

**2006 Trend Analysis of
Indiana K-8 Library Services
Since the
School Library Printed Materials Grant**

August 2006



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Executive Summary

The Indiana General Assembly recognized the importance of updating school library book collections by appropriating \$4 million for K-8 schools during the 1997-1999 school years, \$6 million for K-12 schools during the 1999-2001 school years, and \$6 million for K-12 schools for the 2001-2003 school years. However, due to state budgetary restraints, only \$3 million was actually provided in the 2001-2002 school year and no funds have been provided in the subsequent school years. Our 2002 and 2004 reports indicated that the funding provided between 1997 and 2001 resulted in sharp increases in purchasing and circulation of library materials followed by significant decreases in purchasing in 2002 and 2004 after the fully funded cycle. An increase in circulation was seen in 2002 followed by a decrease in 2004. It is assumed that these results were obtained due to a lag in circulation as new materials are introduced into the library system. This report reviews the current state of library services in Indiana public schools in light of these developments, and looks at the trends in school enrollment and book purchasing and circulation between 2000 and 2006.

Two types of data analysis were utilized in preparing this report. Survey results ($n = 3,573$) from Indiana public schools serving children in kindergarten through Grade 8 were compared across the 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006 school years. In addition, the comments of 138 Indiana public school librarians in response to an open-ended question on the 2006 survey were analyzed. The full report includes text, tables, and graphs illustrating both sets of analyses, as well as representative quotes from survey respondents.

Results

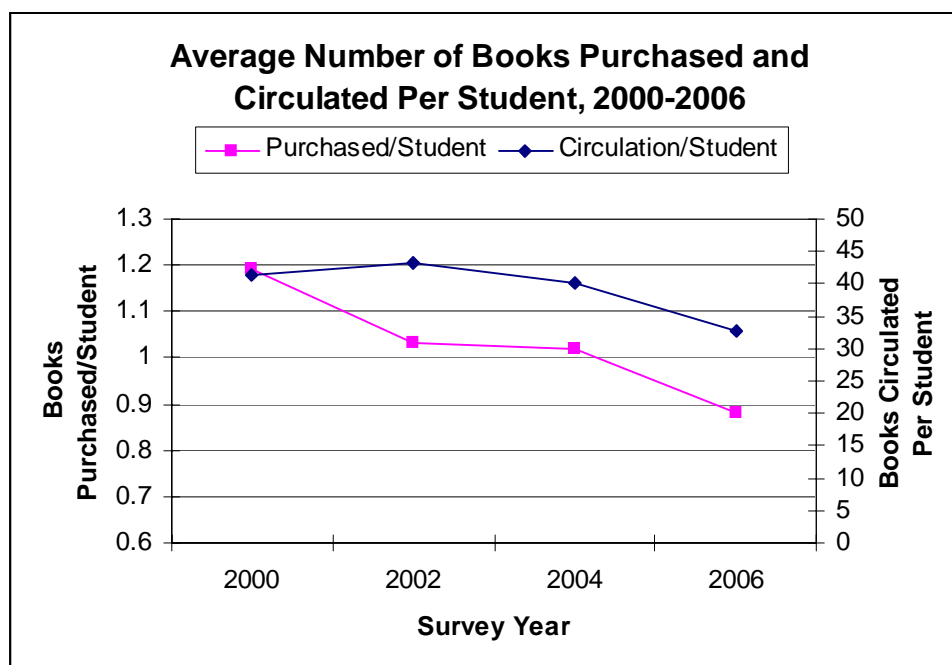
The results further support the conclusion made in the 2004 report that school libraries are unable to maintain the levels of book purchases and circulation that were seen during the fully funded 2000 cycle. They report experiencing financial stress resulting in understaffing and an inability to purchase up-to-date materials which they view as important to the academic growth of school children.

Table 1 provides a summary of statistics for schools that participated in the past four administrations of the Middle Grades Reading Network School Library and Acquisition Survey. As seen in Figure 1, book purchases per student dropped since the 2000 fully funded cycle and have not yet recovered. Circulation numbers showed an increase in 2002, presumably as those new purchases found their way into circulation. Since 2002 the number of purchases has been steadily increasing but so, too, has student enrollment thus producing the decreasing number of books purchased per student each year. In 2006, school enrollment reached its highest level while book purchases and book circulation per student reached their lowest levels across the eight-year period.

TABLE 1. Library Statistics, 2000-2006

Year	Average School Enrollment	Average Books Purchased/School	Average Books Purchased/Student	Average Books Circulated/School	Average Books Circulated/Student
2000	470.7	524.2	1.19	17,510	41.35
2002	493.7	479.2	1.03	19,180	43.12
2004	506.9	493.0	1.02	18,393	40.11
2006	587.3	495.0	0.88	17,174	32.72

FIGURE 1. Average Number of Books Purchased and Circulated per Student, 2000-2006



A qualitative analysis of participant responses to an open-ended question revealed that school librarians within the state of Indiana are continuing to cope with significant financial strain. Many librarians are finding it difficult to adequately address the needs of the students and the schools due to insufficient library staffing and low materials budgets. A few voiced concerns that their libraries were not able to adequately assist students with their research or promote motivation for reading due to a lack of up-to-date materials. A concern addressed in many of the comments dealt with the decreasing of library budgets in the face of increasing book costs. To deal with this, many librarians cite alternative methods of funding they use to help supplement the purchase of library materials. These methods often included donations, book fairs, and applying for various grant monies, and although many librarians are finding ways to improve the situations of their libraries, still several reminisced about the days when the Printed Materials Grant was instated and expressed hopes that it would be reinstated in the future.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

