

# Guidelines and Bibliography for Combined Library Operations in North Carolina

Compiled by

The Community Education Committee  
North Carolina Library Association

*Published for the Committee at the direction of  
the Executive Board, North Carolina Library Association*

The following Guidelines and Bibliography were compiled by the North Carolina Library Association, Community Education Committee. The members of this committee were selected by State Agency heads and NCLA Section Chairmen, to represent public, school, and community/technical college libraries. They were: Roy Day, Chairman, Pamlico County Library; Valerie Lovett, Wake County Public Libraries; Marge Lindsey, Department of Cultural Resources, Division of State Library; Mary Holloway, Wake County Public School System; Sue Scott, Department of Public Instruction, Division of Educational Media; Betty Williamson, Fayetteville Technical Institute; and Pamela Doyle, Department of Community Colleges.

The Guidelines are not standards. Rather, they reflect the questions and issues which should be addressed by librarians and administrators faced with or interested in a combined library situation. Since they are Guidelines for North Carolina, they specifically address conditions and requirements within this state. At present, the only two combined facilities in the state (in Pamlico and Wake Counties) involve school and public libraries. Community/Technical College input was included, however, in anticipation of future interest in combining libraries of this type with public libraries.

Before adopting these Guidelines for North Carolina, they are being published in *North Carolina Libraries*. The intent is to give professional librarians across the state an opportunity to comment upon them. Please send any suggestions to: Roy Day, Pamlico County Library, PO Box 436, Bayboro, N.C. The committee will revise the Guidelines, considering the opinions expressed by our colleagues.

## Planning for Combined Library Services

Historically, community response to combined library service has been mixed. Successful programs have worked best in isolated, rural areas with populations under 10,000 people. With this in mind, it is imperative that methodical planning for combined service be an essential part of its development. Representatives from governing bodies, system administrators and staff, and community residents should participate in the process.

When the concept of combining public library service with either a school, community college, or technical institute is proposed, planning for the program will require one to two years to complete. Staff needs this time to work out the intricacies of merging two previously independent operations.

Before planning proceeds, there is careful evaluation of the proposal as it may or may not be desirable for the community. Several excellent studies are available, in particular *A Study of the Combined School Public Library, Phase II, and Phase III*, by Shirley Aaron, and *Combined School/Public Libraries* by Wilma Woolard. These can provide information helpful in making a decision. One error to avoid is the misconception that combined service is cheaper. Studies have disproved this. Instead, the choice must be based upon improving and/or offering a wider range of library services for the community.

If a combined program is selected, another decision concerning the administrative responsibility for the program should be made before planning proceeds. This point is important because some aspects of program development will vary, depending upon the administering agency for the program. For example, if the public library administers the program, its personnel policies are followed; however, if the school system administers the program, then its personnel policies are followed. If the choice is deferred, then portions of program development will be deferred.

After these decisions are made, program development begins. This is a cooperative process involving the professional staff of the participating agencies. The first task is preparation of a written prospectus for the governing bodies and the system administrators. This should discuss in *broad terms* proposed library services. Tied to this description should be personnel estimates, projected hours of operation, and a preliminary budget.

Development of this document provides a checkpoint for the program before a large amount of staff time is committed to detailed planning. The agencies have an opportunity to confirm whether or not their perception of the program conforms to the conceptual and budgetary commitments of the funding bodies. Using the prospectus, modifications are easily incorporated at an early stage.

After agreement on the prospectus by the respective funding bodies, detailed planning begins. It is done by the staff of both agencies. Each aspect of library service is discussed. Policy statements and procedures are developed. It is important to remember that each agency has been operating with different policies. Therefore, this is a time of compromise formation. The result of this process is a consolidated program of service for all library patrons; for, a successful program must operate as a unified service, not as two entities whose common ground is the roof over their heads.

When the program document is completed and accepted, a formal written agreement among governing bodies is developed. The North Carolina statutes require joint ventures between governing bodies be conducted with a contract. The contract should clearly outline responsibilities of each party. Funding, services, personnel, and budget should be addressed. The contract

should be for a specified term, should be renewable, and should contain a termination clause. The program document should be a part of the contract as an attachment or appendix to it. This provides specificity as to the intent of the contract.

Any combined program must be evaluated. Planning includes development of an evaluation program. To avoid prejudicing this process, evaluation methodology is developed as part of the program document and is incorporated in it. It should be ongoing for two years as it is not advisable to reach conclusions about the success of combined services until that period has elapsed.

## **Budget Development**

A program budget is the preferred type to use in a combined operation. It presents a comprehensive view of library services and their costs. It deals with library materials (books, audiovisuals, serials), personnel, library facilities and operating costs, travel and in-service training, and equipment/capital outlay.

For presentation to funding agencies, it must be constructed in such a manner that it can be broken down into funding agency components. These components clearly demarcate the funding responsibility of each party for library services in accordance with the program document and contract. Although the structure of the budget will be influenced by the budget process of the administering agency, it should be able to provide budget information in a flexible manner to the other agencies.

Again, the point must be made that a combined operation does not produce cheaper service delivery. All information currently available points to some nominal savings in facility costs. However, operating expenses for personnel, library materials, and library programs are not less than in separate operations.

