Non-MLS Salaries in Public Libraries Disparate:
Non-MLS Salaries & Number of Positions Closing Fast on MLS

FAST FACTS
RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

Library support staff are a vital part of many public libraries. They can be an integral part of a department's services for their patrons. The *ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey* is ALA's first attempt to collect salary information nationally for all non-MLS staff not included in the *ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries*. The survey asked participating academic and public libraries for salary information for an overwhelming 62 positions.
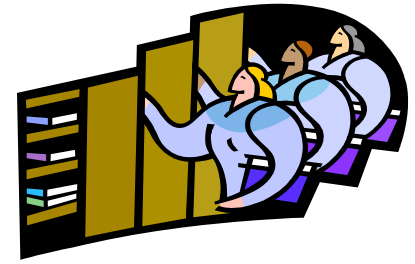
Position Title	Category	Number of Positions (N)
Circulation Clerk	Public Service	4,816
Shelver/Page	Public Service	4,806
Associate Librarian of Adult Services	Public Service	1,188
Library Technical Assistant of Adult Services	Public Service	898
Associate Librarian of Reference/Information Services	Public Service	836
Associate Librarian of Children's Services/Young Adult Services	Public Service	755
Library Technical Assistant of Reference/Information Services	Public Service	736
Adult Services Clerk	Public Service	687
Janitorial Cleaner	General Administration	579
Library Technical Assistant of Children's Services/Young Adult Services	Public Service	500

For public libraries, ten of the 62 positions had 500 or more responses (see Table 1). Of these ten, nine were in the Public Service category. Furthermore, Adult Services was the only department to have all three position levels (Clerk, Library Technical Assistant, & Associate Librarian) represented in this high response group. (See grey box of definitions for the position levels.)

Associate Librarian (non-MLS degreed) – Provides assistance to patrons including topical research and material location. Assists patrons with the use of library resources and equipment. Screens the collection for outdated or unused materials following established guidelines. May perform managerial and administrative duties.

Library Technical Assistant – Provides basic assistance to patrons referring patrons to Librarian for professional assistance. Locates materials and information for patrons. May complete routine copy cataloging. Assists with special programming.

Clerk – Performs routine duties requiring the use of a variety of forms, reports or procedures. Provides basic patron assistance: sets up computer stations, locates materials, provides information. Maintains department or area records. Performs miscellaneous clerical duties such as filling, typing, sorting or photocopying.

Unlike the previous issue of *Fast Facts*, "Non-MLS Salaries in Academic Libraries Wide Ranging", there is no clear salary discrepancy specifically for staff in Adult Services when compared to their peers. In fact, the results indicate that Adult Service Clerks have a higher average annual salary than Circulation Clerks – a difference of $823 (see Chart 1).

## Chart 1. Average Non-MLS Salaries for Positions in Public Libraries, 2006
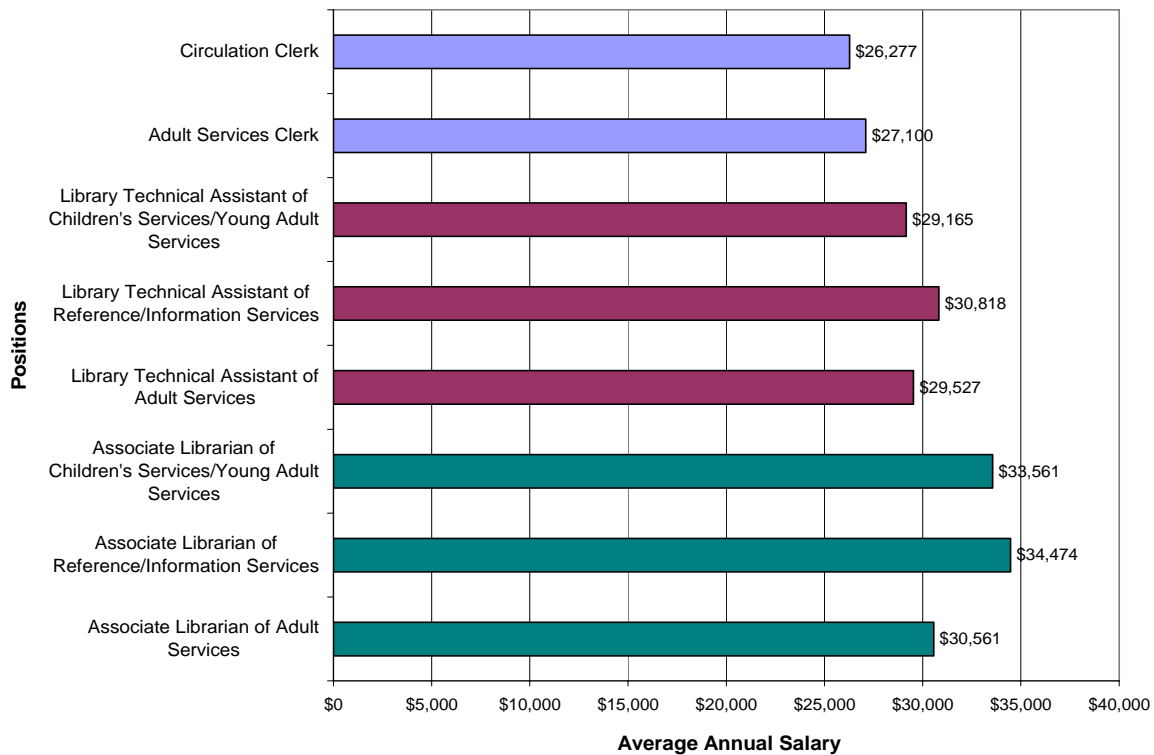
The average annual salary of Library Technical Assistants (LTA) of Adult Services falls in the middle when compared to their peers. On average, LTAs of Reference/Information Services earn $1,291 more than those in Adult Services, while LTAs of Adult Services earn $362 more than those in Children's Services/Young Adult Services.

The results for Associate Librarian of Adult Services, on the other hand, show a lower average annual salary than their peers. The average Associate Librarian's salary is $33,561 for Children's Services/Young Adult Services and $34,474 for Reference/Information Services. Therefore, the average annual salary of Adult Services (29,527) is between $3,000 and $3,913 less than their peers.

Findings for public libraries are similar to those in academic libraries. Results from both library types indicate that salaries of Associate Librarians (non-MLS) are catching up to salaries of Beginning Librarians (MLS), as reported in the 2006 *ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey*. Also, the number of positions reported in both surveys indicates there may be more Associate Librarians than Beginning Librarians working in public libraries.

The average annual salary for all types of Associate Librarians in public libraries is $33,680 and the average for Beginning Librarians is $40,026 (see Chart 2). Therefore, Associate Librarians (non-MLS) earn only $6,346 less than Beginning Librarians (MLS). This is a greater difference than the one between Beginning Librarians and Librarians Who Do Not Supervise (that difference is $1,650). Notably, however, there are fewer reports of Beginning Librarians salaries than Librarians Who Do not Supervise and Associate Librarians. While the MLS survey received 1,650 responses for Librarians Who Do Not Supervise, the survey only received 311 for Beginning Librarians. The Non-MLS survey received 3,416 responses for Associate Librarians.

FAST FACTS
RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

Chart 2. Non-MLS & MLS Salaries in Public Libraries

Average Annual Salaries

- Associate Librarian: $33,680
- Beginning Librarians: $40,026
- Librarians Who Do Not Supervise: $45,782
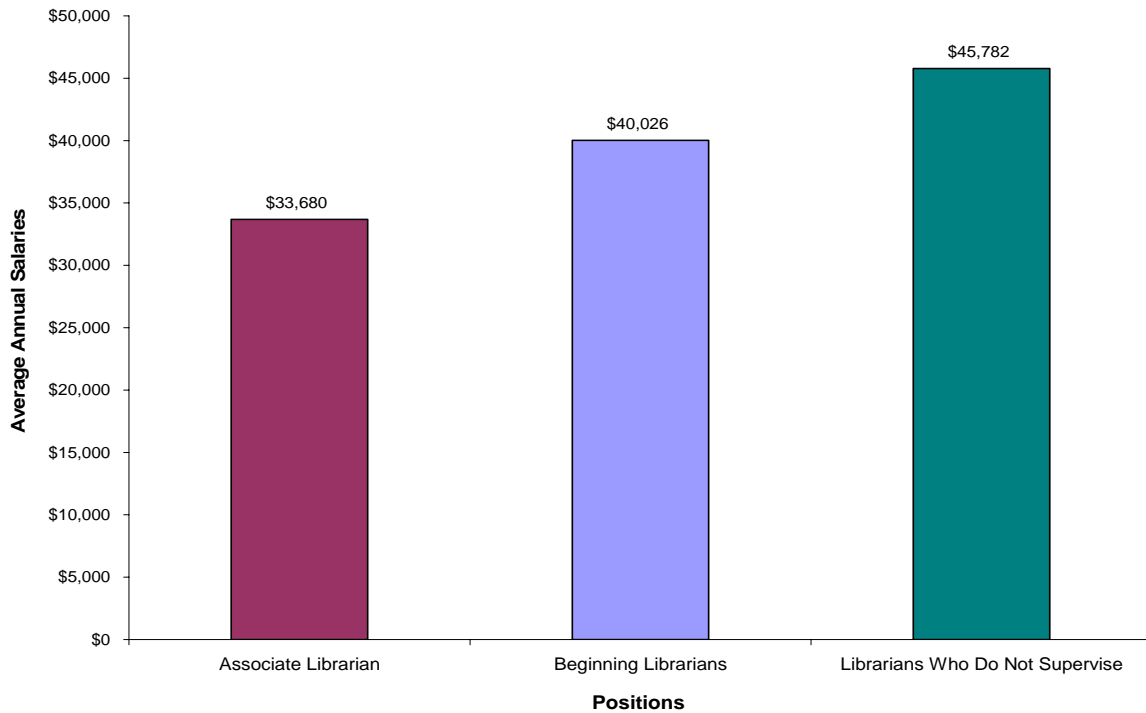
Positions

To conclude, the data suggests that although non-MLS staff in Adult Services may not always earn the highest average annual salaries compared to positions in other departments, their salaries are still competitive with their peers in positions at similar levels. This may indicate that public libraries recognize the need to retain well-trained and experienced staff in support positions.