1. The data collected in 2006 reveal that book purchases per student have declined significantly since the 2004 school year. Book purchases per student have decreased 26.3% since the 2000 school year (the last year of full funding). Inspection of book purchases per school indicates that although total book purchases appear to be growing from 2002-2006, school enrollment has grown at a faster rate, thus causing the number of purchases per student to decrease dramatically. Book circulation per student also continues to decrease, likely as a result of the decrease in funding experienced during the 2004 school year. Librarians are continuing to find new sources of funding to supplement their collections of library materials, but still struggle as book prices keep on rising and library staffing continues to decrease.
2. Librarians are beginning to worry about accommodating students as enrollment continues to increase. With this trend in enrollment, and little increase in the amount of funding for school libraries, it is likely that we will continue to see a downward trend in the amount of books purchased and books circulated per student.
3. A surge in circulation in 2000-2002 was followed by a decline from 2002-2006, with circulation in 2006 being far below the circulation levels in 2000. Declines in circulation can be expected when purchases of library books decrease as students lack library access to new reading materials.
4. Literacy continues to be a central focus of educational initiatives in Indiana schools yet librarians are reporting difficulty in meeting the educational and literacy related needs of students. A lack of up-to-date materials paired with an

insufficient number of library support staff make it difficult for librarians to work with teachers and students to promote literacy and the love of reading. In order for librarians to continue to support school programs such as accelerated reading or programs for low-income students, they are being forced to submit grant proposals, hold book fairs, and take donations. Although these efforts are commendable, it is questionable whether they are adequate and can be sustained.

5. Despite the state's considerable financial challenges, the role of library materials should be considered in any comprehensive plan to improve the literacy of Indiana's students. Resources for the support of school libraries are increasingly strained, making it difficult to support critical academic and student needs. We are already being able to see the long-term outcomes of the budget cuts on book circulation per student, but further negative outcomes on student reading levels and achievement may also become evident.

2006 Trend Analysis of Indiana K-8 Library Services Since the School Library Printed Materials Grant

There is ample evidence to support the importance of school libraries and library media centers in the educational achievement of students. Studies in Alaska, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Oregon, Iowa, and New Mexico suggest that when school libraries have well developed library media programs, adequate staffing (meaning at least one full-time media specialist and one support staff member), a good sized library collection, an organized library system, and higher levels of funding, improvements in student reading achievement are observed (Hamilton-Pennell et al., 2000; Lance, 2002).

In addition, results from the federally sponsored National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) provide evidence that students who read for fun every day have significantly higher reading achievement scores than students who read less frequently. A study by Whitehead (2004) also demonstrates that students with more access to printed media spent more time voluntarily reading in the home and consequently had higher scores in reading comprehension and reading accuracy.

As part of a comprehensive strategy to improve the literacy of Indiana students, the state legislature created the School Library Printed Materials Grant starting with the 1997-1998 school year. Those funds have been discontinued due to state financial problems. In 2004, Plucker et al. reported on the impact of the cease in funding on K-8 school library purchases and circulation. The purpose of this report is to follow up on that report by describing the current state of Indiana school libraries and to present a trend analysis of school library functioning from the 2000-2006 school years. Data were collected during the spring of 2006 and are compared to the results of the previous surveys in 2000, 2002, and 2004.

Recent History of State Funding of School Libraries in Indiana

The Indiana General Assembly provided \$4 million to K-8 schools for the 1997-1999 school years in the School Library Printed Materials Grant. The grant was expanded to K-12 schools for the second funding cycle (1999-2000 and 2000-2001) and the funds increased to \$6 million. School corporations could spend the funds for any grade levels from kindergarten through Grade 12.

Another \$6 million was appropriated for a third funding cycle, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. School corporations received \$3 million for 2001-2002 with the expectation that another \$3 million would follow in 2002-2003. However, the funds for 2002-2003 were eliminated due to the state's budget difficulties.

School corporations received and spent most of the funds for each biennium during the first year of funding. Thus, school corporations spent most, if not all, of the \$4 million for 1997-1999 in 1997-1998, the \$6 million for 1999-2001 in 1999-2000, and the \$3 million in 2001-2002.

The Indiana Administrative Code (511 IAC 6.1-5.6 Media Program) states that each school shall spend at least \$8 per student per year from its 22200 account to maintain its media program. The \$8 minimum figure was set in 1989 when the average cost of a book was about \$9 compared to the present average cost of over \$19. However, even this small amount might not be spent exclusively on books, since salaries for library-related staff can also be drawn from the 22200 account. Therefore, while satisfying their legislative requirements for support of school media programs, Indiana public schools may not necessarily be purchasing books for their libraries.

Methodology

Librarians in Indiana public schools enrolling students in kindergarten through Grade 8 were sent a survey in the spring of 1997 to determine the numbers of books purchased and circulated during 1997. This information was collected prior to state funding for school library books. Subsequent library surveys were sent to schools in 1998, 2000, and 2002. A report by Plucker et al. was completed in 2002 summarizing those results (Plucker et al., 2002).

In spring of 2004, the survey was again sent to librarians in all Indiana public schools enrolling students in kindergarten through Grade 8. A copy of the survey, which was distributed by the Middle Grades Reading Network, is included as Appendix A. In 2004, 680 schools containing at least one grade in the K-8 range returned surveys. A report by Plucker et al. was completed in 2004 summarizing the trends in the survey results from 2000-2004 (Plucker et al., 2004).

The survey was distributed again to all Indiana public schools enrolling students in kindergarten through Grade 12 in the spring of 2006. In 2006, 476 schools containing at least one grade in the K-12 range returned surveys (but only K-8 data were included in the analyses; see explanation below).

The survey requested information on the school name, school corporation, and grade levels served by the school. Additional questions included: a) number of students in the school, b) number of books purchased that year, c) number of books circulated that year. Respondents were also able to provide open-ended comments on of the survey.

Included in the analyses were K-8 data from all four years for schools that answered all of the questions on the survey. The decision to exclude 9-12 data from the sample was made because grade 9-12 schools only appeared in large numbers in the 2006 sample (approximately 16% of the 2006 sample was 9-12 schools). Because schools

containing grades 9-12 tend to be high schools, their enrollment tends to be higher. Thus, including schools in the 9-12 range would bias the enrollment estimates for the 2006 sample. Excluding these schools from the analysis makes the proportions of each type of school included in the sample more similar to the samples analyzed in previous years (see Appendix B for complete breakdown of school types in sample) and provides a more accurate interpretation of the data.

