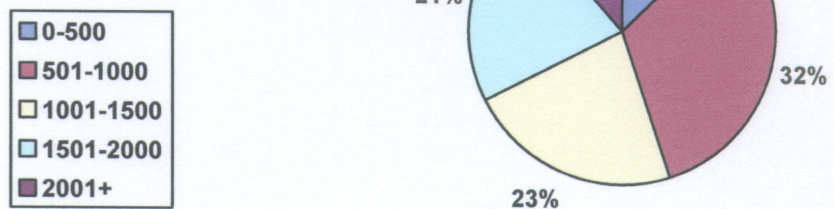
Sussex, Warren counties) drew the largest number of participants at 35% of the total response rate (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Response by County**  
N=71 responses



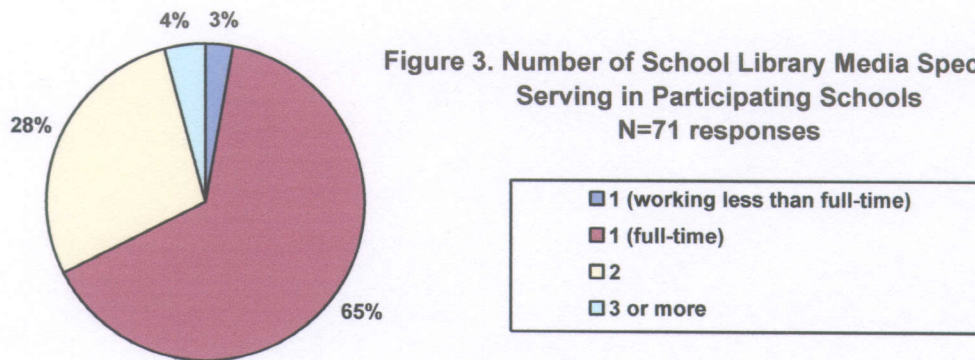
The highest percentage of respondents stated that their high school library media centers served between 501-1000 students (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Number of Students Served by Participating High School Library Media Centers**  
N=71 responses



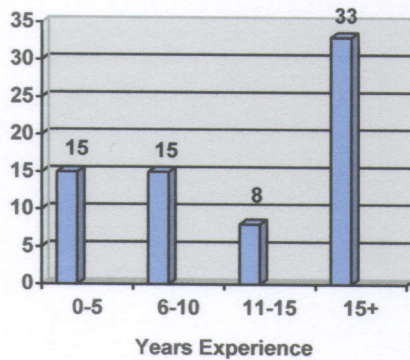
Although most of the participating high schools employed 1 (*full-time*) school library media specialist (65%), with the vast majority of those employed in high schools that served 501-1000 students (32), 100% of the schools who employed 3 or more school library media specialists were located in Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, and Union counties, and had a population of over 1500 students (see Figure 3).



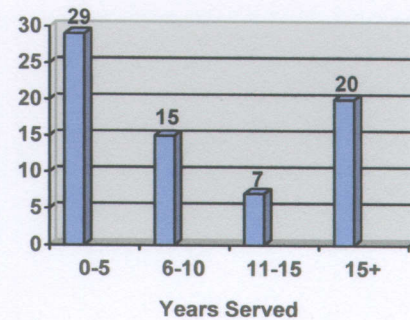


The majority of high school library media specialists (n=33) responding to the survey averaged more than 15 years experience in K-12 school library media centers, but the highest percentage of respondents (41%) had only served in their current high school media centers from 0-5 years (see Figures 4 and 5).

**Figure 4. Years Experience in K-12 School Library Media Centers**  
N=71 responses



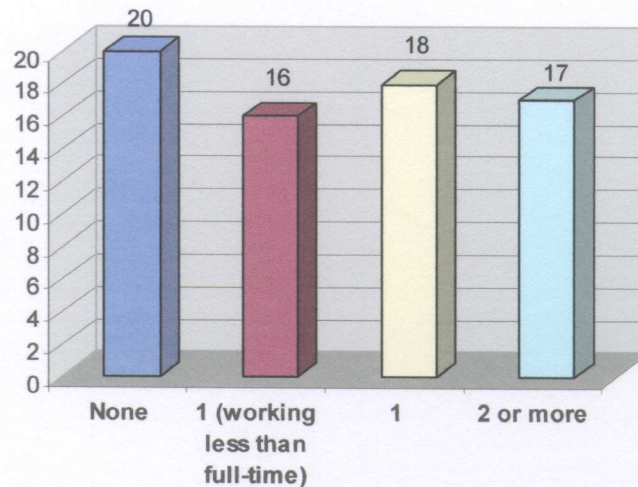
**Figure 5. Number of Years in Current School Library Media Center**  
N=71 responses



In addition, the respondents reported how many paid support staff members the school provided for the high school library media center. Although there was no accompanying definition of “paid support staff member”, this title included all paid staff (i.e., aides, clerks, paid parent-volunteers) (see Figure 6).



Figure 6. Number of Paid Support Staff in Participating School Library Media Centers  
N=71 responses



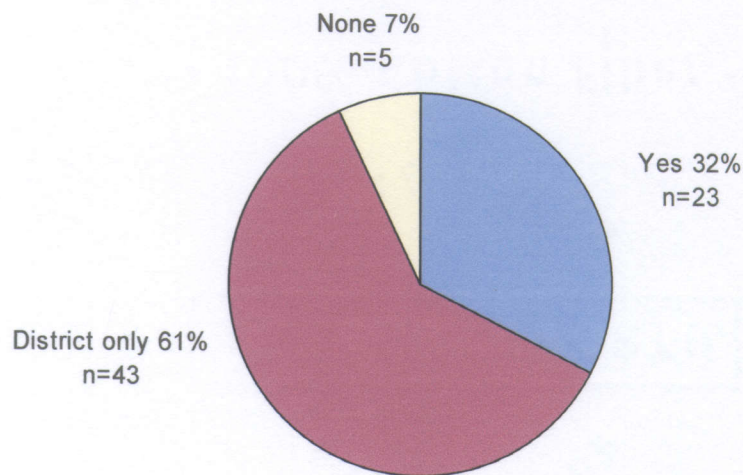
One of the variables of interest for the purpose of this study was the percentage of responding high schools that employed a *school* technology coordinator who provided technology services *solely* to the high school and the high school library media center. Only 32% (23 responses) of the participating high schools employed a *school* technology coordinator; 83% of those school technology coordinators maintained their offices in the same building as the high school library media specialist (see Figures 7 and 8). Analysis of the open-ended responses required for answering yes to this question concluded that 16 of the school technology coordinators' offices were located on the same floor as, next door to, across from, or actually in the high school library media center. Of the remaining 68% of the responses regarding the employment of a technology coordinator, 90% of those (43 responses) stated that their district employed a district technology coordinator who provided technology services to the entire



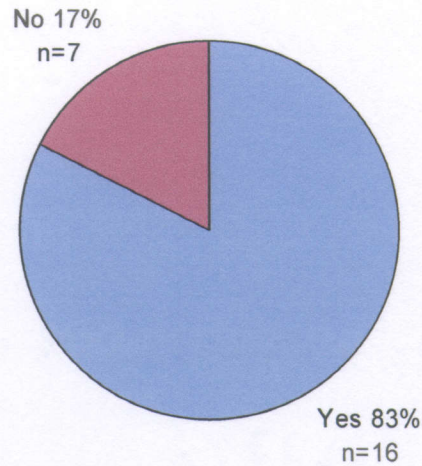
district, or at least to many schools within the district. The questions that remained (amount of time spent for communication, tasks discussed during communication, etc.) were thus answered by the 66 participants whose district employed *either* a school- or a district-technology coordinator. This administrator is referred to in all charts as the Technology Coordinator.