On the other hand, a comparison of Beginning Librarian (MLS) and Associate Librarian (non-MLS) salaries, suggests a lack of recognition for Beginning Librarians. Based on the data, it appears that public libraries employ Associate Librarians (non-MLS) ten times more than Beginning Librarians (MLS). The salaries of Associate Librarians are also closing in on Beginning Librarians. It is encouraging to see public libraries recognize the value of non-MLS staff by providing competitive salaries. However, if this is truly the case, libraries need to also recognize the importance of the Beginning Librarian position in order to retain qualified professional staff for the future.

Sources:

Grady, J. & Davis, D. (2006). ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey: A Survey of Library Positions Not Requiring an ALA-Accredited Mater's Degree. American Library Association – Allied Professional Association.

Grady, J. & Davis, D. (2006). ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries. American Library Association – Allied Professional Association.

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Salaries of Staff Working in Archives

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RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

The *ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey*, the Society of American Archivists' (SAA) *A*CENSUS* [1] survey and the U.S. Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) all have salary information and occupation definitions for positions in archives (see sidebars). The definition in the *ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey* includes most of the tasks mentioned in the other two resources, stating that a staff member working in archives or special collections "manages and maintains collection; identifies and appraises records, authenticates, describes and documents, facilitates access and use, preserves and conserves, and exhibits collection".

Table 1
Available Salary Data for Positions in Archives

Salary Source	Position	Average Annual Salary
BLS	Archivist	$40,850
	Librarian	$49,110
	Library Technician	$26,940
SAA	Archivist	$46,544
ALA (MLS)	Librarian	$56,259
ALA (non-MLS) Public Libraries	Associate Librarian of Archives & Special Collections	$30,329
	Library Technical Assistant of Archives & Special Collections	$34,651
	Archives & Special Collections Clerk	$26,640
ALA (non-MLS) Academic Libraries	Associate Librarian of Archives & Special Collections	$40,445
	Library Technical Assistant of Archives & Special Collections	$31,149
	Archives & Special Collections Clerk	$26,424

Position Definitions

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Archivists - Appraise, edit, and direct safekeeping of permanent records and historically valuable documents. Participate in research activities based on archival materials.

Librarians **-** Administer libraries and perform related library services. Tasks may include selecting, acquiring, cataloguing, classifying, circulating, and maintaining library materials; and furnishing reference, bibliographical, and readers' advisory services. May perform in-depth, strategic research, and synthesize, analyze, edit, and filter information. May set up or work with databases and information systems to catalogue and access information.

Library Technicians - Assist librarians by helping readers in the use of library catalogs, databases, and indexes to locate books and other materials; and by answering questions that require only brief consultation of standard reference. Compile records; sort and shelve books; remove or repair damaged books; register patrons; check materials in and out of the circulation process. Replace materials in shelving area (stacks) or files.

[1] "The 2004 A*CENSUS (Archival Census & Education Needs Survey in the United States) was conducted by a team of researchers from the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in conjunction with other archivist organizations" (*A*CENSUS 2004: Data Collection Methodology Report*, 2005, p. 2)

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Salaries of those working in archives vary from over $56,000 to under $27,000, depending on the position (see Table 1). For example, according to the *ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries*, the average salary for an MLS Librarian is $56,259 (regardless of library type) whereas a non-MLS Archives and Special Collections Clerk (in an academic library) earns on average $26,424 annually.

The training and education needed to be a professional archivist is usually similar to that of a librarian. However, according to the BLS, archivists typically earn $8,260 less annually than librarians. There is a larger difference in the salary data collected from professional associations. The SAA's *A*CENSUS* survey found that the average annual salary of archivists is $46,544, this is $9,715 less than the ALA average for librarians.

The *2006 ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey* asked participating public and academic libraries to provide salary information specifically for Library Technical Assistants and Clerks. In archives, the average annual salary for Library Technical Assistants was $34,651 and Clerks earned $26,640 in public libraries (see Chart 1). The survey results indicate that both positions earn less in academic libraries. Library Technical Assistants in academic libraries earned an average salary of $31,149 which is $3,502 less than those in public libraries. Clerks in academic libraries earned almost $400 less than those in public libraries.

Position Definitions

Society of American Archivists

Archivist

1. An individual responsible for appraising, acquiring, arranging, describing, preserving, and providing access to records of enduring value, according to the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control to protect the materials' authenticity and context.

2. An individual with responsibility for management and oversight of an archival repository or of records of enduring value.

Chart 1
ALA Average Annual Salaries of Library Technicians and Clerks in Archives and Special Collections

FAST FACTS

RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

Associate Librarians of Archives and Special Collections are non-MLS positions which may perform managerial and administrative duties, according to the *ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey*. Of these Associate Librarians in public libraries, 128 reported their education levels. Eight reported they had a master's degree, however, of the 45 in academic libraries who reported their education levels 12 had master's degrees and 3 had doctoral degrees.

The average annual salary of Associate Librarians of Archives and Special Collections is $30,329 in public libraries and $40,445 in academic libraries. When these salaries are compared to the SAA & BLS average annual salaries, Archivists (MLS) earn between $16,215 to $10,521 more than Associate Librarians (non-MLS) in public libraries and $6,099 to $405 more than those in academic libraries (see Table 1).

Both MLS and non-MLS positions in archives may perform similar tasks at different professional levels. However, salaries for positions in this field range widely. Average annually salaries for Non-MLS positions are less in academic libraries than public libraries. While the BLS data suggests that an archivist earns more than 20 percent less than the average annual salary of a librarian.

Sources:
Grady, J. & Davis, D. (2006). ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey: A Survey of Library Positions Not Requiring an ALA-Accredited Mater's Degree. American Library Association – Allied Professional Association.

Grady, J. & Davis, D. (2006). ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries. American Library Association – Allied Professional Association.

Society of American Archivists. (2005). A*CENSUS. Available at: http://www.archivists.org/a-census/index.asp .

U.S. Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2001). Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System. Available at: http://www.bls.gov/soc/home.htm .

Position Definitions

American Library Association

Archives and Special Collections (non-MLS positions) - manages and maintains collection; identifies and appraises records, authenticates, describes and documents, facilitates access and use, preserves and conserves, and exhibits collection.

Associate Librarian (non-MLS degreed) - Provides assistance to patrons including topical research and material location. Assists patrons with the use of library resources and equipment. Screens the collection for outdated or used materials following established guidelines. May perform managerial and administrative duties.

Library Technical Assistant - Provides basic assistance to patrons referring patrons to Librarian professional assistance. Locates materials and information for patrons. May complete routine copy cataloging. Assists with special programming.

Clerks - Performs routine duties required the use of a variety of forms, reports or procedures. Provides basic patron assistance: sets up computer stations, locates materials, provides information. Maintains departmental or area records. Performs miscellaneous clerical duties such as filing, typing, sorting, or photocopying.

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Is $40,000 the Magic Number?

FAST FACTS — RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

With such a wide range of salaries being offered to new Master's in Library Science (MLS) graduates, it may be difficult to know just how much one should expect to be paid. It now appears that $40,000 may be the magic number.

According to a February 2007 press release by the American Library Association (ALA), $40,000 is the wage most agreed upon as the minimum starting salary that should be offered to professional librarians.[1] In their annual salary survey, ALA defines a professional librarian as an individual with a master's degree from an ALA accredited program.[2]

The declaration passed by ALA at the 2007 Midwinter meeting, "endorses a nonbinding minimum salary of $40,000 for professional librarians." It also states: "over three-quarters of respondent library workers support the establishment of salary minimums for librarians, with the commonest salary figure cited being $40,000."[3] The full resolution can be found on the ALA-APA website at: http://www.ala-apa.org/about/20062007APACD15.pdf

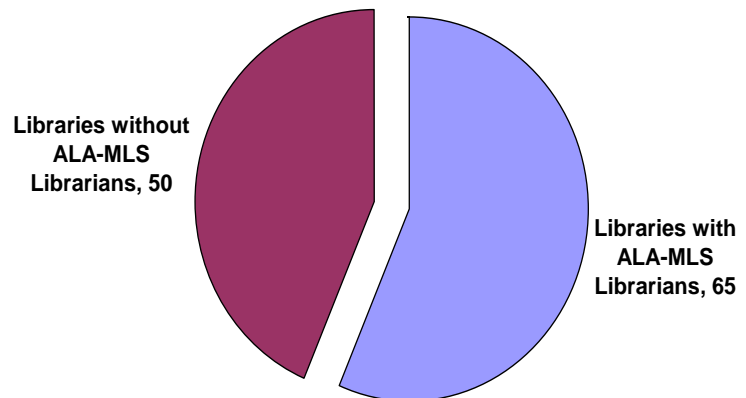> **Colorado Public Library Annual Report**
> **Job Definitions**
>
> **Beginning Librarians**:
> Staff with LIS master's degrees but no professional experience after receiving the degree.
>
> **Non-supervisory Librarians:**
> Staff with LIS master's degrees who were not reported earlier [i.e., managers, supervisors, associate directors, and directors] and who do not supervise.

How realistic is this number? The most recent data available from the *2005 Colorado Public Library Report*, which reports salaries as of January 2006, illustrates how Colorado stands[4].

Based on this report, out of the 115 public libraries in Colorado, 65 reported employing ALA-MLS accredited librarians. The remaining 50 libraries reported no librarians with ALA-MLS credentials. (See Chart 1.) Of these 65 libraries with ALA-MLS librarians, only 33 reported salaries for full-time beginning and non-supervisory librarian positions (see definitions in sidebar). The following information is based on the salaries reported by these 33 libraries.

Chart 1
Colorado Public Libraries by ALA-MLS Librarians Staffing Status, 2006

Libraries without ALA-MLS Librarians, 50

Libraries with ALA-MLS Librarians, 65

As reported in the Colorado Public Library Annual Report 2005 to the Library Research Service, Colorado State Library, January-March 2006.