Also excluded from the analysis were those schools indicating a “0” for number of books circulated, because these cases tend to indicate atypical circumstances at that school, such as the library being closed for renovations or computer glitches that made assessing accurate information impossible. Also, those schools with extreme scores (z scores greater than 5) on purchases per student or circulation per student were treated as statistical outliers and excluded from the analyses ($n = 44$).

As shown in Appendix B, samples for the four survey administrations were similar with regard to the grade level taught within those schools. Analysis of variance was used to compare results for the four survey years, with conservative post-hoc Scheffé tests used to compare results between any pair of survey years. A limitation to this approach is the quasi-independent nature of the data, in that some schools participated in more than one survey year.

The 2006 sample size is considerably lower than the samples in previous years.¹ Although the data in Appendix B suggest that the samples are similar enough to be generalized across years, results should be interpreted with caution.

¹ The collaborating organizations suggest that the decrease in survey responses is due to the fact that school librarian positions have been cut substantially in recent years, therefore decreasing the population that could respond to the survey.

Quantitative Results

Demographic and library statistics from those schools appear in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2. Demographic and Library Statistics, 2000-2006

Year	Average School Enrollment	Range in School Enrollment	Average Books Purchased/School	Range in Books Purchased/School	Average Books Circulated/School	Range in Books Circulated/School
2000	470.7	75 – 2,132	524.2	0 – 5,090	17,510	150 – 133,964
2002	493.7	102 – 4,200	479.2	0 – 4,014	19,180	210 – 81,000
2004	506.9	80 – 2,200	493.0	0 – 6,116	18,393	30 – 102,600
2006	587.3	100 – 5,868	495.0	0 – 4,925	17,174	25 – 90,204

Note: Throughout this report, the year listed represents the spring of the academic year in which the survey was administered. For example, “2000” represents the spring of the 1999 – 2000 school year.

In order to control for enrollment changes across years, the purchase and circulation data are adjusted per student, with results presented in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3. Library Statistics, Adjusted per Student, 2000-2006

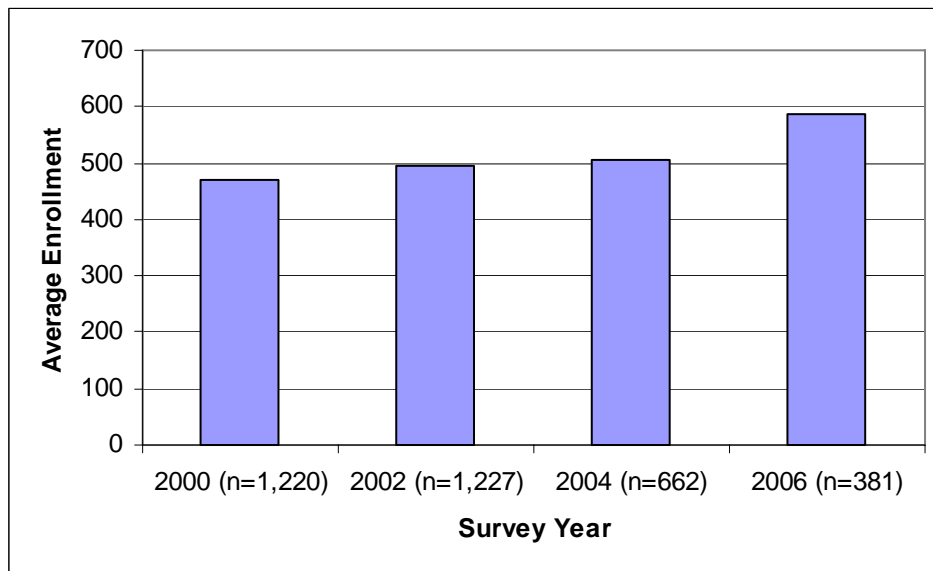
Year	Average Books Purchased/Student	Range in Books Purchased/Student	Average Books Circulated/Student	Range in Books Circulated/Student
2000	1.19	0.00 – 7.77	41.35	0.24 – 256.64
2002	1.03	0.00 – 6.61	43.12	0.98 – 170.00
2004	1.02	0.00 – 7.20	40.11	0.11 – 184.34
2006	0.88	0.00 – 8.46	32.72	0.19 – 146.65

Analysis of variance was used to compare means across the four survey years for a) enrollment, b) purchases, c) circulation, d) purchases per student, and e) circulation per student. Findings regarding each measure are presented below.

Enrollment

School enrollment has continued to increase since the Printed Materials Grant was discontinued. The main effect of enrollment was statistically significant, $F(3, 3486) = 19.489, p < .001$. Post-hoc Scheffé tests indicate that enrollment was significantly higher in 2006 than in 2000, 2002, and 2004. Enrollment was also found to be significantly lower in 2000 than in 2004. The results are shown below in Figure 2 below.

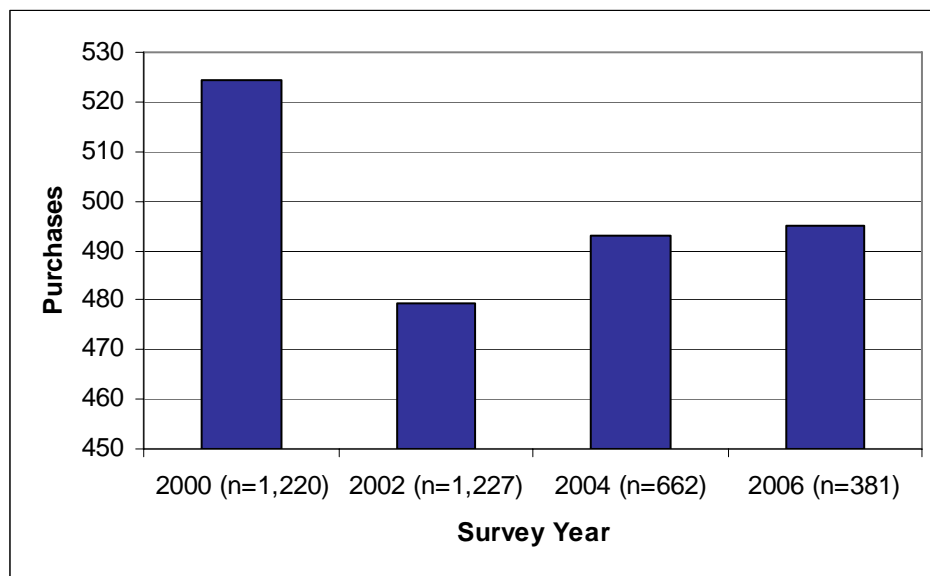
FIGURE 2. Average School Enrollment by Survey Year



Book Purchases

The number of books purchased per school decreased when the Printed Materials Grant funds were cut in 2002, but appear to have remained relatively stable since that time. The main effect of book purchases per school nearly reached significance, $F(3, 3,486) = 2.45, p < .062$. Although all post-hoc tests were non-significant there was a decreasing trend for book purchases observed between 2000 and 2002. Book purchases per school increased slightly from 2002 to 2006 but these differences were not significant. These results are shown in Figure 3 below.