Five high school media specialists (totaling 7% of the entire response rate) advised that neither their school nor their district employed or provided a technology coordinator. These five responses are not included in Figures 7-14; however, their open-ended responses to Question 21 of the electronic survey are included in the proposed guidelines and in Appendix C.

**Figure 7. Number of Participating High Schools with Technology Coordinator Services in the School or District**  
N=71 responses



**Figure 8. Percentage of School Technology Coordinators with Offices  
in Same School as Library Media Specialist  
N=23 responses out of 71 total**

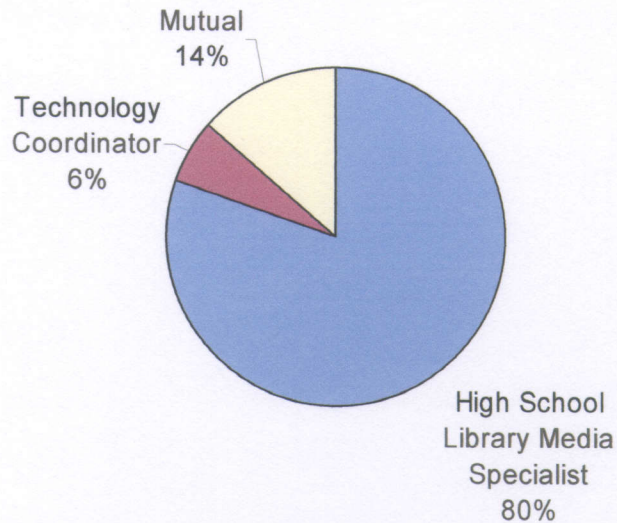


Presentation of Results: Communication, Behaviors, and  
Attitudes

The average participant of the study agreed that it was the high school library media specialist who generally initiated communication and/or meetings with the technology coordinator (80% of the responses), however, 14% concurred that either the school library media specialist or the technology coordinator did initiate contact (see Figure 9).

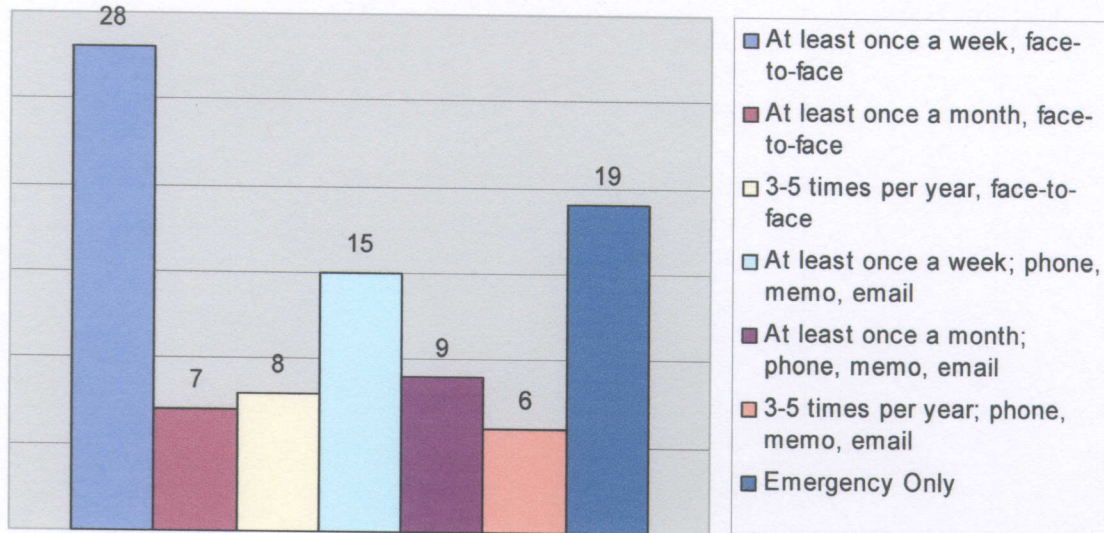


**Figure 9. Regarding Meeting with the Technology Coordinator, Who Generally Initiates Contact?**  
N=66 responses

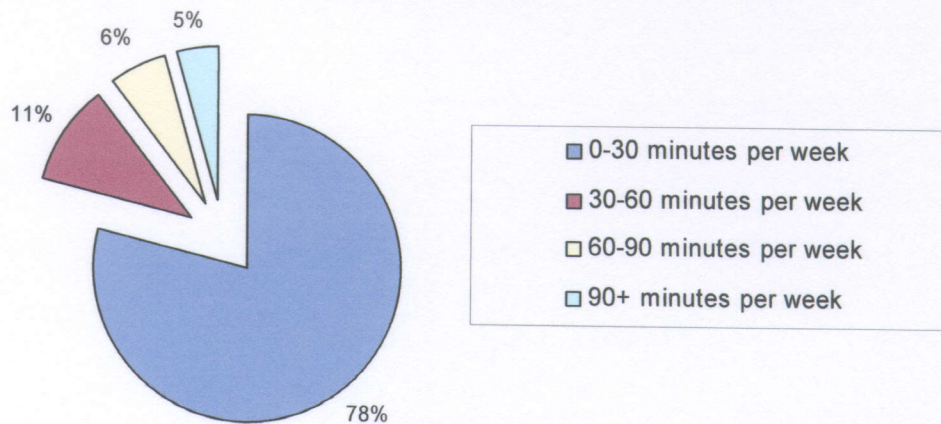


According to the following data, communication between the school library media specialist and the technology coordinator occurred on a regular basis (30%, *At least once a week, face-to-face*). However, the statistics from the survey also showed that this communication was limited: 78% of the respondents claimed that this communication was limited to *0-30 minutes per week*. Also, as the respondents were able to select more than one option in regards to how often this communication occurred, 13 participants who selected *At least once a week, face-to-face* also selected *Emergency Only*.

