

## **2009 Wyoming School Library Collection Analysis**

*March, 2010*

In the fall of 2009, the Wyoming State Library worked with Follett Library Services to conduct a collection analysis of Wyoming schools. This data was combined with enrollment numbers provided by the Wyoming Department of Education for Oct. 1, 2009.

Wyoming has 349 public schools, with student enrollment of 87,461 students. Although there is not a definitive count of how many have libraries, 314 schools serving 97% of the state's K-12 population have FTEs assigned for Library Media Specialists (LIM) and/or Library Media Aides (LMA). Two additional schools are served by combined public/school libraries. Many of the remaining schools are small rural schools or alternative schools; just over half have less than 20 students. It is likely that most students in schools without LIM or LMA staffing are accessing library services through other means: other schools, district-level staff, public libraries or by staffing the library with non-library personnel.

Of those 349 Wyoming public schools, 126 (36.1%) participated in the 2009 school collection analysis. These 126 schools had 46,517 students enrolled as of Oct. 1, 2009, or just over half of all Wyoming public K-12 students. Although this is not a complete picture of the Wyoming school library community, it is a sizable sample.

The analysis looked at size and age of collections, specifically the age of the nonfiction collection in Dewey range 6xx (Technology) and 61X (Medical Sciences). Age of collection is traditionally used by many states (not Wyoming) in guidelines for school library media centers. With electronic resources becoming more prevalent, especially in the higher grades, these are imperfect measures, although still useful. Wyoming students are fortunate to have access to the state's GoWYLD databases, and schools use these heavily. It will be interesting to see how the balance of electronic and physical resources changes over time.

The 126 reporting schools averaged just over 30 items per student, with a median collection age of 1991 for the overall collection, 1994 for items in the 600s and 1995 for the 610s. A 15-year-old medical sciences book was written before the Dolly the Sheep was cloned and the human genome sequenced.

The data is presented by grade level and also in order of enrollment, items per student and age of collection. The sorted lists should not be seen as a "best to worst" list – different libraries have different needs and service models. Instead, it is intended to allow libraries to more easily find others that compare to their own collections.

Questions on the 2009 Wyoming School Library Collection Analysis may be directed to:

### **Wyoming State Library**

Susan Mark, Statistics Librarian

1-800-264-1281 (press 3, then 3) or 307-777-5915

[smark@state.wy.us](mailto:smark@state.wy.us)