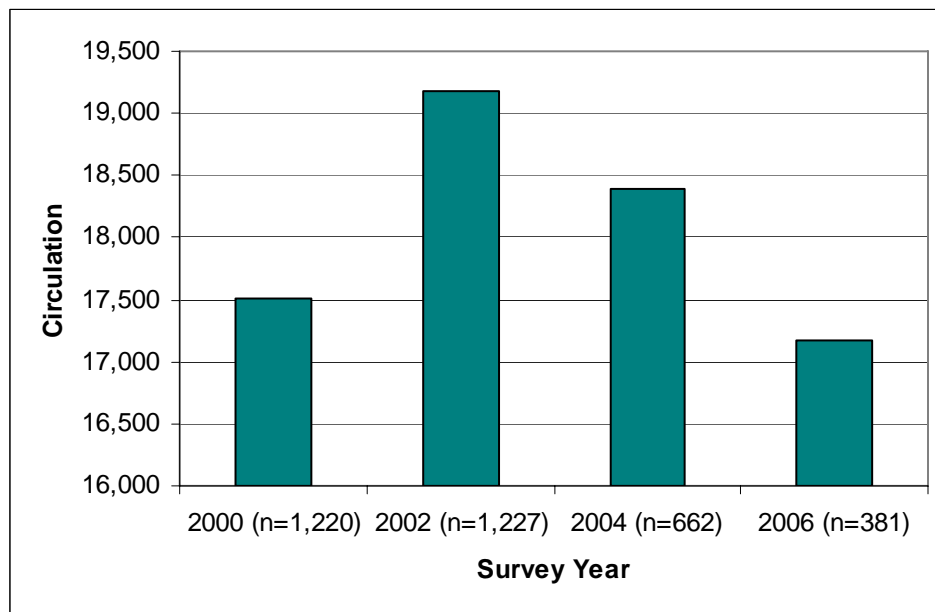
FIGURE 3. Average Number of Book Purchases per School



Circulation

The Printed Materials Grant appears to have resulted in large increases in book circulation, as reported previously (Plucker et al., 2002). These increases were seen in years immediately following funding, as one might expect given the time necessary to order the books and enter them into circulation. A significant difference across survey years was found, $F(3, 3,486) = 3.94, p < .01$. Post-hoc analyses revealed the only significant difference to be the increase in circulation between 2000 and 2002. Although there appears to be a decreasing trend from 2002 to 2006, these differences did not reach significance.

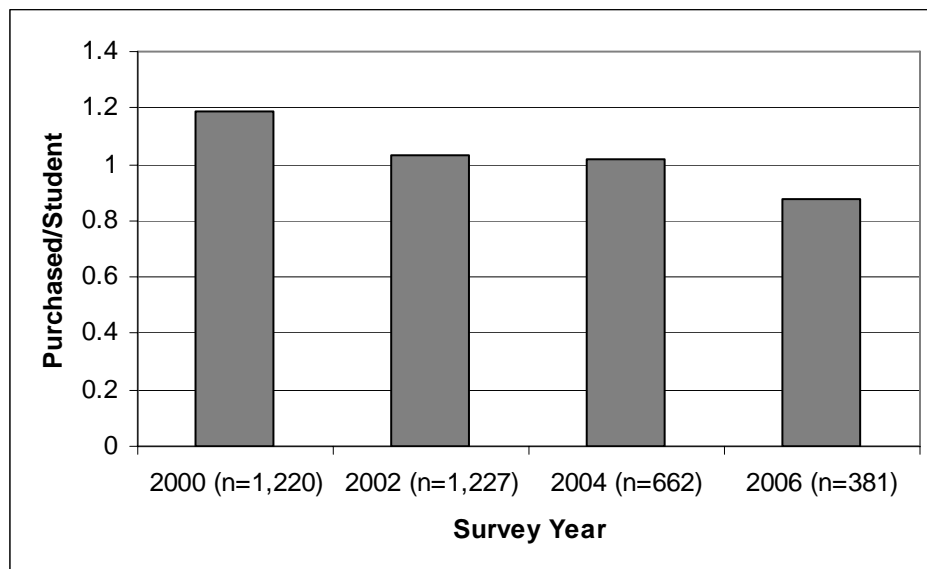
FIGURE 4. Average Book Circulation per School



Purchases per Student

As shown in Figure 5 below, the average number of books purchased per student is significantly different across the survey years $F(3, 3,486) = 11.54, p < .001$. Post-hoc tests revealed that the average number of books purchased per student was significantly higher in 2000 than in any of the following survey years. Conversely, the average number of books purchased per student is significantly lower in 2006 than in any of the previous survey years. Comparing these figures with those in Figure 3, we see that although book purchases per school have only decreased an average of 5.5% from 2000 to 2006, book purchases per student decreased an average of 26.3% during that time. Although strong efforts are being made by school librarians to raise funds for new book purchases (as will be described later in this analysis), they appear to be unable to keep up with increasing enrollments within their schools.