**Figure 10. How Often High School Library Media Specialists and Technology Coordinators Communicated**  
N=66 responses



**Figure 11. Minutes Per Week High School Library Media Specialists Spent with Technology Coordinators**  
N=66 responses

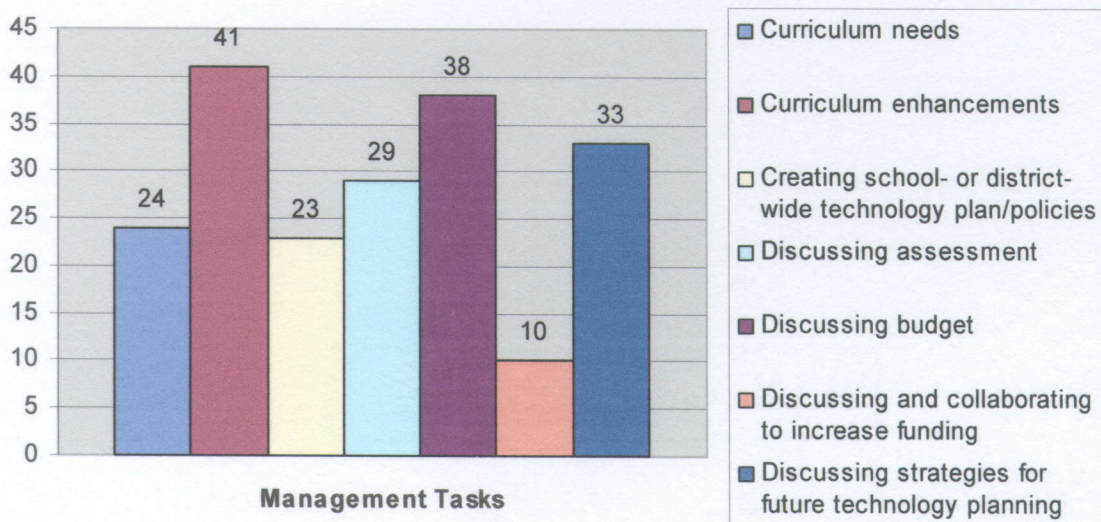


When communication between the school library media specialist and the technology coordinator did occur, regardless of meeting format, most survey participants identified a variety of management and information tasks that were



discussed. Sixty-one (61) participants agreed with the various management tasks provided (five participants who did not answer this question were from the group that did not employ a technology coordinator; the reasons for the other five not answering this question were unknown from the data), with the highest percentage of responses advising that the most discussed management task was *curriculum enhancements* (i.e., discussing addition of new databases, *WebQuests*, or other electronic enhancements that will integrate technology into the curriculum), with *discussing budgets* a close second. Participants were advised to choose more than one task, if applicable.

**Figure 12. Management Tasks Discussed When Technology Coordinator and Library Media Specialist Met**  
**N=61 responses**

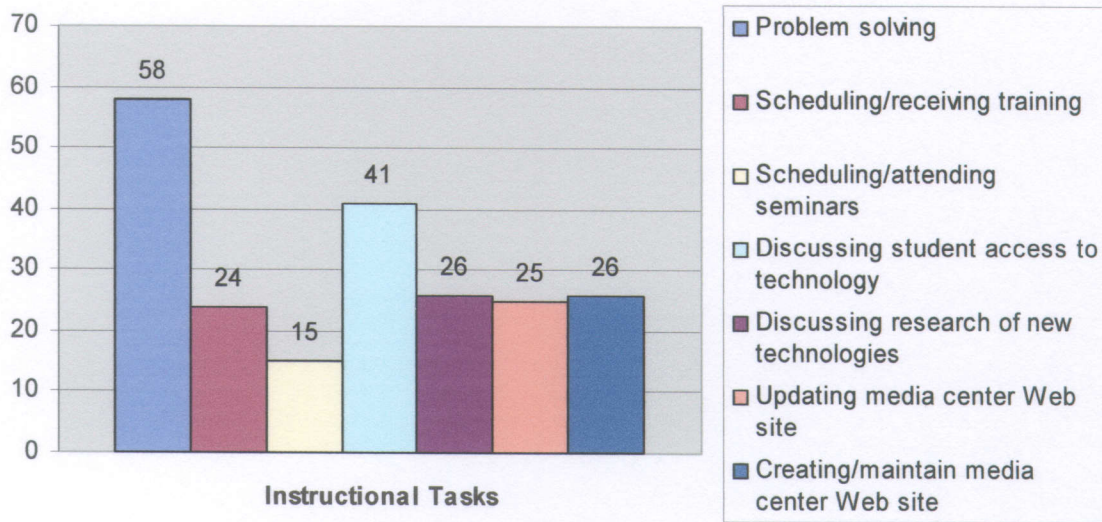


In addition, sixty-four (64) participants agreed with the various instructional tasks provided as well. Again, five participants who did not answer this question were from the group that did not employ a technology coordinator; the reason for the other two participants not responding was unknown. The majority of the



respondents agreed that *problem solving (i.e., broken computers, network crashes, virus assistance, security issues)* was the main instructional task discussed when meeting with the technology coordinator. Participants were advised to choose more than one task, if applicable.

**Figure 13. Instructional Tasks Discussed When Technology Coordinator and Library Media Specialist Met**  
N=64 responses

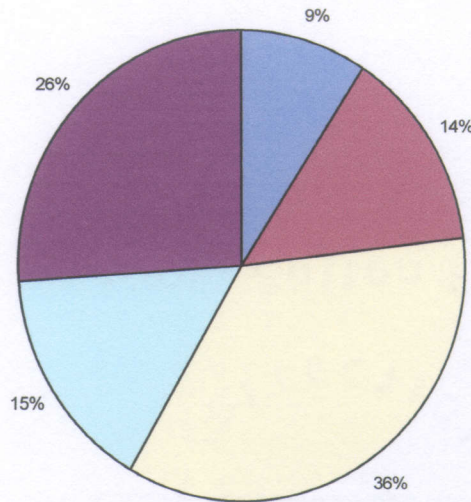


Although 52% of the participating high school library media specialists agreed that there was less communication with technology coordinators than with teachers, 27 respondents claimed that they rated the success of their communication with their technology coordinators as *Successful* or *Very Successful*. About one-third of the respondents (35%) stated that they rated the success of their communication with their technology coordinator as *Mildly Successful*, meaning they collaborated on a few things, but could definitely communicate more. In addition, 45% of the respondents claimed that they felt that their working relationship with their technology coordinator was already a



success, as opposed to 26% who were interested in creating a better working relationship, and 18% who were interested in establishing a working relationship with their technology coordinators (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. Success Rating of Communication  
N=65 responses



- Unsuccessful: no collaboration or communication
- Neutral: other than little things here or there, I can pretty much do everything on my own
- Mildly successful: we collaborate on a few things (i.e., budgets, hardware, outages), but we could definitely communicate more
- Successful: we communicate on at least a monthly basis, and are able to enhance each other's programs and student learning
- Very successful: we communicate regularly (i.e., at least weekly), consistently work on projects to enhance our students' and faculty's knowledge of technology, and work together quite a bit when it comes to activities such as grant writing, etc.

The 17 high school library media specialists (26%) who claimed that they currently had a *Very Successful* level of communication with their technology coordinators had the following similar characteristics:



- 47% were located in Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, or Warren Counties
- 47% served 501-1000 students
- 88% discussed curriculum enhancements to integrate technology into the curriculum and budget planning for software, hardware, and training
- 94% discussed problem solving
- 76% discussed research of new technologies that may provide additional academic success

Participants were also asked if they (their high school or school district) had ever developed guidelines for communication or collaboration between teachers, administrators, staff, technology coordinators, etc. Although 29% of the responses advised Yes, none of the free-form responses toward the end of the survey presented any information regarding these guidelines (14% admitted that they were not sure if their district has any such guidelines).