More than half (17) of the 33 libraries, report paying a *minimum* salary of less than $40,000 to full-time beginning and non-supervisory librarians. Many of these salaries are significantly less than $40,000.
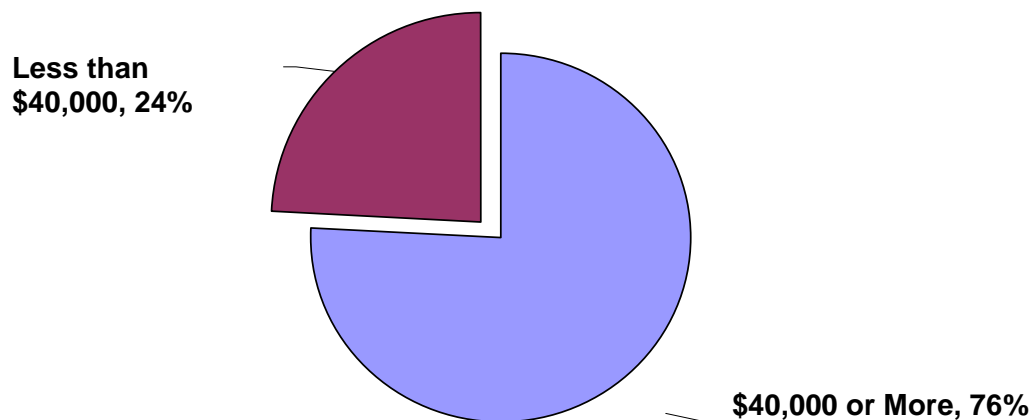
Less than one-third (10) of these libraries, report paying a *minimum* salary of $40,000 or more to full-time beginning and non-supervisory librarians. Six libraries did not report minimum salaries. (See Chart 2.)

Chart 2
***Minimum* Salaries Paid by Colorado Public Libraries**
to Beginning or Non-Supervisory Librarians

**No Minimum Salary
Reported, 18%**

Less than $40,000, 52%
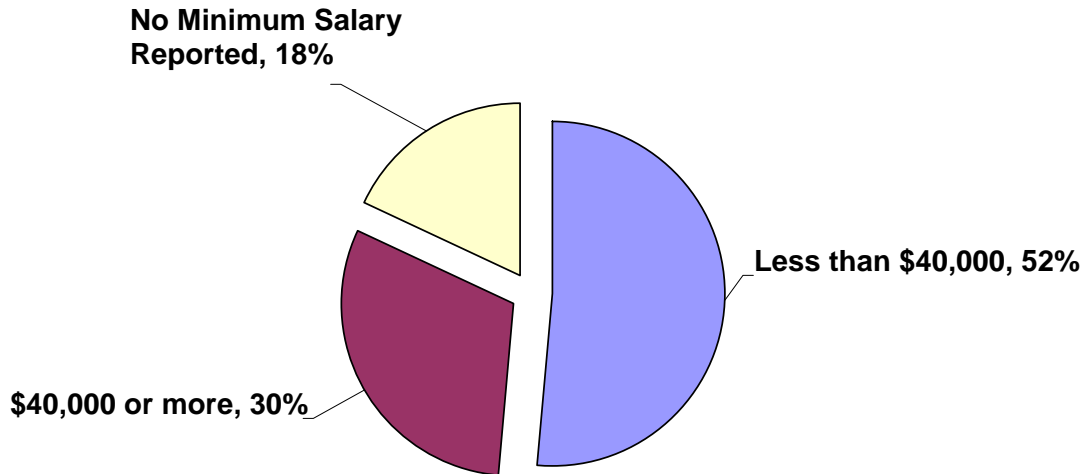
$40,000 or more, 30%

More than three-fourths (25) of the 33 libraries, report paying a *maximum* salary of $40,000 or more to beginning and non-supervisory librarians. While about one-fourth (8) of these libraries, report paying a *maximum* salary of less than $40,000. (See Chart 3)

Chart 3
***Maximum* Salaries Paid by Colorado Public Libraries in 2006**
to Beginning or Non-Supervisory Librarians

**Less than
$40,000, 24%**

$40,000 or More, 76%

FAST FACTS

RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

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RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

Perhaps the ALA resolution will be an incentive for libraries to increase the minimum salaries of librarians. At this time, however, more than half of the public libraries in Colorado do not pay the proposed minimum salary of $40,000 to full-time beginning or non-supervisory librarians.

For detailed information regarding individual libraries
reported salaries of librarians in Colorado go to:
http://www.lrs.org/interactive/index.asp

Sources:

[1]American Library Association – Allied Professional Association. *ALA-APA Council Passes Resolution to Endorse a Nonbinding Minimum Salary for Professional Librarians.* (February 13, 2007). Retrieved on March 7, 2007 from http://www.ala-apa.org/news/news.html#councilmw07.

[2]Grady, J. & Davis, D. (2006). *ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries.* American Library Association – Allied Professional Association.

[3]McGrorty, Michael. (2007). American Library Association Allied Professional Association. *Endorsement of a Nonbinding Minimum Salary for Professional Librarians.* Retrieved on March 7, 2007 from http://www.ala-apa.org/about/20062007APACD15.pdf

[4]*Colorado Public Library Annual Report, 2005.* (2005). Compiled by Library Research Service. Retrieved on March 7, 2007 from http://www.LRS.org.

Fast Facts – Recent Statistics from the Library Research Service
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Library & Information Science Program • College of Education • University of Denver

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Statewide Courier Saves Libraries Thousands in Shipping Costs Each Year

During the months of October 2006 and February 2007, 27 public, academic, school, and special libraries in Colorado collected statistics on the number and format of items sent via the statewide courier service, operated by the Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC). The study was undertaken to determine the cost-effectiveness of the courier service.

Without the presence of a statewide courier, Colorado's libraries would need to find alternative methods of transferring items between library systems – most likely they would need to ship materials using a standard shipping company, i.e., the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), Federal Express (FedEx), or United Parcel Service (UPS). For the purposes of this study, we collected data for items sent on the courier by the libraries, rather than received, because in using the standard shipping methods mentioned above the sender nearly always incurs the cost (COD being the exception). Statistics were collected during specified weeks in October and February—some libraries participated in data collection during only one of these periods, while others participated during both. Statistics for all libraries were annualized.

Based on the data collected, the courier proved to be extremely cost-effective. During the study period, participating libraries were charged $3,389 for their participation in the courier. Estimates for the cost of sending materials via a shipping company were made using average weights for each type of item (e.g., books, DVDs, audio tapes). For each shipping company, the least expensive option within its services was chosen. The most economical alternative shipping method—USPS—was over 3.5 times more expensive than the courier, at $12,098. Shipping the same materials via Federal Express or UPS would cost even more, with both of those services topping $20,000 (see Chart 1).

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RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

Chart 1: Courier Cost Study 2006-07:
Comparison of Total Cost to Participating Libraries During the Study
Period
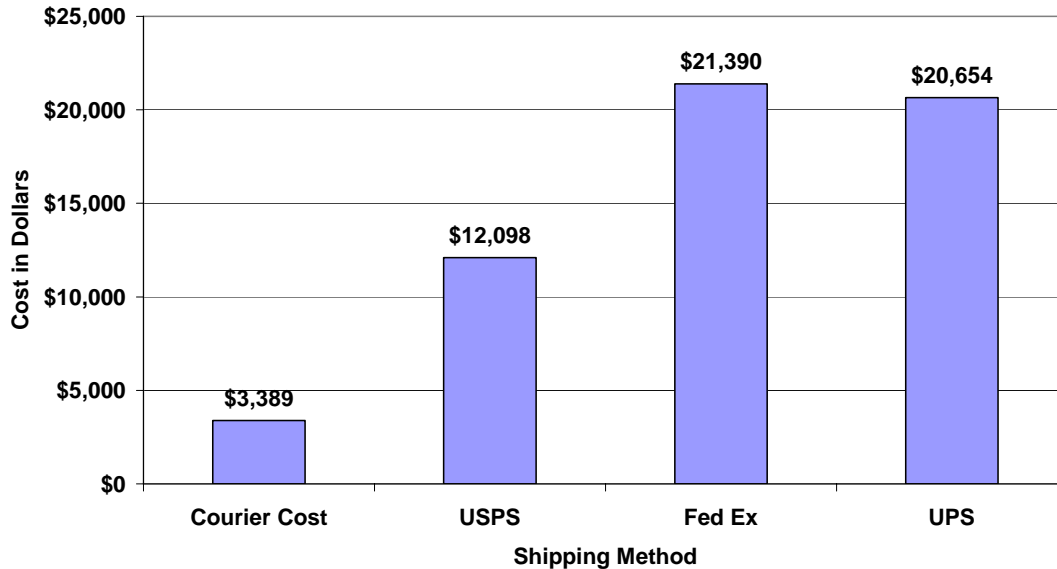
Additionally, courier service is more convenient than standard shipping methods, and undoubtedly saves staff time and packaging costs. When using the courier, library staff place all courier-delivered items in a bin with a label directing courier staff how to route the item. For any of the alternative methods, items need to be more carefully packaged in boxes and protective wrapping. This savings of time and materials increases the courier's cost effectiveness even more.

Statewide Usage
There were too few participating school and special libraries to even attempt extrapolating their data on a statewide level, but participation from public and academic libraries was sufficient to attempt an estimate. This study had a relatively small number of participants, and they were a self-selected (volunteer) group, making it impossible to assume a representative sample and difficult to extrapolate numbers of items moved on a statewide level.