FIGURE 5. Average Number of Books Purchased per Student

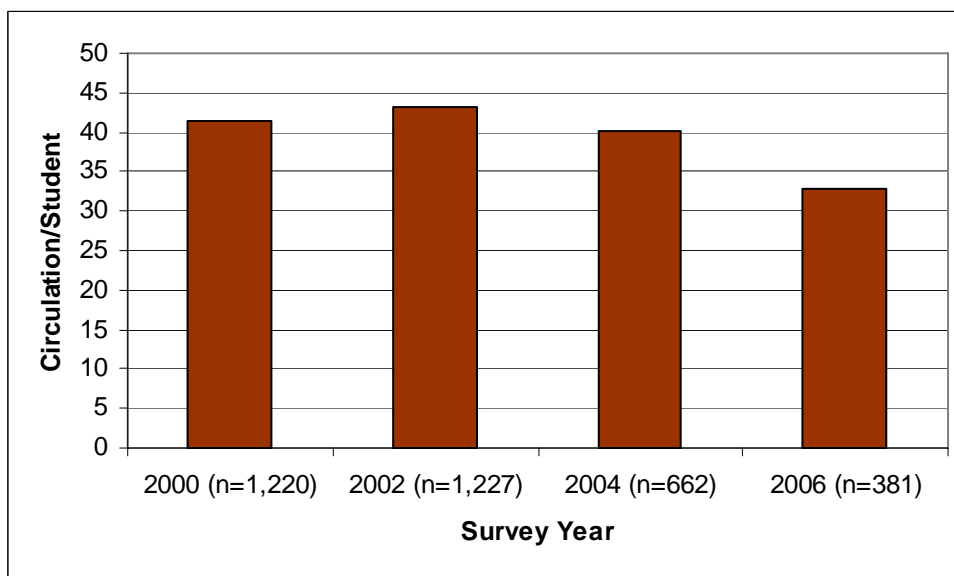


Circulation per Student

Findings in the 2002 report indicated steady increases in circulation per student from 1997-2002. Current findings indicate circulation underwent a significant decline from 2002 to 2006, $F(3, 3,486) = 12.72, p < .001$. Post-hoc tests showed that circulation in 2006 is significantly lower than circulation in any of the other three survey years.

Although the figure indicates an increase from 2000-2002 then a decrease from 2002-2004, the differences did not reach statistical significance.

FIGURE 6. Average Number of Books Circulated per Student



Summary of Quantitative Results

The number of books purchased per school increased nearly 25% during the 1997 to 2002 funding cycle of the School Library Printed Materials Grant (Plucker et al., 2002). The 2002 report also provided evidence that the number of books circulated per school and per student increased nearly 18% and 16% respectively over the course of that funding program. From 2002 till 2004, significant decreases in book purchases were observed following the last year of full funding in 2000.

The current data suggest that book purchases per student have continued to decline significantly. On average, schools purchased 5.5% fewer books in 2006 than in 2000 but due to the increases in student enrollment during that time, this represents a 26.3% drop in average book purchases per student. Book circulation has also experienced a significant decline. Circulation per school has decreased 1.9% on average, but again taking increasing enrollment into account, circulation has decreased 20.9% per student since the last year of full funding in 2000.

Qualitative Results

Of the 476 respondents to the Middle Grades Reading Network survey, approximately 194 individuals provided responses to an open-ended prompt for additional comments. Of these 194, 138 comments were usable in the qualitative analysis. Comments were excluded from the analysis if the content of the comment was merely clarifying their responses on the questionnaire (e.g., “The circulation figures are as of 8:30 am on April 26, 2006.”) or if they were comments not relevant to the analysis at hand (e.g., “I am sorry, but, I do not know the number of the School Corp.”).

The comments were analyzed by identifying themes and subthemes recurring throughout respondents. Five major themes were identified: a) concerns about decreases in library funding, b) concerns about the lack of school resources, c) comments on funding and fund allocation, d) concerns about the effects of decreased funding library on students, and e) comments on the positive effects of the Printed Materials Grant. The responses were additionally categorized into subthemes for each major theme. Those subthemes are listed in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4. Themes in 2006 Survey Comments

Theme	Frequency	Subthemes
Concerns about Decreases in Funding	69	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lowered Library Budget• Decrease in Purchasing Power
Concerns about Lack of School Resources	66	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insufficient Library Staff• Need for New Materials• Technological Changes and Problems Affecting Library Functioning
Funding and Fund Allocation	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional Sources of Funding• Allocation of Funds
Concerns about Effects on Students	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low Per-Pupil Spending• Concerns about Accommodating Growing Enrollment• Need Books to Promote Reading Growth in Children
Positive Effects of Printed Materials Grant	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive Effects of Printed Materials Grant• Direct Pleas for Reinstatement of Printed Materials Grant

Note: Many comments contained elements of several different subthemes, thus many of the comments were represented multiple times in the frequency counts.

Concerns about Decreases in Funding

Lowered Library Budget

A major theme identified in the analysis was the concern about the decreases in funding. Many respondents indicated that their library funds had decreased up to 50% in the past few years. They report that these decreases in funding are making them less able to purchase the books they need. Quotes that exemplify participant responses are listed below.

Between the decrease in money from the state and the decrease in ESEA funds, I have not been able to purchase the [same] quantity of books this year.

Budgets at 50%

I have just received my library book budget for the 2006-2007 school year and it has been cut by \$386.00, which means even less books for our library next year.

Decrease in Purchasing Power

Many participants voiced similar concerns about their library budget but specifically cited that they were unable to purchase needed library materials due to a combination of their decreased budget and the increase in book prices. Quotes best demonstrating this concern appear below.

Our school corporation cut library funding by 50%. Book prices continue to rise, but my purchasing ability decreases...fewer and fewer books into the hands of our children.

Resource prices continue to increase and our funds decrease. Funding from the state, local school system, and even our PTO support have all decreased.

Our book budgets in this district have been decreasing around 10% or so for the past two years. And because the cost of books is increasing, our money doesn't go as far. I use book fair money to purchase most of the Young Hoosier Book Award nominees for the school year.

With budgetary cuts in place, our media services and programs have been drastically cut. We cannot keep up with inflation and have difficulty in adding books to our media center. Our PTO has been a source of books for this school.

Concerns about the Lack of School Resources

Another theme consistently running through the survey comments was the concern about the lack of school resources. In particular, concerns were voiced about an insufficient number of library personnel, and a lack of up-to-date materials. Individuals cited having library personnel stretched too thin and too narrow a variety of up-to-date materials, resulting in difficulty helping students at their schools do research projects. Quotes exemplifying each of these concerns are listed below.