In addition, 83% of respondents advised that they participated in various professional development topics on communication and collaboration, with 19 high school library media specialists selecting that they participated in professional development on *communication or collaboration between technology coordinators AND teachers OR administrators/staff*.

Finally, participants were invited to include any suggestions, ideas, or stories that they had regarding working relationships (good, bad, or ugly) between high school library media specialists and technology coordinators, using

an open-ended question at the end of the survey. Over half (42) of the total respondents included remarks; many of these remarks were taken into consideration when proposing the guidelines outlined in Chapter 5. Most of the open-ended responses in this section (18) were considered favorable responses; 12 were unfavorable; 10 were neutral or undeterminable; and two responses were provided by high school library media specialists whose districts did not employ a technology coordinator (see Appendix C).

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY

The impetus for this study came from numerous conversations with colleagues in school library media centers regarding the frustrations they had when dealing with their technology coordinators and departments, as well as by the interesting writings of library media specialist turned director of technology, Sharon Joiner (2005). In many ways, technology and technology-integration within our philosophies of education, classrooms, and school media centers, are just as important these days as traditional curriculum and teachings. Embracing this fact is essential to a successful school library media program, especially those programs whose main goal is to produce the next generation of information-literate, life-long learners.

As a school library media specialist, every decision made, every lesson taught, every supplement brought in to the media center ultimately had one objective – the student and his or her success. The same objective should be considered when dealing with technology, and the incredibly smart people who provide, create, maintain, and run it. Joiner (2005) said that media specialists “see their technology chief as the least likely person in the entire district with whom they would share a cup of coffee.” Why? If the commonality between

these two administrators is to enhance the students' traditional curriculum by providing information and technology, why should these two entities separate themselves from each other and not work together? With a powerful and successful working relationship between school library media specialists and technology coordinators, the possibilities are endless as to what new technologies and information methods or techniques can be provided to students, staff, and faculty. But, how do you get there?

### Analysis of Survey Responses

Out of the 71 valid surveys that were used in analysis for this study, only five New Jersey high school library media specialists advised that neither their school nor district provided a technology coordinator. Although 32% (n=23) of the total respondents stated that there was a school technology coordinator who provided technology services solely to their high school, only 60% of those respondents felt their relationship with their school technology coordinator was already a success. These high school library media specialists typically met with their technology coordinators *at least once a week, face-to-face*, although only for *0-30 minutes per week*, and primarily to discuss curriculum enhancements and problem solving. From this preliminary data, it seems as if having an in-house technology coordinator is ideal to the high school library media program. Unfortunately, not every high school was in this situation.

The remaining respondents (n=43) claimed that their district employed a district technology coordinator, who provided technology services to the entire

district, or to many schools within their district. Prior to the survey's release, it was expected that these numbers would not emulate those of having a technology coordinator in-house, and the results concurred. Approximately 38% of the "No" responses indicated that they see their district technology coordinators for *Emergency situations only*, and even then for only *0-30 minutes per week* on average. Many of the open-ended responses from this group were favorable; however, there were more unfavorable responses from this group of school media specialists.

From open-ended responses that were deemed unfavorable (see Appendix C), it seems that the main reason school media specialists did not communicate regularly with their technology coordinators was because the technology coordinators were not educators, and were not seen as understanding that the students were top priority when it came to operations. Those technology coordinators from the "industry" were seen as more concerned with toys and networking than with collaboration and success. Well, since not all technology coordinators can be promoted from a previous teaching or school media position, media specialists can become an ally with the technology coordinator and make collaboration and technology integration happen. Media specialists cannot do their jobs without technology, right? The success of the library media program depends upon this link!

As a result of this study, the following guidelines are proposed to school media specialists to assist with establishing or maintaining successful working relationships with their technology coordinators.

## MAKE IT SO!

### GUIDELINES TO BUILDING BETTER WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH TECHNOLOGY COORDINATORS

Remember, not everyone's personality, work ethics, or interests are going to coincide. These guidelines were developed with the intention of helping school library media specialists and technology coordinators communicate and collaborate more, and to hopefully help enhance each other's programs for the ultimate goal of allowing all students to succeed. More importantly, successful relationships between these two administrators may provide better access to perhaps even newer technologies, and will produce information literature, life-long learners.

- Communicate, communicate, communicate! This verb is so simple to say, yet the action is so difficult to execute. Introduce or reintroduce yourself to the technology coordinator (preferably in-person) and try to find a common interest other than education to talk about. You never know, your technology coordinator could be just as much of a Star Trek fan as you are! Email is best when working with someone whose life is based on technology – there is also no reason why you cannot just send out a quick Thank You email for something that your technology coordinator did for you previously, and ask if there is anything that you can do for him or her. Check in with your technology coordinator at least once a week, apart from regular scheduled meetings that you may have together.

- You are both administrators – act like it! Your technology coordinator is there to help make your job easier; you are there to help make your technology coordinator’s job easier (just like with your teachers). He or she is not trying to take your job; make it known that you are also not trying to take over his or her job. Get together at the beginning of each year and take a look at both of your job descriptions, then work out areas of responsibility (i.e., “I am responsible for this; you are responsible for that.”). Finally, write it down!
- Find out the technology interests and goals of your technology coordinator. Don’t know how? Just ask! Turn it into a meeting with the principal as well, and let them know your technology interests and goals. You will probably find that they are all similar, just on a different scale. You may even find that you have resources available in your media center that can assist with these interests and goals. Give the meeting a name; call it “Meeting of the Minds” and schedule it as soon as possible (and then, maybe, once each quarter after that). This may also help take the mystery out of what your technology coordinator does all day.
- Speaking of meetings: Consistently Clear Connections. Although many do not wish to add another meeting to their schedules, this one might actually be very important. Make sure that the main goal of these meetings with the technology coordinator is to serve students (faculty and staff, as well) with their technology needs. Set objectives and stick to

them! During the succession of these meetings, try to discuss the following collaborative topics (of course, not all during the same meeting):

- Curriculum needs (i.e., how to integrate technology into the curriculum)
- Curriculum enhancements (i.e., addition of new databases, WebQuests, pathfinders, etc.)
- School- or district-wide technology plan (creating or updating) and/or other technology policies
- Assessment or evaluations to ensure the most efficient use of technology in the media center
- Budget for new software, hardware, and training
- Other methods to increase funding (i.e., grants, contests)
- Strategies for planning the future of the technology in the school library media center (think beyond the 5-year plan)
- Upcoming professional development opportunities in technology
- Enhancing students' access to technology
- Research of new technologies that may provide additional academic success (i.e., pod-casting, student Web sites, etc.)
- Keep adding to this list!

Consistency is the key with these meetings. Meet once a week, or once every other week – just to collaborate.

- Make a list... and check it many, many times! For one week, keep two lists – on the first, list all of the technologies used and accessed on a daily



basis by you and the students in your media center; on the second, list any issues or problems with the use of and access to these technologies. Clean up the lists, and present them to the technology coordinator.