Making extrapolation even more difficult is the fact that different libraries use the courier in very different ways. For example, Grand County Library District, which serves a population of around 14,000 people, has the courier stop at all 6 of its locations, and uses the courier for intra-library loaning of items (materials sent between Grand County libraries), as well as inter-library loans (materials sent to other library systems). Meanwhile, Aurora Public Library, which serves nearly 300,000 people at its 7 branches, has the courier only stop at one location, and uses it only for inter-library loans. These two library systems, serving quite different populations, have very similar courier usage numbers.
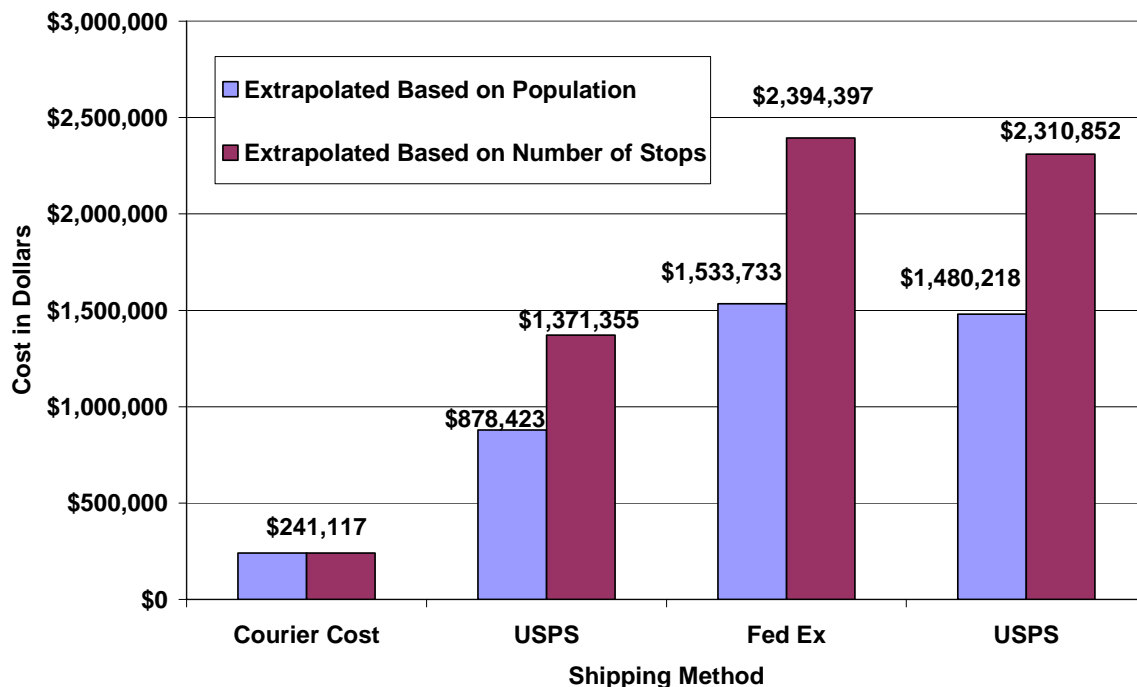
This suggests that extrapolating exclusively on the basis of population served (or in the case of academic libraries, enrollment) or solely on number of courier stops may produce an inaccurate number. Because no one single method recommends itself, extrapolations were made using both methods (see Table 1).

Table 1: Estimated Number of Items Sent via Courier by Colorado Public Libraries

Format	Extrapolated Based on Population	Extrapolated Based on Number of Courier Stops
Books	1,167,622	1,822,841
Audio Book Cases	125,645	196,151
VHS/DVDs	345,227	538,953
Music CDs	112,606	175,796
Photocopies, correspondence, other items	24,003	37,472
Packages	8,742	13,647
Totals	1,783,845	2,784,861

Using these estimations, it is expected that public libraries ship somewhere near two million items on the courier each year and save between $600,000 and $1 million annually, when comparing courier cost with USPS. Again, this savings jumps dramatically if the alternative shipping method were either FedEx or UPS (see Chart 2).

Chart 2: Comparison of Estimated Annual Cost for Public Libraries

Legend:
- Extrapolated Based on Population
- Extrapolated Based on Number of Stops

Shipping Method	Extrapolated Based on Population	Extrapolated Based on Number of Stops
Courier Cost	$241,117	
USPS	$878,423	$1,371,355
Fed Ex	$1,533,733	$2,394,397
USPS	$1,480,218	$2,310,852

X-axis: Shipping Method; Y-axis: Cost in Dollars

Extrapolated in the same manner, it is projected that academic libraries in Colorado ship around 400,000 items on the courier (see Table 2) and in the process save over $200,000 over USPS costs, while spending under $100,000 on courier service (see Chart 3).

Table 2: Estimated Numbers of Items Sent via Courier by Colorado Academic Libraries

Format	Extrapolated Based on Enrollment	Extrapolated Based on Number of Courier Stops
Books	353,121	375,327
Audio Book Cases	3,506	3,726
VHS/DVDs	25,045	26,620
Music CDs	5,630	5,984
Photocopies, correspondence, other items	2,364	2,512
Packages	239	254
Totals	389,905	414,424

Chart 3: Comparison of Estimated Annual Cost for Academic Libraries

FAST FACTS — *RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE*
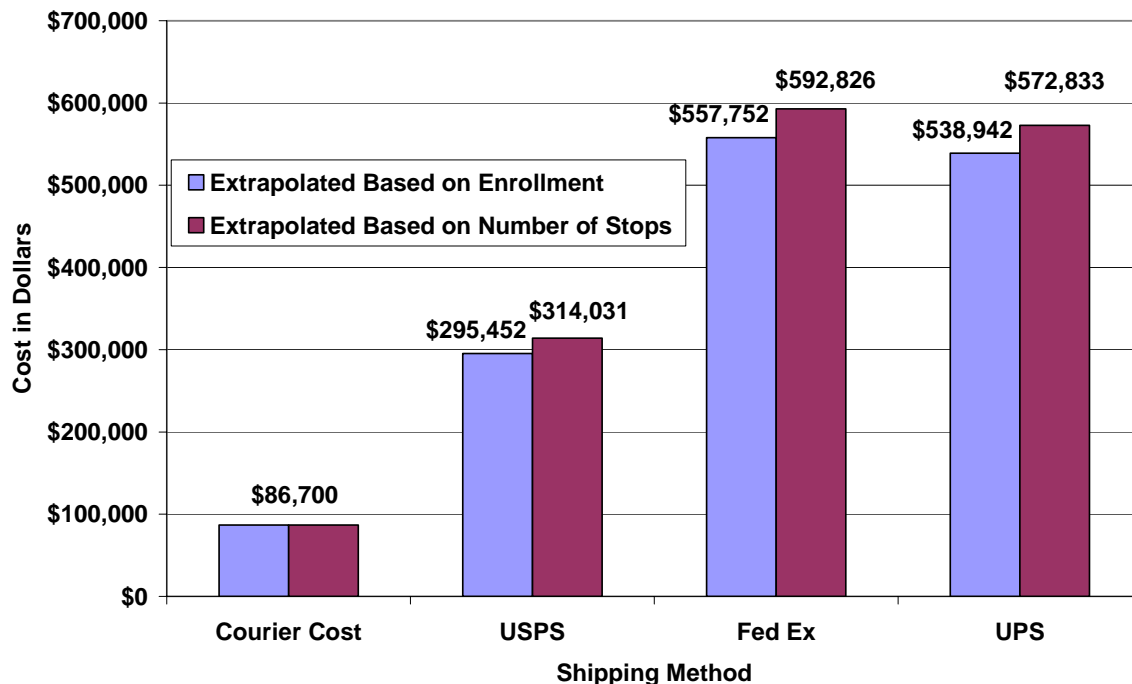
It is highly probable that courier usage is increasing. Prospector, the unified catalog of 23 libraries in Colorado and Wyoming, which uses the courier as its shipping method, has seen a dramatic rise in use over the past few years. According to their statistics (found at http://www.coalliance.org), they fulfilled 129,719 requests between library systems in 2003. For 2006, that number nearly tripled, to 377,632. For the first three months of 2007, 116,546 requests were fulfilled; at that pace, Prospector will reach 466,184 requests fulfilled for the year. The courier is involved twice with each of those requests – once to move it to the requesting library, and again to return it to the owning library.

Again, given the diversity of the libraries on the courier, and the small, volunteer nature of the participating sample, these estimates are just that – estimates. Any number of factors could affect the true annual totals in either direction. For instance, the two largest public libraries in the state – Denver Public Library and Jefferson County Public Library – both participate heavily on the courier, moving large numbers of materials via Prospector. However, neither of them participated in this study, so their data could not be used to aid in the extrapolations.

Without a more comprehensive study, an exact number of items moved by the courier each year cannot be pinpointed. In addition to the problems inherent in attempting to extrapolate for public and academic libraries, insufficient data is available for school and special libraries as well as community courier stops to attempt an extrapolation. However, it is safe to say that millions of items are being sent among Colorado libraries each year using the statewide courier, and the savings provided to these libraries is tremendous. Combined public and academic libraries alone would spend over 250% more using USPS, the least expensive alternative.

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CTBL Provides Essential Service to Community

FAST FACTS

RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

In the Fall of 2006, a patron survey was developed and administered, to evaluate the current services of Colorado Talking Book Library and to plan for future services.[1] Patrons, Colorado residents who are unable to read print materials, in over 43 counties throughout Colorado responded to the survey. The results of this survey overwhelmingly demonstrate that these patrons consider CTBL to be an important and useful service for meeting their informational and recreational reading needs.

Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with a number of different CTBL services, including the overall quality of services. Virtually all respondents rated the overall quality of service as either excellent (85%) or good (15%). (See Chart 1.)

**About the
Colorado Talking Book Library**

The Colorado Talking Book Library (CTBL) provides services, at no cost, to Coloradans of all ages who are unable to read standard print material due to visual, physical or learning disabilities. CTBL provides recorded, Braille and large-print books and magazines, as well as a small collection of descriptive videos. CTBL currently has 12,000 active patrons.

CTBL is part of the Colorado State Library, a division of the Colorado Department of Education and is affiliated with the network of Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind & Physically Handicapped (NLS).

**Chart 1
Respondents' Rating of CTBL's Overall Quality of Service**

Fair 0.5%
Good 14.6%
Excellent 85.0%

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FAST FACTS
RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE
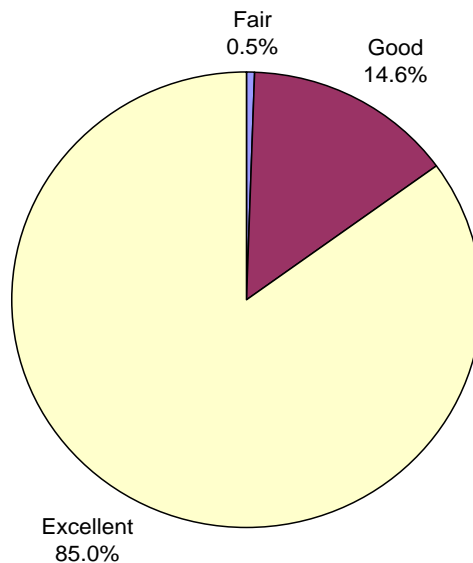
Chart 2
Respondent Satisfaction Ratings of CTBL Services

Service	Rating
Courtesy of Library Staff	10.5% / 88.5%
Speed We Get Books to You	16.5% / 82.4%
Ease of Contacting Us	20.2% / 77.6%
Number of Books We Send	28.9% / 69.6%
Quality of the Cassette Machine	39.4% / 54.8%
Completeness and Condition	42.7% / 53.3%
CTBL Newsletter	43.4% / 50.8%
Book Titles We Select for You	47.4% / 37.7%