Insufficient Library Staff

This full time library media specialist was not replaced for this building for the 2005-2006 school year.

Our library here... is staffed by only one person, me. I have a Masters degree in education - not a library science degree. There are 20 classes scheduled for library each week - each class is here for 60 minutes. This library class is prep time for the classroom teacher - so there are no class-

room teachers that stay in the library or use the library w/ their class. All of the ordering, cataloging, shelving, re-shelving, assisting students & teachers find things, the administrative and maintaining of the library is done by me. Don't take this as a huge complaint - I do enjoy the students, and the job - but it does take an average of 20 additional hours a week above what I' paid just to keep my head above water - and keep up with the reading needs of the students.

If we had a librarian, we could answer some of these questions.

Need for New Materials

We need to correlate our AR collections to student reading levels. Right now, in our high schools, we probably do not have sufficient materials at the lower levels where many students are reading.

When teachers request a stack of books for a unit, we never have enough on that one topic to fill that need. We have to spread our resources to cover the whole curriculum somewhat so nothing gets covered in depth like it should.

Some of the books in this data have circulated so much that they have been removed from the shelves. Unfortunately there is no money to replace them.

A large portion of our circulation is to teachers who take carts of books to their classrooms. We do not have enough nonfiction books when there are big research projects going on, and our media center is tied up with me teaching classes two periods a day.

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Technological Changes and Problems Affecting Library Functioning

Also related to the purchase of library materials and the hiring of library personnel, several comments spoke to upheaval going on at their school impairing the ability of the library facilities to function smoothly. The most prevalent type of upheaval mentioned was construction and renovation of school facilities resulting in the closing of libraries or the lack of technology required for circulation information or information technology. Comments of this variety are listed below.

We were under construction & combined two libraries for the first half of the year.

We have been undergoing renovation so the library was closed, moved and has finally reopened in our old/new location with a partial collection.

Our numbers are low this year due to a construction project. We did not have computers to track this information the entire first semester.

Funding and Fund Allocation

Additional Sources of Funding

Another major theme throughout many of the responses was the librarians' comments about how they were obtaining additional funds for library materials and what was done with the money once obtained. In particular, many individuals mentioned using such tactics as book fairs, and applying for grants to raise money to buy the majority of their library materials. Many also mentioned receiving donations from various sources such as the public libraries, Scholastic Book Fairs, and the community.

Many books are still in processing, so the number added is incomplete. We have ordered several hundred books through various grants (Target, local organizations) and through book fair profits the past two years.

I try to spend most of my money before May so I don't risk losing it, so have very few books for the first part of the year. Also 100 of these books were donations, so are gently used books. And 200 of them are from the book fair I just had 2 weeks ago. None of the books this school year were bought with school budget funds.

We used a Continuing School Reform grant for 10,000 to buy books.

Many of the books are ones donated as excess by the public library and other sources. Our budget of \$6,000 doesn't allow for many new purchases.

95 percent of all new books added this year were gift donations to the library and free books from Scholastic Book Fairs.

Allocation of Funds

Many comments made about sources of funding also spoke to how the funds were spent after they were obtained. Several individuals mentioned that their funding had to be spent in particular ways in order to keep up with the current school curriculum. Other individuals lamented how their library book budget is low but the school chooses to spend its money on other matters.

Our book budget is right at \$4.30 per student. However, our school did find the money to put artificial turf on the football field at a price of \$500,000.

New books are added yearly. Emphasis is placed on high interest K-5 readability. Accelerated reading materials are used extensively.

I spent the majority of my budget (\$4,174) on the new corporate wide Reading Counts quizzes and on DVD/Videotapes.

Many of our books were purchased via a grant for Reading Counts materials. Most of the books in this program are geared to high-low reading needs. Very few titles available for purchase were at the high school reading level. Also, much of our research is done online thus a low number of circulated items.

Concerns about Effects on Students

Low Per-Pupil Spending

A number of respondents voiced concerns that the decrease in library funding was producing negative effects on their students. Of these concerns, the most prominent was the concern about low per-pupil spending. Many respondents indicated that they are spending much less per student, and are buying too few books per student than they would like and that they believe they should be. Comments exemplifying this concern appear below.

It sure would be nice to purchase 2 books for every child. I am barely reaching the goal 1 book for each child.

8\$ per student is not enough to keep our collection current.

Out of our annual budget we must purchase supplies and equipment as well as books and periodicals. That comes out to be about 1 book per three children.

Concerns about Accommodating Growing Enrollment

Although per-pupil spending appeared to be the largest concern of this type, several respondents also voiced concerns regarding accommodating the students as school enrollment continues to climb. It has been demonstrated already in the report that school enrollment is growing every year (between 2000 and 2006, school enrollment increased by 25%) while library funding continues to remain constant or decrease. Several respondents indicated that in the face of the growing enrollment and decreases in funding they are worried about maintaining a sufficient level of materials for the students. Below are quotes that represent this concern.

Sixth graders are coming back into the elementary buildings next year. However, we have received no additional funding to purchase books or materials for students.

We inherited books from a closing school. That is why we didn't add many books. Our students are transient so at the time of the budget our numbers were low. Also with transient students our books tend to never come back. With a low # our budget came in low. Now with another school closing and 50 extra kids we are looking at a budget that doesn't fit our school.

Need Books to Promote Reading Growth in Children

A recurring concern addressed the role of libraries in helping children grow and prosper as readers. The belief that children need good library resources to become proficient readers and successful students permeated the comments. Several respondents lamented that if students do not have new books or books on new and interesting topics, their motivation to read will diminish. The following quotes demonstrate this concern.

I only have \$3,500 to purchase new books for 489 students. We no longer have money to purchase magazines for students. Our low income area

needs to encourage reading so students can improve their reading skills and gain an appreciation for reading that can last a lifetime! \$3,500 is a paltry amount when one considers book costs and our need to provide two new books per student to improve and expand our collection. Lots of our books have yellowed pages and unattractive covers, but I can't afford to replace them. Please help with more library funds!