Chances are, he or she may not even know what you access and/or need on a daily basis. With these lists, you may be able to justify reasons why you need an administrative password to fix that typo on your WebQuest.

- Learn the lingo! Remember, there is a separate language for every industry out there – even your industry! Educate yourself on basic lingo so you can understand some of the techno-speak.
- Let alone the lingo – learn, learn, learn! Educate yourself as much as possible on current and upcoming technologies that are available and in use right now. Read technology journals, attend seminars and conferences (within reason, of course), or take a class on library or educational technology. Attend professional development opportunities WITH your technology coordinator.
- Then, act as a liaison between the technology coordinator and individual teachers. Your technology coordinator will thank you and will then be able to provide you with more collaboration time to talk about integrating more technology into the curriculum!
- Become their ally! Teachers are overworked, so you send them tips, ideas, subject articles, and lists of things that you can do in the media center to enhance their units, lessons, and projects. Do the same for your technology coordinator! No reason why you should not forward that great

technology article you just read to him or her with *What do you think about this?* in the subject line.

- Introduce them to *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (fortunately, major excerpts are available from the American Association of School Libraries online at: <http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslproftools/informationpower/informationpower.htm>). It made a great difference in your life, right? While you are educating yourself in technology, you can also educate your technology coordinator on the importance of the media center, and the impact technology makes upon that by viewing the nine IL standards (also available online from the above link). Your technology coordinator may then recognize the role the media center and specialist plays in technology and may then use you proactively.
- Do not assume that your technology coordinator does not care about or realize the importance of education. Find out what his or her thoughts are or what their philosophy of education may be.
- If you have a district technology coordinator, offer to become the “technology person” for your school (assess and fix basic computer problems, and serve as the contact person between staff and the coordinator). Yes, it’s hard work – but it may just pay off greatly for your media center.
- Visit other schools and districts with your technology coordinator and see how they do it. Sometimes you just need to see it to believe it.

- **Lastly, be enthusiastic! Happiness and passion CAN rub off on people. If you are enthusiastic about your program and how the relationship between you and the technology coordinator can enhance your students' learning, it will spread!**

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**APPENDIX A**  
**SURVEY COVER LETTER**

## APPENDIX A

### SURVEY COVER LETTER

Dear NJ High School Media Specialists:

Hello! As a graduate student in the School and Public Librarianship program at Rowan University, I am required to perform a research project. The premise of my study is to research the current working relationships and communication efforts of New Jersey high school media specialists and district technology coordinators.

As a high school library media specialist in the state of New Jersey, your expertise is essential and your participation is appreciated in completing the following survey. The results of this survey are vital to the research of my study, and the results could potentially help create guideline for school library media specialists and technology coordinators to follow to ensure a positive and communicative partnership. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes of your time, and can be accessed here:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=618161741516>

Please keep in mind that your name will not appear on any form or in the final report. No data will be personally identified with you. Participation is completely voluntary, and the Rowan University School and Public Librarianship program has approved the distribution of this questionnaire.

I appreciate your time and effort in completing this survey, and look forward to sharing the results. If at any time you have any questions or concerns regarding the questionnaire of the study, or if you would like to receive a copy of the results upon completion, please feel free to contact me, Jennifer Sedlock, at [jsedlock@gmail.com](mailto:jsedlock@gmail.com). You may also contact my thesis advisor, Dr. Marilyn Shontz, at [shontz@rowan.edu](mailto:shontz@rowan.edu). Thank you so much in advance for your time and participation!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Sedlock  
Graduate Student  
Rowan University  
[jsedlock@gmail.com](mailto:jsedlock@gmail.com)

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=618161741516>



**APPENDIX B**  
**SURVEY LANGUAGE**

## APPENDIX B

### SURVEY LANGUAGE

Hello!

One of the most important challenges high school library media specialists face is that of maintaining and expanding student and staff access to technology. As a graduate student in the School and Public Librarianship program at Rowan University, I have chosen as the premise of my graduate study to research the current working relationships and communication efforts between New Jersey high school media specialists and school technology coordinators.

As a high school library media specialist in the state of New Jersey, your expertise is essential and your participation is appreciated in completing the attached survey. The results of this survey are vital to the research of my study, and could potentially help create communication guidelines for school library media specialists and technology coordinators.

Please keep in mind that your name will not appear on any form or in the final report. No data will be personally identified with you. Participation is completely voluntary, and the Rowan University School and Public Librarianship program has approved the distribution of this questionnaire.

I appreciate your time and effort in completing this survey, and look forward to sharing the results. If at any time you have any questions or concerns regarding the questionnaire or the study, or if you would like to receive a copy of the results upon completion, please feel free to contact me, Jennifer Sedlock, at [jsedlock@gmail.com](mailto:jsedlock@gmail.com). You may also contact my thesis advisor, Dr. Marilyn Shontz, at [shontz@rowan.edu](mailto:shontz@rowan.edu). Thank you so much in advance for your time and participation!

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Thank you very much for your assistance in completing this survey!

Please keep in mind the following definition:

**SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR:** a school-based administrator who has the responsibility of overseeing infrastructure, equipment, purchases, and integration of technology into the school, and who is also focused on empowering teachers and school media specialists to harness the power of technology integration for student learning. (Note – the Technology Coordinator, for

purposes of this study, is not the person who teaches computer skills directly to students.)

1. In what county is your high school library media center located?
  - Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Warren
  - Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Union
  - Mercer, Monmouth, Ocean
  - Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Salem
  
2. How many students does your high school library media center serve?
  - 0-500 students
  - 501-1000 students
  - 1001-1500 students
  - 1501-2000 students
  - 2001+ students
  
3. Does your high school employ a school technology coordinator who provides technology services solely to your high school?
  - Yes (Please continue to question 4)
  - No (Please skip to question 5)
  
4. If you answered YES to question 3, does the school technology coordinator have an office in your school?
  - No, the school technology coordinator's office is not in my school. (Please skip to question 6)
  - Yes. How close to your office or library is the school technology coordinator's office? (Please skip to question 6) \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. If you answered NO to question 3, does your district employ a technology coordinator who provides technology services to the entire district, or to many schools within your district?
  - Yes (Please continue to question 6)
  - No (Please skip to question 13)
  
6. How often do you and the school technology coordinator communicate?  
(Check all that apply)
  - At least once a week, face-to-face
  - At least once a month, face-to-face
  - 3-5 times per year, face-to-face
  - At least once a week; phone, handwritten memo, or email
  - At least once a month; phone, handwritten memo, or email
  - 3-5 times per year; phone, handwritten memo, or email
  - Emergency situations only (i.e., system crash; computer failure; software corruption).
  - You do not see or have never met the school technology coordinator.