Legend: ■ Poor □ Fair ◪ Good ▨ Excellent

Percentage of Respondents (0% – 120%)
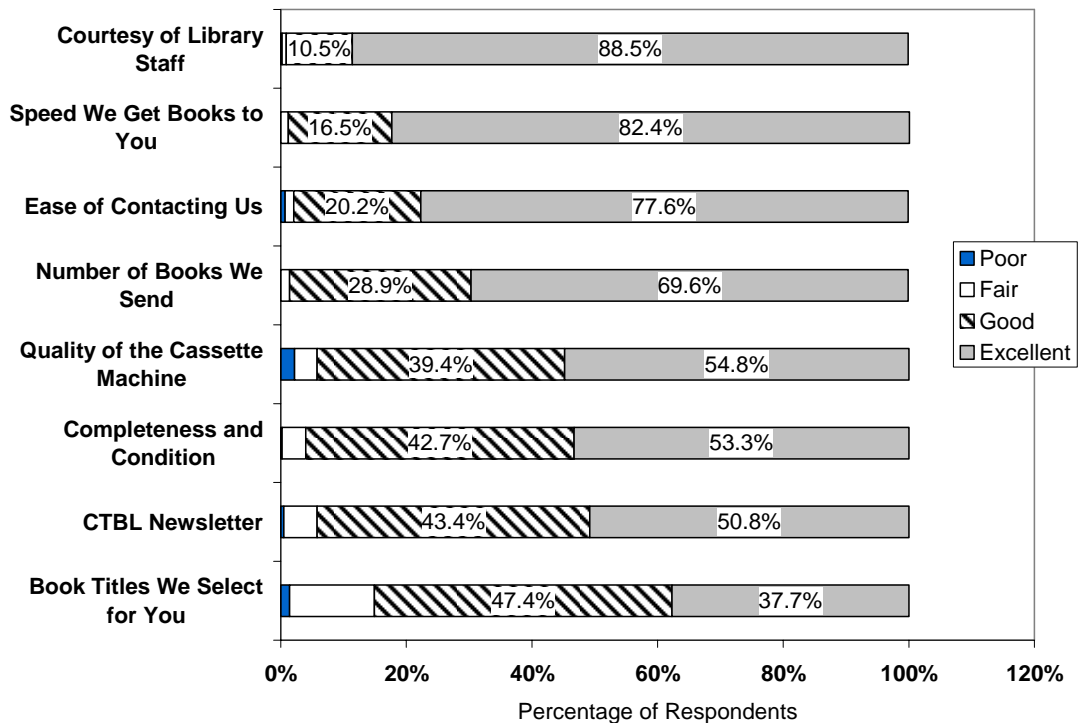
Almost all respondents (99%) rated the courtesy of library staff as either excellent or good (see Chart 2). Notably, no respondents rated it as poor. All respondents were satisfied at some level (excellent, good, or fair) with the speed and the number of books sent to them. Most respondents were satisfied (excellent or fair) with the ease of contacting CTBL (98%) and with the book titles CTBL staff had chosen for them (85%).

CTBL Services

- Books may be ordered via mail, e-mail, phone, fax, or online.
- The library loans the cassette playback machines free of charge to its patrons.
- Patrons can request specific titles or books can be selected for them based on their reading interests.

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Chart 3
CTBL Services Indicated as Valuable
by Percentage of Respondents

Services (y-axis)

- Read for pleasure — 88%
- Learned more about a personal interest — 37%
- Helped me stay connected to my community — 10%
- Found information needed for school — 7%
- Learned more about an organization — 5%
- Found information needed for job/career — 4%

x-axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Percentage of responses
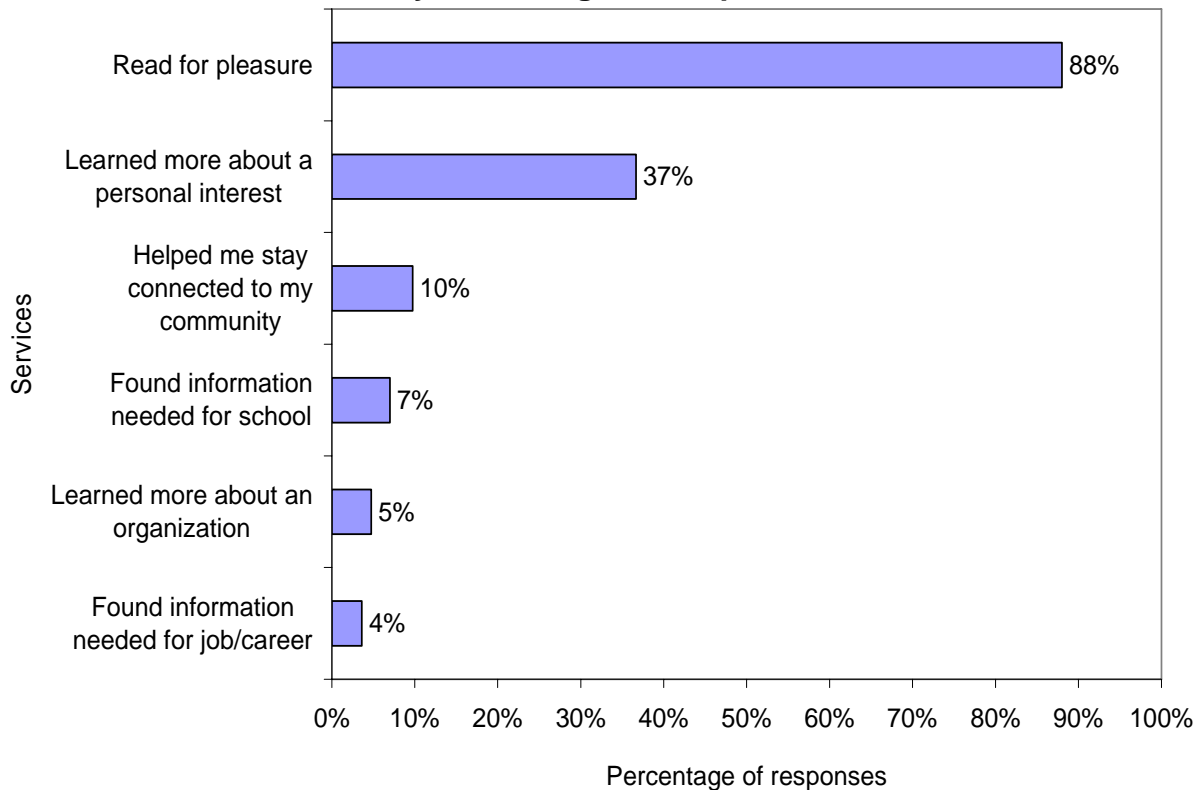
Note: Respondents could indicate more than one service as valuable

Respondents were asked in what ways CTBL services have been of value to them (see Chart 3). An overwhelming number of respondents chose reading for pleasure (88%). This is similar to the findings from a national study, indicating "leisure reading is the most widely cited outcome" of public library patrons in general.[2] Over one-third of respondents (37%) selected learning about a personal interest followed by help with staying connected to the community (10%).

CTBL Collection Information

The collection includes nearly 70,000 titles of fiction and non-fiction, including 52,000 titles in recorded books, 4,000 titles in Braille, 13,000 titles in large print, and 250 titles in descriptive video.

Colorado Collection
Included in CTBL's collection is the material recorded by volunteers in CTBL's recording studio. Books in this collection are by Colorado authors, about Colorado history or are of regional interest. Patrons may suggest material to be recorded, however the collection development policy on the CTBL website will apply. This collection supplements the larger collection provided by Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Handicapped (NLS).

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Respondents overwhelming indicated they consider the services CTBL provides to be valuable. More than three-fourths rated the overall quality of CTBL services as excellent. The CTBL also received high satisfaction ratings for the ease of contacting staff, as well as general staff courtesy.
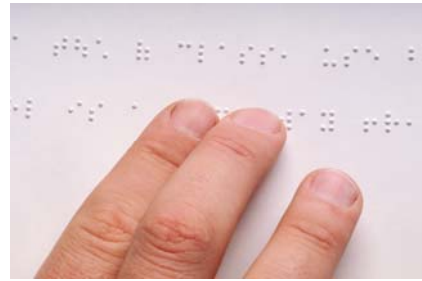
Based on the results of this survey it is clear that CTBL is highly valued by the community it serves for its staff and the services it provides. At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were asked to write any additional comments. Several respondents said that their lives have been greatly enhanced because CTBL has provided them with a variety of formats to access information they might otherwise be unable to read. One respondent summed it up, "[CTBL] is an absolute lifeline for me and I am grateful it is available."

Sources:

[1] French, J. (2007) *Colorado talking book library 2006 survey report*. Library Research Service
        Colorado State Library.
[2] Lance, K.C., Steffen, N.O., Logan, R., Rodney, M.J., Kaller, S. Koontz, C.M., and Jue,
        D. K., (2001) *Counting on results: New tools for outcome-based evaluation of public libraries*.
        Colorado State Library and Bibliographical Center for Research.

CSAP Scores
Higher in Schools with Staffed Libraries

The Colorado Department of Education recently released 2007 CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program) test results for schools throughout the state[i], and students in schools with staffed libraries performed better on the reading portions of the CSAP than their counterparts in schools without staffed libraries[ii]. Schools with staffed libraries saw a higher percentage of their students score Proficient or Advanced on the CSAP reading test (68.5% vs. 57.5%). Conversely, schools without staffed libraries had a higher percentage of students score Unsatisfactory (15.9% vs. 10.3%), compared to schools with staffed libraries (see chart).

Percentage of Students Scoring at Various Levels of Proficiency on 2007 CSAP Reading Test, by Presence of Staffed School Library
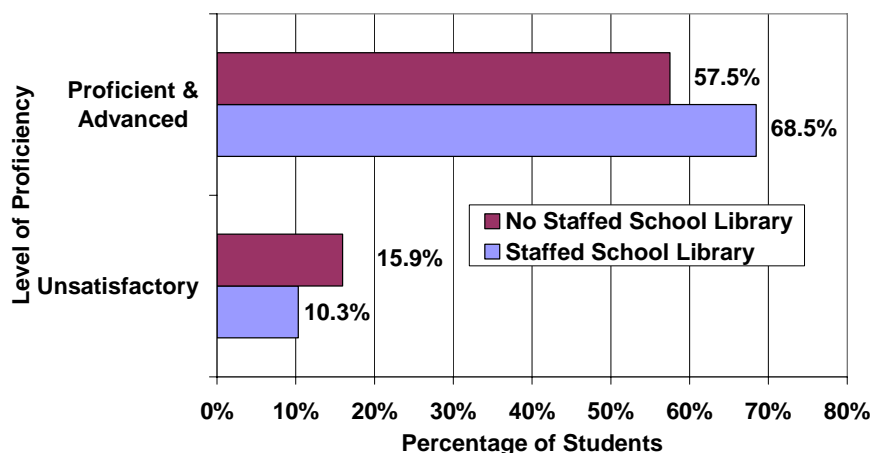
Undoubtedly, many factors contribute to success or failure on standardized tests. There is an opportunity here for more research to better determine the role that school libraries play in the success of Colorado's students.