Our purchasing power has gone way down since the grant money expired. Please, give more \$\$ to schools to purchase books for our children. Children need to read to succeed.

We have had an increase in the number of books checked out for this time of the year, and attribute that in part to our Silent Sustained Reading Program. Students come in looking for more books by a certain author, or books that are part of a series. Student recommendations for books to add to our collection has also increased.

Positive Effects of the Printed Materials Grant

A final theme running through survey comments shows how much respondents appreciated the Printed Materials Grant. Several respondents made comments about how much further their money went during the days of the Printed Materials Grant and what the money allowed them to do. Several respondents simply used the comment space to plea for the reinstatement of the Printed Materials Grant. The following are comments exemplifying this theme.

I would love to see the materials grant reinstated. I was able to do some much more with my library budget when we had the grant. I know it would be a big help to schools who do not have as large a budget as I do. Thank you for all of your efforts.

The Printed Materials Grant assisted us in rebuilding our school library after removing books which were inadequate due to physical condition or obsolescence. New books make a difference when helping students to become proficient readers. Students are excited when new books arrive and become eager to read them.

Although we have a fairly good book budget compared to many school, and a good circulation rate, our circulations have steadily declined every year since the Printed Materials grant was taken away. When we had that extra money we could allow students to help select books for motivational reading and they were excited about reading the new items. Three years ago our circulation figures were 30% higher.

I have been in this school since 1982 and have budget folders for each year since. Thought it was interesting that our total budget in 1983 for books, software, and periodicals was \$6,836 for 867 students. (\$2,449 of this total came from the old ECIA grant) In 2006, total budget for same items is \$8,432 for 800 students. Considering the increase in cost of the average book during the past 23 years, a bare \$1,600/year increase in budget in 23 years seems an excellent rationale for reinstating state grant money to help maintain school library collections.

Please reinstate the Printed Library Materials Grant!!!

Many comments made cut across more than one of the identified themes and are representative of the sentiments expressed by the respondents.

The majority of my purchases for the school year has been non-fiction due to a heavy weeding done to the shelves last year. I rely mostly on book fairs and Junior Library Guild for my fiction. That's not enough! If this grant could come through, I know that I could supply our students not only with the non-fiction materials that they need for research, but I could get books for their pleasure reading as well. I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

I am so limited in the number of books that I can purchase for the elementary. Book costs go up but my budget doesn't. I try to be frugal and shop for the best deal possible, but I don't want to give up quality, either. It seems that I am buying replacement books for our Accelerated Reader Program almost as much as I am buying current books. The Grant would be a huge blessing!!!

This is the number of books we have purchased and checked out this school year (Aug-Feb). Obviously our numbers are higher for an entire school year. I would love to see the print materials grant renewed. We are trying to update our non-fiction collection, but don't have the money to replace even a small fraction of the old, out-dated books we have. Our new non-fiction books circulate regularly, but the older ones just sit on the shelves.

The Printed Materials Grant assisted us in rebuilding our school library after removing books which were inadequate due to physical condition or obsolescence. New books make a difference when helping students to become proficient readers. Students are excited when new books arrive and become eager to read them.

Conclusions from Qualitative Analysis

Results of this qualitative analysis indicate that public school librarians within the state of Indiana are continuing to cope with significant financial strain. Many librarians are finding it difficult to adequately address the needs of the students and the school due to insufficient library staffing and low materials budgets. A few voiced concerns that their libraries are not able to adequately assist students with their research or promote motivation for reading due to a lack of up-to-date materials. A concern addressed in many of the comments dealt with the decreasing of library budgets in the face of increasing book costs. To deal with this, many librarians are finding alternate methods of funding to help supplement the purchase of library materials.

These methods often included donations, book fairs, and applying for various grant monies, and although many librarians are finding ways to improve the situations of their libraries, still several reminisced about the days when the Printed Materials Grant was instated and expressed hopes that it would be reinstated in the future.

Study Limitations

The results of this study should be interpreted with caution. It is important to note that school librarians voluntarily completed and returned the surveys. Although in 2000 and 2002 the numbers of librarians returning the surveys were quite large, this still does not represent the views of every public school librarian in the state of Indiana. This becomes more problematic when looking at the significantly smaller survey return rates in 2004 and 2006.

It should also be noted that although we report finding a significant increase in enrollment for the years since the Printed Materials Grant, there has been little change in school enrollment in Indiana schools overall. Thus, the increase in enrollment is found for the schools choosing to participate in our survey, and is not due to an overall increase in Indiana school enrollment.

The self-report nature of the surveys may also be considered a limitation to the study. Respondents may have made reporting errors which will influence some of the data. In particular, several comments were made in the open-ended portion of the survey suggesting difficulty reporting exact purchase and circulation figures due to problems with record keeping or complex library situations. Thus for many of the cases, circulation and purchase numbers may be approximate at best. Along the same lines, the possibility for bias exists in the open-ended responses in that respondents' hopes of influencing decisions regarding funding may have influenced their responses.

A third limitation to the study is the lack of data collected regarding the actual source of book-purchasing funds within each school across the survey years. In the 2004 and 2006 surveys, many responses to the open-ended question addressed alternative sources of funding being used after the end of the fully funded cycle. Although an important assumption of this study is that a substantial portion of the 2000 and 2002 funds for book purchases within each school year came from the K-12 grants, no data of this nature were collected during the 2000 and 2002 survey years.

Funding was limited to K-8 schools during the first funding cycle but expanded to K-12 schools in subsequent cycles. Therefore, conclusions about when funds were spent are limited: At best, readers can assume that \$4 million was spent during the 1997-1999 academic years, \$6 million during 1999-2001, and \$3 million during 2001-2002. The last two figures probably amount to less of a per-student increase in grade levels eligible for the targeted funds. Indeed, the \$3 million during 2001-2002 may even represent a decrease in per-student funding relative to the first funding cycle.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

In a previous study (Plucker et al., 2004), researchers found that increases in state funding for school libraries from 1997-2001 resulted in substantial increases in book purchases and circulation that were reflected in the 2000 data on the number of books purchased per school and per student. Subsequently, with a new pool of printed materials available to students, book circulation per school rose substantially as reflected in the 2002 data. The decline in book circulation in 2002-2004 was presumably due to the decrease in funding during the 2002 school year.