7. When communicating with the school technology coordinator, how much time do you and your school technology coordinator typically spend communicating with each other?
- 0-30 minutes per week
  - 30-60 minutes per week
  - 60-90 minutes per week
  - 90+ minutes per week
8. When you meet with the school technology coordinator, regardless of meeting format, which of the following MANAGEMENT tasks do you discuss: (Check all that apply)
- Curriculum needs (i.e., discussing curriculum and how to integrate technology into curriculum)
  - Curriculum enhancement (i.e., discussing addition of new databases, webquests, or other electronic enhancement that will integrate technology into the curriculum)
  - Creating a school- or district-wide technology plan and/or other technology policies (i.e., acceptable use policy, internet use policy)
  - Discussing assessment to ensure the proper and most efficient use of technology in the high school library media center
  - Discussing budget for new software, hardware, and training
  - Discussing and collaborating on methods to increase funding (i.e., writing joint grants, contests)
  - Discussing strategies for planning for the future of the technology in the school library media center (i.e., changing 5-year plan, setting aside funds for new gear and applications)
9. When you meet with the school technology coordinator, regardless of meet format, which of the following INSTRUCTIONAL tasks do you discuss: (Check all that apply)
- Problem solving (i.e., broken computers, network crashes, virus assistance, security issues)
  - Scheduling or receiving updated training on hardware and software so you (and/or your support staff) may provide technical support to staff and students
  - Scheduling or attending professional development seminars with or for the school technology coordinator
  - Discussing ways to enhance students' access to technology (i.e., home access, security, new technologies)
  - Discussing research of new technologies that may provide additional academic success (i.e., pod-casting, more space for student websites, discuss additional gear)
  - Updating the high school library media center website
  - Creating and/or maintaining the high school library media center website

10. Regarding meeting with your school technology coordinator (regardless of meeting format), who generally initiates contact?
- High school library media specialist
  - School technology coordinator
  - Principal
  - Teacher
  - Other (please list, i.e., administrators, support staff) \_\_\_\_\_
11. In relation to the amount of time you collaborate with individual teachers in your high school, how do you rate the amount of time you communicate with the school technology coordinator?
- I do not communicate with the school technology coordinator on a regular basis
  - Less communication than with teachers
  - Same amount of communication as with teachers
  - More communication than with teachers
12. Please rate the success of your communication with the school technology coordinator:
- Unsuccessful: no collaboration or communication
  - Neutral: other than little things here or there, I can pretty much do everything on my own
  - Mildly successful: we collaborate on a few things (i.e., budgets, hardware, outages), but we could definitely communicate more
  - Successful: we communicate on at least a monthly basis, and are able to enhance each other's programs and student learning.
  - Very successful: we communicate regularly (i.e., at least weekly), consistently work on projects to enhance our students' and faculty's knowledge of technology, and work together quite a bit when it comes to activities such as grant writing, professional development, and proposing new ideas to the school administration.
13. Are you interested in establishing a working relationship with or creating a better working relationship with the school technology coordinator?
- Yes – I am interested in establishing a working relationship with the school technology coordinator
  - Yes – I am interested in creating a better working relationship with the school technology coordinator
  - No
  - Our working relationship is already a success
  - My school and/or district does not employ a technology coordinator

14. Have you, your high school, or school district ever developed guideline for communication or collaboration between teachers, administrators, staff, technology coordinators, etc.?
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know
15. Have you participated in any of the following school or school district initiated professional development topics?
- Communication or collaboration between technology coordinators AND teachers OR administrator/staff
  - Communication or collaboration between teachers AND administrators
  - Communication or collaboration between school media specialists AND technology coordinators, teachers, administrators, OR staff
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
16. Have you, your high school, or school district ever initiated professional development on communication or collaboration between teachers, administrators, staff, technology coordinators, etc.?
- No
  - Yes – through seminars/meetings off-site
  - Yes – through seminars/meetings on-site (separate from regular meetings)
  - Yes – pamphlets only; no formal meeting
  - Yes – other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
17. How many school library media specialists serve in your high school?
- 1 (working less than full-time)
  - 1 (full-time)
  - 2
  - 3 or more
18. How many years of experience do you have serving in a K-12 school library media center, public or private?
- 0-5
  - 6-10
  - 11-15
  - 15+
19. How many years have you served as the school library media specialist in your school?
- 0-5
  - 6-10
  - 11-15
  - 15+

20. How many paid support staff members does your school provide for the high school library media center?

- None
- 1 (working less than full-time)
- 1
- 2 or more

21. Please feel free to use this space to include any suggestions, ideas, or stories that you may have regarding working relationships (good, bad, or ugly) between high school library media specialists and school technology coordinators. What makes your relationship work, or not work? As noted previously, all answers will remain confidential, but are subject to be used in the published survey.

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Thank you very much for your time and participation. I look forward to analyzing your results! For any questions, concerns, or if you are interested in receiving the results from this survey, please feel free to contact me at [jshedlock@gmail.com](mailto:jshedlock@gmail.com) or my thesis advisor, Dr. Marilyn Shontz, at [shontz@rowan.edu](mailto:shontz@rowan.edu). Again, thank you for your expertise!

Jennifer Sedlock  
Rowan University

APPENDIX C  
OPEN-ENDED RESULTS



## APPENDIX C

### OPEN-ENDED RESULTS

Survey participants were asked to share any suggestions, ideas, or stories regarding their relationship with their school- or district-technology coordinators by utilizing an open-ended field at the conclusion of the survey. Forty-two high school library media specialists (59% of respondents) responded to the following prompt:

Please feel free to use this space to include any suggestions, ideas, or stories that you may have regarding working relationships (good, bad, or ugly) between high school library media specialists and school technology coordinators. What makes your relationship work, or not work? As noted previously, all answers will remain confidential, but are subject to be used in the published survey.

The following notes all responses from the above request categorized by Favorable quotations (18 total) , Unfavorable quotations (12 total), and Neutral/Undetermined (9 total). In addition, two of the five survey respondents who claimed that neither their school nor their district employed a technology coordinator also responded to the above request. Those answers are included after the Favorable, Unfavorable, and Neutral/Undetermined responses. Please note – all responses provided have been included in their genuine entirety,

regardless of spelling, grammar, etc. This was done to preserve the integrity of all responses.

### FAVORABLE RESPONSES

Survey 3 - Optimum situation! We are in the same department, and the technology staff is extremely helpful and cooperates 1000%.

Survey 9 – Our relationship works because the technology coordinator and I share a common goal of serving students and their technology needs. We have mutual respect for each other, and our technology coordinator is always willing to “break new ground” with me, and try things that haven’t been done here before. She’s flexible, patient, and is always willing to try new ideas. I love working with her!

Survey 16 – We have a great relationship with our tech coordinator. She is a friendly person and was a classroom teacher for many years – so she supports the teaching staff.

Survey 22 – One of the things that helps is the fact that the tech coordinator was a former teacher and does get the fact that technology is a tool. However, the other tech people are from industry and do not get the fact that technology does not drive instruction but is simply a tool.

Survey 24 – An open channel of communications is encouraged and the technology coordinator’s department is open to suggestions, always available for emergency situations, responsive in a timely fashion and wants the entire district’s media and technology services to be successful. They serve us so we can better serve the students.

Survey 26 – We have a casual but effective line of communication. Sometimes it’s on the fly, and sometimes we communicate by memo through email, especially if other admin’s are involved or need to be informed.

Survey 33 – We have an excellent tech coordinator who covers 2 elementary schools as well as a junior/senior hs. He has an office in this building, but I rarely get to see him. We communicate by e-mail but see very little of each other. Sometimes this is fine, but other times it presents a problem. I work as best I can under these circumstances.