Until that research can be realized, this is anecdotal evidence that supports a series of studies that have been performed over the last decade and a half. These studies detail how well-developed school libraries positively impact academic achievement[iii].

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[i] CSAP data accessed 8/2/07 from www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csap/csap_summary.html
[ii] The term "staffed libraries" refers to schools which reported having Library/Media Consultants or Assistants.   Staffing data available at www.lrs.org/school/stats_2006.php
[iii] Studies relating school libraries to academic achievement can be found at www.lrs.org/impact.php

Challenged Materials in Colorado Public Libraries, 2006

According to the American Library Association, a challenge is "an attempt to remove or restrict materials, based upon the objections of a person or group . . . thereby restricting the access of others."[1] The Library Research Service annually collects data on challenged materials as part of the Colorado Public Library Annual Report.

In 2006, out of the 115 public libraries in Colorado, 23 reported that they received a formal challenge during the year. There were a total of 89 individual challenges to books, materials, events, exhibits, and Internet-related services in the state's public libraries. Challenges to Internet content or access policies are reported separately from materials and event challenges. There were 63 challenges to materials and events. This was the lowest number of challenges to materials and events since 2003 (see Chart 1).

Chart 1

Colorado Public Libraries, 2003 - 2006
Number of Challenges to Books, Materials, Events,
and Exhibits Reported
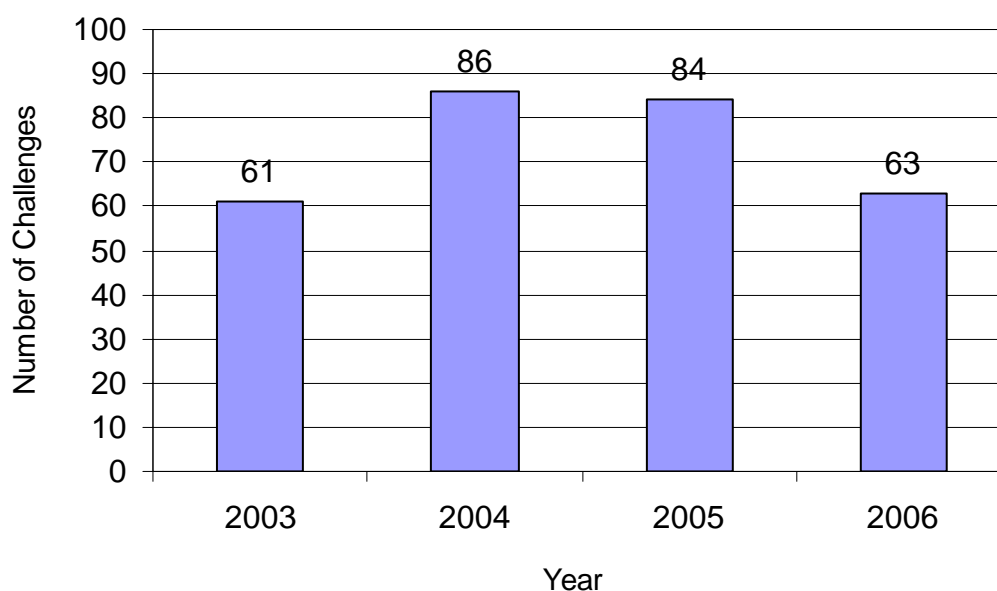
In 2006, six Colorado public libraries reported challenges to Internet content or access policies. A total of 26 individual challenges were reported. This is nearly four times the number of Internet-related challenges reported in 2005.

A follow-up survey was sent to all 23 libraries who reported a formal challenge. This survey requested the title, author, format, reason for the challenge, action taken by the library, and the date of the publication or incident regarding each challenge. Twenty of the twenty-three libraries responded to the follow-up survey.

Actions

The follow-up survey received detailed information for 49 challenges to books, materials, events, and exhibits. Of these challenges 40 (82%) resulted in no change being made by the staff regarding the location, availability, description, or classification of the item (see Chart 2). Seven items (14%) were moved to another part of the library or reclassified. The action was dropped by the individual who filed the challenge in one case (or 2%).

Chart 2

Colorado Public Libraries, 2006
Challenges to Books, Materials, Events and Exhibits
by Type of Action Taken

No Change, 82%

Moved, 14%

Action Dropped, 2%

Other, 2%
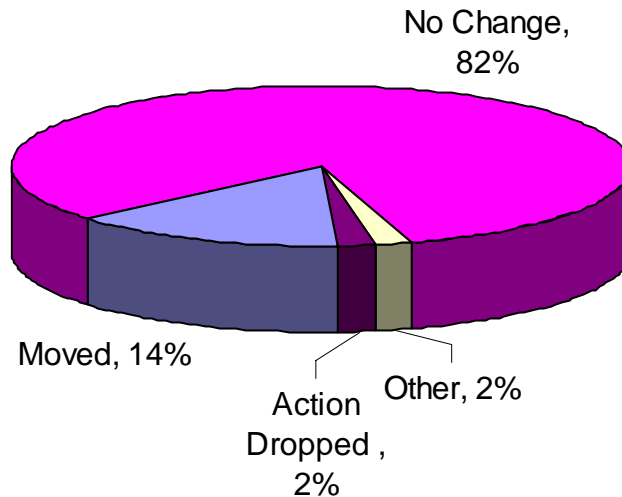
Of the 26 Internet-related challenges reported in the Public Library Annual Report, the follow-up survey received information for 13 challenges. Six cases resulted in no change, in three cases the action was dropped, and in two cases the Internet-related matter was restricted. For the remaining one case, the reporting library chose other for the action but did not provide more detailed information.

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Formats

Following the trend of the previous years, books were the most challenged format in 2006 according to the result of the follow-up survey. Almost half (47%) of all challenges in Colorado public libraries involved books (see Chart 3). Less than one-quarter (22%) involved Internet-related services (i.e. computer) and video materials accounted for less than one-fifth (17%) of the challenges. Challenges involving music CDs, periodicals, activities, and audio books together totaled over one-tenth (12%) of all challenges.

Chart 3

Colorado Public Libraries, 2006
Formats of Materials Challenged

Book
47%

Audio Book
2%

Activity
2%

Information not
provided
2%

Periodical
5%

Music CD
3%

Video
17%

Computer
22%

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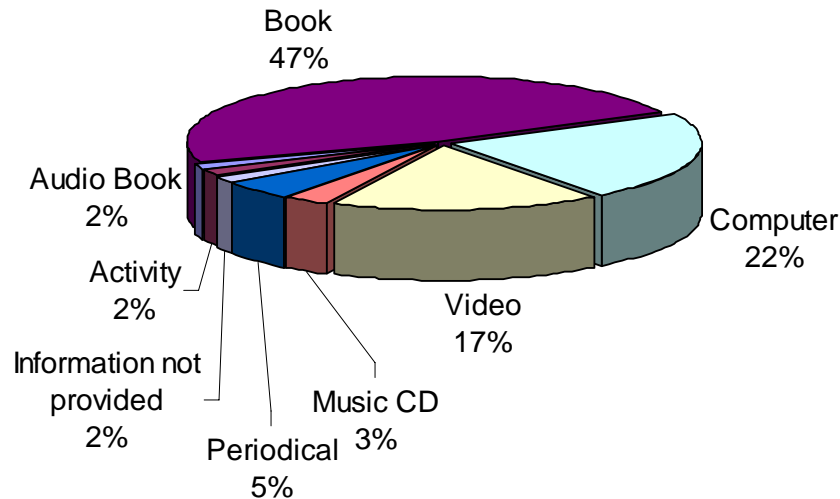
Chart 4

Colorado Public Libraries, 2003 - 2006
Book, Computer, and Video Challenges
as a Percentage of Total Challenges by Year

| ◆ book | ■ computer | ▲ video |

Percentage of challenges by type

- 2003: book 57%, video 23%, computer 9%
- 2004: book 53%, video 30%, computer 8%
- 2005: book 39%, video 17%, computer 3%
- 2006: book 48%, computer 22%, video 17%

Year
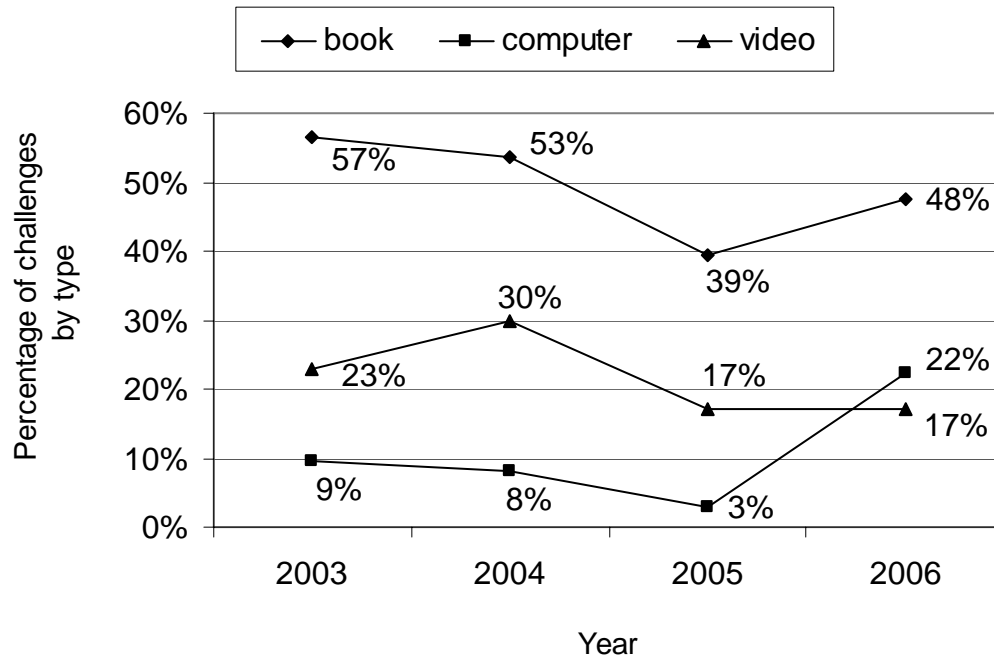
In 2004, the figures indicated a possible trend in which videos would begin to account for a greater proportion of challenged materials. However, a more recent examination of the types of materials challenged indicated that computer (i.e. Internet-related) services are increasingly being challenged. The percentage of Internet-related challenges rose dramatically from 3 percent in 2005 to 22 percent in 2006. In spite of these fluctuations, books continue to be the most challenged format.