Book purchases per student declined dramatically from 2000 to 2002 and remained relatively flat from 2002-2004, reflecting the consequences of the exhaustion of state funding for printed materials, the rising costs of books, and increased school enrollments that reduced purchases per student and caused schools to be unable to rebound from the loss of funds. In the face of significant decreases in funding, however, librarians have shown considerable resourcefulness at finding new sources of funding for book purchases which have likely prevented school libraries from falling further behind.

Based on 2006 data, several new conclusions can be drawn:

1. The data collected in 2006 reveal that book purchases per student have declined significantly since the 2004 school year. Book purchases per student have decreased 26.3% since the 2000 school year (the last year of full funding). Inspection of book purchases per school indicates that although total book purchases appear to be growing from 2002-2006, school enrollment has grown at a faster rate, thus causing the number of purchases per student to decrease dramatically. Book circulation per student also continues to decrease, likely as a result of the decrease in funding experienced during the 2004 school year. Librarians are continuing to find new sources of funding to supplement their collections of

library materials, but still struggle as book prices keep on rising and library staffing continues to decrease.

2. Librarians are beginning to worry about accommodating students as enrollment continues to increase. With this trend in enrollment, and little increase in the amount of funding for school libraries, it is likely that we will continue to see a downward trend in the amount of books purchased and books circulated per student.
3. A surge in circulation in 2000-2002 was followed by a decline from 2002-2006, with circulation in 2006 being far below the circulation levels in 2000. Declines in circulation can be expected when purchases of library books decrease as students lack library access to new reading materials.
4. Literacy continues to be a central focus of educational initiatives in Indiana schools yet librarians are reporting difficulty in meeting the educational and literacy related needs of students. A lack of up-to-date materials paired with an insufficient number of library support staff make it difficult for librarians to work with teachers and students to promote literacy and the love of reading. In order for librarians to continue to support school programs such as accelerated reading or programs for low-income students, they are being forced to submit grant proposals, hold book fairs, and take donations. Although these efforts are commendable, it is questionable whether they are adequate and can be sustained.
5. Despite the state's considerable financial challenges, the role of library materials should be considered in any comprehensive plan to improve the literacy of Indiana's students. Resources for the support of school libraries are increasingly strained, making it difficult to support critical academic and student needs. We are already being able to see the long-term outcomes of the budget cuts on book circulation per student, but further negative outcomes on student reading levels and achievement may also become evident.

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Appendix A

2006 Survey

Middle Grades Reading Network

SCHOOL LIBRARY BOOK ACQUISITION AND CIRCULATION SURVEY

We need the following information to help us compare previous information from 1997 (baseline), 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2004 in the quest of increased funding for school library books. Results will be widely distributed. **Please fill in the information and return to the Middle Grades Reading Network, University of Evansville, 1800 Lincoln Avenue, Evansville, IN 47722, or fax to 812-423-6034, or email information to rc33@evansville.edu.**

School _____

School Corporation _____

Grade levels served by the school:

____ K-5 ____ K-6 ____ 6-8 ____ 7-12 ____ 9-12

____ Other (Grade Levels _____)

What is the number of students in the school? _____

How many books were purchased from June 1, 2003 to May 31, 2004 including those ordered but not yet received? _____

How many books were circulated from June 1, 2003 to May 31, 2004 including an estimate of the number of books that will be circulated from now to May 31? _____

Comments:

Appendix B

Grade Level Taught in Schools by Survey Year

TABLE 5. Schools Included in Analysis

Grades Taught	Schools in 2000 Survey (N=1222)		Schools in 2002 Survey (N=1227)		Schools in 2004 Survey (N=662)		Schools in 2006 Survey (N=462)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
P-K	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.22
P-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.22
P-4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.43
P-5	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1.1
P-6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.22
P-8	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.22
K	4	0.32	1	0.08	2	0.30	1	0.22
K-1	1	0.08	2	0.16	0	0	0	0
K-2	11	0.90	14	1.1	5	0.75	4	0.87
K-3	12	0.98	10	0.81	8	1.2	0	0
K-4	44	3.6	44	3.6	37	5.6	24	5.2
K-5	472	38.6	460	37.5	217	32.8	140	30.3
K-6	269	22.0	273	22.2	116	25.1	35	7.6
K-7	1	0.08	0	0	0	0	0	0
K-8	21	1.7	25	2.0	15	2.3	2	0.43
K 6-8	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.22
K-9	1	0.08	0	0	0	0	0	0
K-12	8	0.65	8	0.65	10	1.5	5	1.1
1-4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.43
1-5	20	1.6	18	1.5	3	0.45	9	1.9
1-6	2	0.16	1	0.08	1	0.15	0	0
2-5	2	0.16	3	0.24	2	0.30	0	0
2-6	1	0.08	3	0.24	0	0	0	0
3-5	9	0.74	10	0.81	5	0.75	2	0.43
3-6	1	0.08	2	0.16	1	0.15	2	0.43
4-5	1	0.08	1	0.08	2	0.30	1	0.22
4-6	8	0.65	8	.65	5	0.75	0	0
4-8	1	0.08	1	0.08	0	0	0	0
5-6	7	0.57	5	0.41	3	0.45	7	1.5
5-7	1	0.08	0	0	0	0	0	0
5-8	14	1.1	10	0.81	9	1.4	7	1.5
6	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.43
6-7	2	0.16	2	0.16	2	.3	0	0
6-8	165	13.5	176	14.3	119	18.0	60	13.0
6-9	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	2.4
6-12	14	1.1	15	1.2	11	1.7	9	1.9
7-8	48	3.9	57	4.6	30	4.5	28	6.1
7-9	5	.41	8	.65	3	0.45	0	0
7-12	74	6.1	67	5.5	56	8.5	16	3.5
8-9	1	0.08	1	0.08	0	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.22
9-12	0	0	0	0	0	0	78	16.9
10-12	2	0.16	0	0	0	0	2	0.43



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