Survey 47 – Our Coordinator has a staff that is top notch. Whenever there is a problem, system down, etc. The staff is available and response time is great. We are asked to fill out trouble trackers and those are assigned a number. There is a followup to this and everyone is taken care of in the order of the problem.

Survey 49 – We have a great working relationship because we have a mutual respect for each other's expertise and ideas.

Survey 52 – Initially, six years ago, I had problems getting tech problems solved because tech were overworked, but then I developed a strategy of emailing every few days to thank for what was done and to list the still to be completed items. It seemed to work. Since then, tech dept has added more personal.

Survey 67 – The relationship is very informal. If I need help with broken equipment or info. on certain programs, he is available to help me. If he is not in the building, I leave a note and he always responds. It is a pleasant working relationship.

Survey 69 – The technology Coordinator and I work closely together. It helps that I am the technology person for the high school: assess & fix computer problems and serve as the contact person between staff and the Coordinator. It is a lot of work but has paid off for the library. The Coordinator and I communication several times a day. Through our work, a respect for each other's job has been created. The coordinator listens and tries to understand the library's technology needs and I do the same on his positions. Some time we do have interesting discussions – we don't always see eye to eye. But that is OK. We always work it out. Also advocate for the teachers.

Survey 72 – We have an on site technology coordinator who is very knowledgeable and does a fantastic job. We also have the office for the district coordinator in our school and he also interfaces with us as well. We have an excellent working relationship with them. This is not the norm. In my last school there was three tech's for 13 schools.

Survey 75 – We have a tech coordinator and an assistant. I talk/email with them often. They ask me for suggestions. I ask them. They offer after school seminars in various technology to the entire staff – not all teachers take advantage of the opportunity. They are available and approachable. We work together on the library technology budget. I would be lost without them – not just as tech people, but as colleagues. They are always willing to sit with individuals for personal training/assistance.

Survey 76 – Our District Technology Coordinator has actually taken the libraries on as her project. She is our unofficial Supervisor since we don't have one. She has initialed monthly department meetings so that we can discuss common problems and concerns, and come to some possible solutions. While we can't solve everything due to lack of cooperation on the part of the rest of the administration, or a lack of funds, it is nice to know that someone at least listens to us. And, we have solved SOME issues in the few meetings we have already had this year. The problem is coordinating our schedules (there are 8 of us and her!).

Survey 81 – The Technology coordinator and I are both fairly new to the district. The district hired us because of the work we had done in our previous districts developing programs encouraging the use of technology by students and faculty. We communicate regularly to share information and have the same goals. We also have the support of the administration; they want to see the teachers using all the technology available on a regular basis. We have a long way to go and have to take “baby steps” with a staff not even comfortable with email, but we have identified several teachers who enjoy the possibilities open to them and we encourage them to use our new resources whenever we can. We are confident the excitement will spread and others will join in. Our common goals and open lines of communication are key to the relationship.

Survey 82 – Our work relationship is positive because I make it a friendly environment for my tech person to visit. I don't whine about things not working. Instead I pay attention and take notes when he explains how to get things to work. My tech person appreciates that I listen and remember what has been taught to me. I pass this knowledge onto the teachers and students, so everyone benefits from it. As of collaborating, my tech person is very knowledgeable. I have learned a lot. We work on budget, webpages and installing software to enhance the curriculum.

Survey 83 – The library staff and tech staff communicate DAILY. This may be due to the fact that before there was a technology department all computer related problems were handled by the library staff. We respect and rely upon each others' expertise.

#### UNFAVORABLE RESPONSES

Survey 5 – Re: how far apart are the technology coordinator and the LMC? Our technology coordinator proposed to move his office to the LMC, but he would then have taken over my office. We don't have any extra, empty space. Our district supervisors discouraged that idea. It was proposed to Bd. members, and I learned about it only after it was shot down. A lot of the computer writing is in the LMC, in my magazine storage room.

Survey 8 – Our technology coordinator seems to want to keep what he does a mystery. He does not have an open door policy. Most of the time I catch him on the run. His way is the way things are and he wants no one to initiate anything new. I think he is afraid someone might want his job. I definitely don't. But for years I served with him on the Technology Committee once he took over he re-evaluated the needs of the committee and had 1 teacher from each department on the committee and I was eliminated.

Survey 10 – The position of a district technology coordinator should be an outstanding asset to our district. District-wide Communication would definitely enhance the integration of technology into the curriculum. However, in our school district, this position has a vague job description that has changed with each of the four individuals who have held this position in the past seven years. We have not even had a district technology committee since we have had a technology coordinator (we had one prior to having someone in this position!). I personally believe that the direction for communication and other functions of the technology coordinate needs to come from the district level administration. I have a distinct vision for the many ways in which this person could promote technology services and expand professional development in our district, but as the only full-time librarian in the high school I am responsible for library services, all AV equipment, a computer lab, 63 laptops computers on 3 carts, the in-house TV system and the local public access TV channel. I don't have time to take on another challenge!

Survey 21 – need more than one over worked person

Survey 23 – Although the District Technology Coordinator is in another school, there are staffed offices in each of the two schools with a secretary. Usually, the technical staff in those offices can address any technological problems I have that I cannot fix myself but are usually somewhere else in the building working on another problem. But I do realize that the Technology coordinator has very little knowledge/interest in what goes on in the library except when I call with a major problem. And even at that, I have to cc my supervisor on the email or I will get little or no response. I am constantly frustrated by the lack of understanding that when things are not running well in the library, that many many students are unable to complete assignments, print work, etc. However, it usually takes quite a few hours before anyone returns my calls or emails. Very frustrating.

Survey 38 – In my opinion, technology coordinators are not educators and this leaves a great divide when trying to accomplish curriculum based projects. They are often very busy and difficult to get a hold of as well.

Survey 42 – One techie for two schools [which comprises one school district] that are not within walking distance is outrageously ineffective and inefficient. We all TroubleTrakker him with our problems; HE then sets the priorities. The only reason I ever see him face-to-face is because his office is in my library, so I catch him briefly as he walks by.

Survey 45 – It was a little difficult to answer some of the questions, because we have a District Supervisor of Technology (who I used as the basis of the answers), but we also employ a Chief Technology Officer for the district, and tech people who are devoted to the high school. Our Supervisor of Technology is fairly new and meets with the district librarians at our request. However, she does not appear to recognize the role we play in technology and does not use us

proactively. Additionally, the only reason I communicate with her as much as I do is because I am on the District Technology Committee. This consists of people interested in technology from the various schools. However, in my opinion, she also does not make good use of us and our potential involvement and contribution to increasing the viability of technology in our schools. Our meetings mostly consist of her telling us what she has done or purchased, without any prior input from us. For example, she is currently looking at netTrekker, but did not inform us or ask for our opinions on the product.