Audience/Age Group

In the follow-up survey, more than one audience/age group type may be chosen for each formal challenge. More than half (51%) of all challenges for 2006 were considered challenges to adult materials (see Chart 5). In 2006, there was only one more challenge to children's materials (20) than to young adult (19) materials.

Chart 5

Colorado Public Libraries, 2006
Challenges by Audience Type

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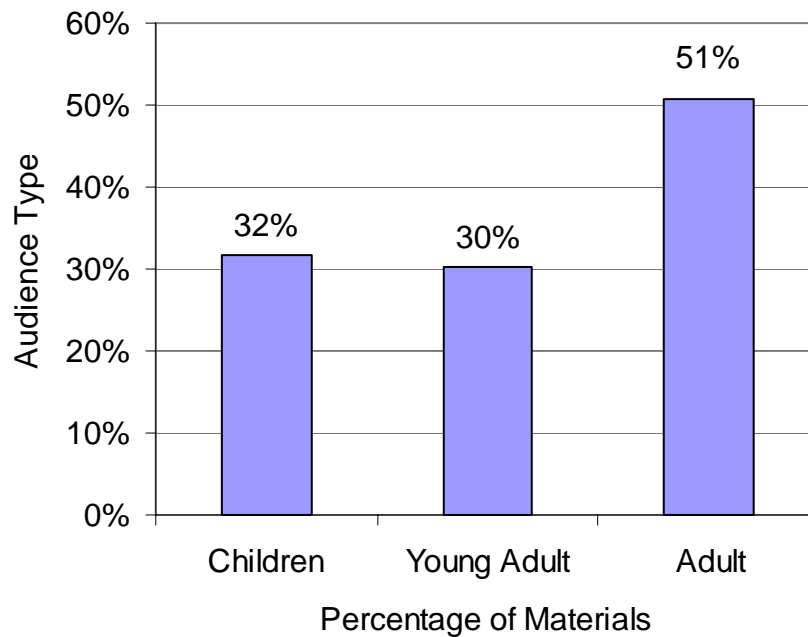
Although challenges to adult materials fell from 63 percent in 2005 to 51 percent in 2006 (see Chart 6), they continue to be challenged more frequently than materials in other age categories. Interestingly the percentage of challenges to children's or young adult materials fluctuates rather more from year to year. The proportion of challenges to young adult materials grew steadily from a low of 17 percent in 2003 to 30 percent in 2006. Whereas challenges to children's materials went from 36 percent in 2003 to a record low 15 percent in 2005, and then rose again in 2006 to 30 percent.

Chart 6

Colorado Public Libraries 2003-2006
Challenges by Audience Type
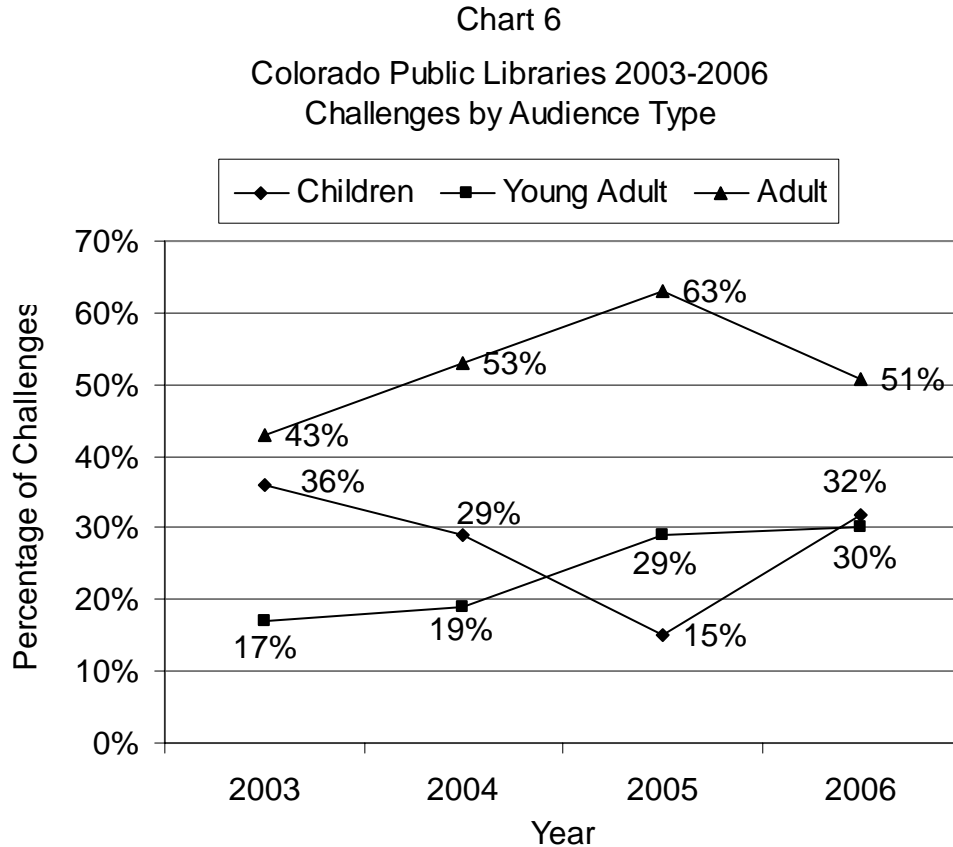
Reasons for Challenges

Responding libraries are also asked to report the patron's reason for the challenge. Multiple reasons can be selected. In 2006, the reasons most commonly cited were due to materials being sexually explicit or unsuited for the intended age group (See Table 1). The "other" category includes reasons not listed on the follow-up survey.

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Table 1
Colorado Public Libraries, 2006
Challenges by Reason

Reason for Challenge	Frequency of Reason
sexually explicit	29
unsuited to age group	29
nudity	15
homosexuality	11
offensive language	10
violence	5
insensitivity	4
anti-family	4
other	3
political viewpoint	2
religious viewpoint	2
drugs	2
racism	1
sexism	1
sex education	1
occult/Satanism	1
anti-ethnic	0
abortion	0
suicide	0

Challenged Titles

The only title to be named multiple times in a formal challenge to non-Internet related materials in 2006 was Justin Richardson's *And Tango Makes Three*. This title was mentioned in two separate challenges. Richardson's book was also the most frequently challenged book nationally in 2006 according to the ALA. [2]

The remaining 61 challenges to books, materials, events, and exhibits were a variety of individual titles.

Go to http://www.lrs.org/documents/plstat06/challenges_details_06.pdf to view the entire Challenges to Materials at Colorado's Public Libraries report for 2006. The challenge reports for previous years may also be viewed at http://www.lrs.org/pub_stats.php .

Sources:

[1] ALA Challenged and Banned Books page (accessed October 12, 2007)
http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/challengedbanned/challengedbanned.htm#wbc

[2] ALA. *"And Tango Makes Three" tops ALA's 2006 list of most challenged books*. March 6, 2007 (accessed November 13, 2007)
http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=News&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=151926

Challenges to Materials at Colorado's Public Libraries, 2006 (accessed October 12, 2007)
http://www.lrs.org/documents/plstat06/challenges_details_06.pdf

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AskColorado Customer Satisfaction High as Usage Continues to Increase

FAST FACTS

*RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE*

AskColorado, the statewide 24/7 free virtual reference service that started in September 2003, is a collaborative project among libraries of all types throughout the state. Through the efforts of over 350 librarians from public, academic, school and special libraries, the service provides online answers to Coloradans—any age, anywhere, anytime. Since its inception, AskColorado has steadily increased both in number of user sessions and customer satisfaction levels.

According to AskColorado usage statistics, the number of user sessions increased substantially during the first three full years of service (see Chart 1). In 2006, AskColorado librarians answered questions during more than 52,000 online reference sessions – almost twice the number of sessions as in 2004 (27,892).

When asked about the growth of the service, Kris Johnson, the AskColorado coordinator, commented, "Usage continues to grow, this is clear. This may be due to more people knowing about the service, or the fact that we now have more librarians available online at any given time to take calls, or both."

Chart 1

AskColorado User Sessions 2004-2006
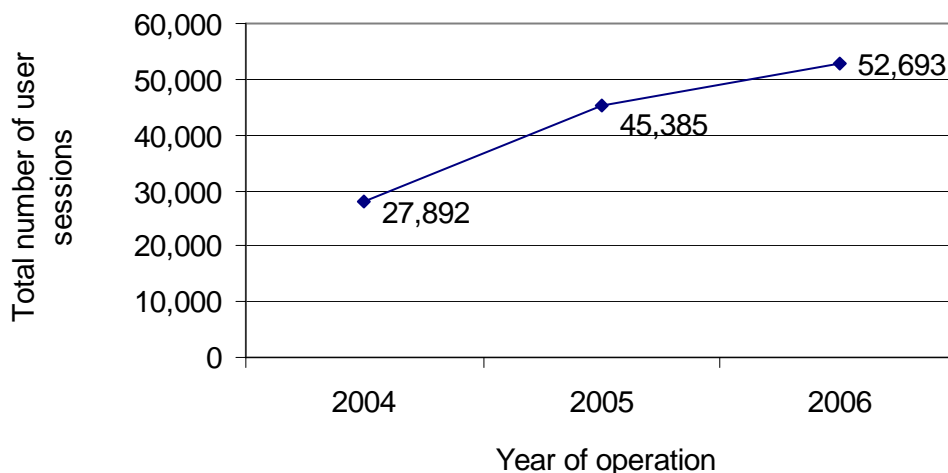
*Note: 2004 was AskColorado's first full year of operation.*

Customer Satisfaction

Findings from both the 2005 and 2006 surveys indicate a majority of respondents found the virtual librarian helpful and were satisfied with the answers to their questions (see Chart 2 and Chart 3). In 2006, 3 out of 4 respondents (74%) found the virtual librarian to be helpful, and a similar proportion expressed satisfaction (72%) with the answers they received from the AskColorado librarians. This represents a significant increase from 2005 to 2006 in the customer satisfaction with the service.

The reason for the increased satisfaction is undoubtedly due to a combination of factors. According to Kris Johnson, "We're getting better about communicating online, we're becoming better searchers, our patrons are having a more realistic understanding of what our service can provide." Johnson continues, "Perhaps our patrons are having a more difficult time finding information on their own and turn to us. After all, librarians are known as information experts. Any or all of these reasons could apply."

Chart 2

AskColorado Customer Satisfaction Survey
Helpfulness of Virtual Librarian, All Responses

FAST FACTS

RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE
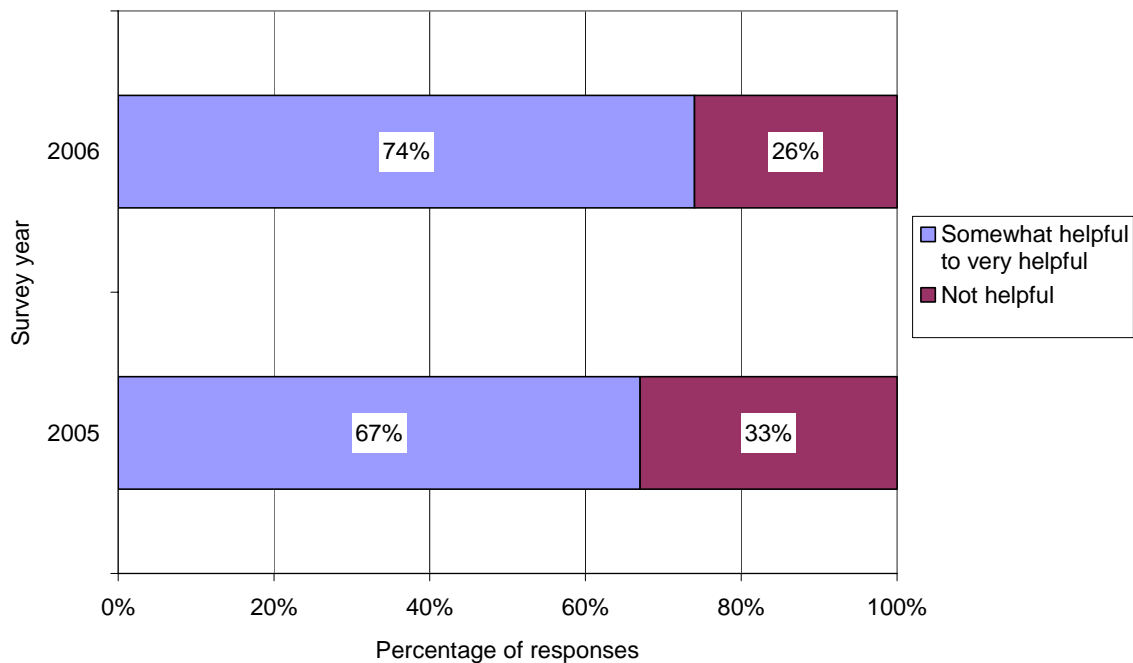
More About the AskColorado Surveys

To measure AskColorado's success serving its patrons, an annual customer service and outcome based evaluation survey was created to ask a sample of users for their reaction to the service. In 2004, following the first year of service, two surveys were administered to users of the service; a pop-up customer satisfaction survey and an outcome survey e-mailed to those who agreed to take this follow up survey. The outcome survey also contained demographic questions. The two surveys were revised and condensed in 2005 to create one pop-up exit survey. Therefore, the data comparisons in this Fast Facts contain only 2005 and 2006 information.

"I am very impressed. As an IT specialist, I understand how difficult it can be to implement a sophisticated system such as this. It worked like a charm. I was quickly connected with a local librarian who helped me research my topic. I had been Googling for hours to no avail, but your librarian found a relevant link in under 5 minutes. Great job!"

-AskColorado User

Chart 3

AskColorado Customer Satisfaction Survey
Respondent Satisfaction with Answer to Their Question, All Responses
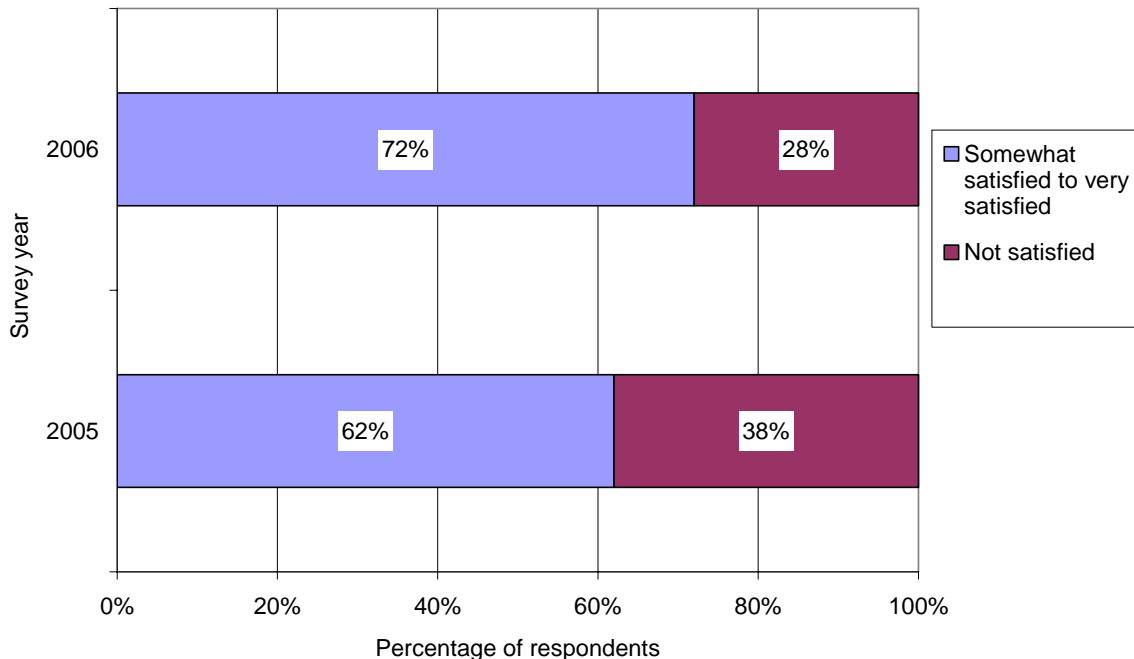
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Customer Outcomes

In both the 2005 and 2006 survey respondents were asked to indicate the outcome(s) of their visit to AskColorado (see Table 1). The same five outcomes top the list each year, with research for homework or a school project having the strongest showing overall (ranking first in 2006 and second in 2005). Similarly, identifying a new source of information rose from 2005 to 2006. Obtaining a specific fact or document was the number one outcome in 2005 and fell to third in 2006. Obtaining information for work and learning how the library can help respondents were the fourth and fifth most popular outcomes, respectively, both years.

Chart 4

AskColorado Customer Satisfaction Survey
Respondent Outcomes
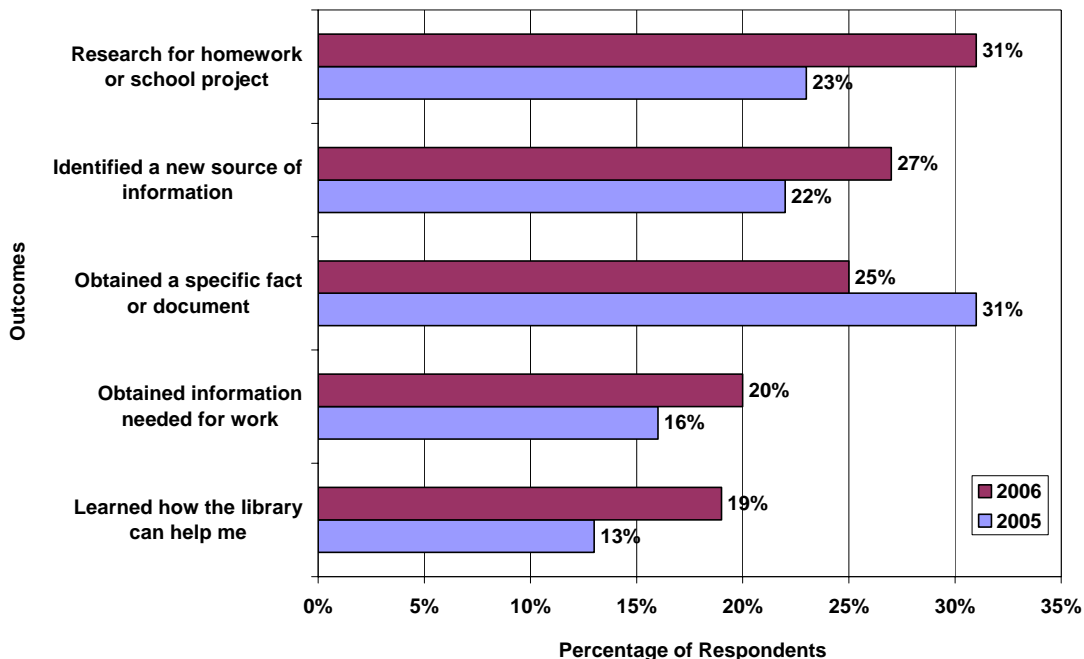
Respondents were told to choose all outcomes that applied.
Therefore respondents could choose more than one answer.

FAST FACTS
RECENT STATISTICS FROM THE LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICE

> *"This is the best site! I have always found what I needed at this site and the people who helped me were great!! This site is a life saver thanks again!!!!!"*
>
> -AskColorado User

Between 2005 and 2006 survey respondents were increasingly using the AskColorado virtual reference service in order to conduct research for homework and school projects, as well as other traditional reference services. The increase in usage of the service, as well

> *"Thank you. You guys so helped me and helped me stay up on my grades thank you I will be coming to this site more often when I need help!!!!"*
>
> -AskColorado User

as a rise in customer service ratings, indicates that AskColorado is growing in both popularity and customer satisfaction.

Source:

French, J. (2007) *2006 AskColorado Customer Satisfaction & Outcome Survey.* Library Research Service Colorado State Library.

AskColorado Usage 2004 – 2006. http://www.aclin.org/reference/stats.html

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