Survey 46 – Relationships, communication and collaboration between people are very much dependent on the personalities of both individuals involved. Before the current district coordinator of curriculum, instruction and technology was hired, I initiated the development of a committee to develop an acceptable use policy, I was consulted by other teachers – and occasionally by administrators – as a technology resource person. When the current coordinator was hired, I made efforts to communicate and voluntarily served on the technology committee to develop a 5 year technology plan with administrators, parents, school board members and a student. However, it quickly became apparent that the committee was not intended as a forum for sharing ideas and developing a plan with various stakeholder input, but rather was a PR front intended to give credibility to a plan that was developed by the coordinator and the district business administrator. My suggestions and input (always given to the coordinator – who is technically my supervisor) were ignored at best – and at one point I was publicly humiliated by being yelled at by the coordinator (yes, voice raised yelling) in a committee meeting for asking the committee to consider a suggestion. Although this coordinator is my supervisor and also the supervisor of the K-12 English/Language Arts, and of technology. Her office is in the elementary school building and she rarely is seen in the middle/high school building. My observations – and those of many of the English/Language Arts teachers are done usually by our building principal. This coordinator also has been known to frequently share her negative perceptions of staff members' personalities and/or performance with other staff member (e.g. I don't think much of x teacher; she is gay OR y teacher seems to be unable to do z). So, I think in your research, you need to consider that there are times when a school librarian is well aware of the need for good communication and involvement in technology acquisition and instruction, and where the coordinator clearly does not welcome such communication, so the only reasonable/possible course of action is to do the best one can with what one has, and wait for personnel change.

Survey 57 – We have a tech coordinator for the whole district (pre-school to 12, and Board of Ed). She seems to spend a lot of time at the BOE. She also does some inservice presentations, the district tech plan and applies for grants. Her assistant is the district AV guy. He does lighting & sound for plays & concerts, stuff for BOE presentations, & sets up the school and library web sites (I send the links & tell him what I'd like on the websites). Her other assistant loads software, sets up new computers & networks—things like that. The main problem I have is

getting in touch with them (2 of them do not answer their phones, the other has no phone.) They may be hiding in their little locked, windowless office, or they may be in another building, or absent. We have no way of knowing. The AV guy insisted that he knew everything about MAC's, but since the library had PC's, he could not help with tech problems. We got MACs 2 years ago, and I haven't seen him since. There are occasional problems with individual computers. I request tech help via e-mail, but I rarely get it. Eventually I usually figure out how to fix the problem myself. I do not have an administrative password, so some things I could not fix even if I knew how. There are problems with the network that I cannot fix. Probably the biggest annoyance is the student passwords. I do not have a default password to get on the computers. If the kids' passwords don't work, they can't use the computers. Sometimes the kids are new to the school & don't yet have an id#. Or their ID #'s are not connected to the school network. Or the kids have made passwords & can't remember them. I fill out & turn in endless reports about passwords problems every day. Some are never fixed. In November, I turned in a list of the tech problems that each of the 14 MACs has. I requested that they be fixed. I'm still waiting (and adding to the list). That is my biggest problem... getting help for day to day problems. The tech crew is great at installing new systems, new networks, new computers, new policies (like the requirement for student passwords), but really bad at maintenance.

Survey 73 – The tech people are too tied up with the equipment to actually deal with people, especially pupils, and their educational needs. They play with equipment and purchase programs to meet their ideas without consulting the educators. They feel their 'specialty' is eons above the reality of those in the trenches and that 'one size fits all.' Additionally, the financial collapse of my District (due to excessive funding of urban places) has severely cut into all services. What ever happened the ideals and goals of the Sales Tax creation? Thus, the 'quick ' answer of technology is rapidly replacing Library instructional purposes. Those computer oriented folks fail to understand that there is more to information than just searching on a screen. I strongly feel that this 'switch' in planning, financing and teaching will eventually come back and haunt us and the US in years to come. Yes, I sound bitter but that is because after 30 years of teaching with 25+ in the Library field, I see what is happening within schools and to our society. The cell phone replaces face-to-face conversation, the IPOD games diminish actual sports contact, and Internet searching is ending reading as an activity. True, the kids are not actually IL-literate but they are rapidly becoming A-literate to anything other than what their electronic keyboards can provide. In two weeks, March 2, will be "Read Across America." How many schools will celebrate by turning off screens and opening books? Too few in my view!

Survey 80 – All orders for software or hardware, although, they come from my account, must go through the technology office for approval. This often takes many months. Our Dell representative cannot speak to us about what product

would best serve our needs and budget. This adds to the delay since we cannot get that information from the district technology office on a timely basis either.

### NEUTRAL/INDETERMINABLE RESPONSES

Survey 2 – When I took the technology plunge years ago, a librarian told me, “He who controls the server has the power,” and it is so true. Every school needs a strong and interested principal who will listen to all sides and make an even-handed decision for the good of the entire school.

Survey 4 – Our Technology Coordinator is retiring at the end of the school year. He is busy getting things wrapped up and straightening the department out. We had a better working relationship before but he is stressed now.

Survey 12 – At this time I feel very fortunate to have a technology coordinator who is so supportive of my position. We work well together although most of our meetings are on an as needs, informal basis. This was not always the case. I have worked at my present position for the past 16 years and I would say that from my 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> year here I had a very uncooperative administrator. He didn't consult me on anything and actually tried to have me replaced with a computer person. He turned the media center into one huge 'lag' and I was restricted from purchasing books and supplies for the center. He re-arranged the entire facility (in no particular order) without my consent or knowledge. Needless to say, it was a nightmare.

Survey 39 – We have a manager for technology who works under curriculum umbrella at the board level. On the building level, we have a teacher who sets up workshops to use technology and shows the staff how to use software programs. We have a person who takes care of the hardware and software issues at the board level and there is a technician in each building. I keep in touch with all these people.

Survey 51 – Our relationship would improve if our district passed the budget and didn't have so many cuts.

Survey 54 – I am the technology curriculum coordinator and the media specialist... we simply expanded the consultation role of the librarian/media specialist and created additional responsibilities call the Director of curricular technology integration to help get technology into our curriculum.

Survey 57 – Because I am the only media specialist in a K-12 district, and because our district outsources all technology services, developing a relationship with the technology people is made difficult. Different people respond to different requests for help at different times.



Survey 60 – Due to their very limited number, our tech support people are vastly overworked. It is very difficult to get relatively minor problems resolved let alone to collaborate with them!

Survey 64 – Our District Technology Coordinator has an exceptionally heavy workload. The Coordinator is knowledgeable and capable, but time is always a difficult factor.

Survey 78 – The biggest problem that I have is that decisions/changes are made without thinking things through and without informing me ahead of time. So I find out when someone tries unsuccessfully to access a resource or when a program doesn't work, for example. While I have a very good relationship with my tech people, they operate in a bubble – there isn't much give and take. They do listen after the fact, but a lot of time is wasted doing things this way.

#### COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS WHOSE DISTRICTS DID NOT EMPLOY A SCHOOL OR DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR

Survey 71 – We do not employ a school technology coordinator. We have an IT department but that is not curriculum related. Media specialists make decisions about school media center resources and instruction and coordinate within all 11 schools in district.

Survey 79 – We have a technology (merely for tech support) person – We have a technology/teacher person who runs workshops once a week but is a classroom teacher – A technology coordinator in house would be wonderful.