## **Administration**

Combined libraries are cooperative ventures between agencies which normally have separate library programs. The basis for administrative success depends upon proper planning, good staff communication, and a clear understanding of the proposed program among the parties. It is vital that a sound administrative rationale be adopted.

In the United States there are a variety of models for administering a combined library. These models are representative of two basic types: unified administration, and cooperative administration. For good management unified administration is recommended.

Under this approach, one of the parties to the contract is delegated, through the contract, the authority to direct and implement the program. The agency has line authority over the entire operation including personnel. It is the fiscal agent and is responsible for library service delivery. This agency can be any of the parties involved in the contract.

Cooperative administration is less desirable. Studies remark that this

approach may create problems for service delivery. If two programs, each with an independent staff, exist side-by-side, questions arise as to who is in charge, who makes final decisions, who sets policy, and who is ultimately responsible for actions. A modified approach has an individual representing one of the agencies designated as "Administrator" or "Administrative Head." This individual is then responsible for coordinating delivery of services and representing the library externally. Separate administrative channels continue to exist and the library is run cooperatively. While less desirable this system may be effective in smaller jurisdictions and may, in fact, be the only feasible method of administration in some cases.

## **Collection Development**

Resources of the library are a key element in an effective library program. They become no less salient in a combined venture. To aid planners in joint projects the committee suggests the following:

The collection should include print, nonprint materials, and the appropriate equipment to utilize media and to serve the users. Although individual items are stamped to identify owner, the collection should be integrated. Not only should all media be interfiled, but users should have access to all types of materials. If certain items are required for class work, the teacher may place them on reserve for a period of time, but they should be accessible to all users.

The library should draft a Collection Development Policy. The policy should speak to standards for selection, respective areas of responsibility for selection, as well as citizens' request for reconsideration of materials. It should acknowledge the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, the student's right to read, and the accessibility of all types of information to all persons. It further should clarify the amount of support expected of each party and any unique stipulations involved, such as federal fund requirements, ownership identity, security tags, special collections, etc.

The library should be funded to have the quantity of materials each would need as a separate entity. Effort should be made to balance curriculum and public needs. Bibliography includes helpful articles for ascertaining collection needs.

## **Personnel**

Each professional staff member should have dual certification—e.g., the public librarian with the typical degree in Library Science may need courses in instructional design, multi-media utilization for learning, and techniques in media skill development. The school media coordinator may require more training in the area of the reference interview, techniques in adult education, adult programming, community analysis, outreach, and public relations. If dual certification is not required initially, all staff members must receive orientation in both school and public librarianship.

The strength of a combined program lies in maintaining the total number of staff members required to operate the programs separately. It then provides for the increased plurality of clients with optimum choices of staff.

Cooperativeness and flexibility are even more necessary characteristics in this situation where funding and administrative jurisdiction is mixed. (County, City, Board of Education) While the administrators have "worked-it-out" on paper, it is up to the staff to "carry-it-out" throughout the work day.

For the selection of personnel, a search committee representative of all concerned agencies is recommended. The agencies joined to produce a combined program must also take care to maintain a standardized pay schedule for all personnel employed under the joint venture (See Administration).

## **Technical Services**

The organization of materials within the library should reflect the philosophy that the library offers a combined service rather than co-existing services. It is vital that the users be able to locate materials easily using a unified cataloging and classification system. This includes unified catalog. Librarians from each agency should work out the standards to be used in the combined library.

Unified cataloging can then be provided in-house, or through the services of a processing center or commercial vendor. However, a shelflist for inventory control should be maintained which reflects ownership of the materials. Processing should include ownership stamps for all materials.

Coordination of selection, purchase verification and order procedures should follow the intent of the collection development statement. However, these procedures must allow for the fiscal reporting procedures required by each agency.

## **Facilities**

When considering the combination of a public library with either a school, community college, or technical institute library, great care should be taken in the design of facilities. Planning for combined operations should include the following considerations:

Square footage requirements will be based on the types of programs and areas of services to be provided. These programs and areas of services will be determined by the type of combined operation being considered. All factors affecting programs and services must be taken into consideration. Facilities must be provided to meet the needs of all ages and the physical conditions of patrons.

Space allocations must be adequate to meet immediate requirements and must also provide for the expansion of existing services and for the addition of new programs and services. Optimum space requirements may be provided if a new facility is constructed; however, compromise may have to occur and only minimum requirements may be met with the renovation of an



existing building. Regardless of the type of building being considered for a combined operation, future expansion of the building is an integral part of planning.

The location of the library plays an important role in the effectiveness of its operation. The building must be accessible to all library patrons while the school or college is in operation and also accessible to everyone when the remainder of the school or the college is closed. An outside entrance to be used by the general public during school hours and by everyone after school hours is preferable. Schools, community colleges and technical institutes often are not located in shopping, business, or governmental centers; when such is the case, planners should have serious reservations about combined libraries in these facilities, since experience has shown that successful public libraries are located "where the people are." An exception might be a functioning community school which has been accepted and is being used as a multi-purpose center by community residents.

Attention must be given to adequate lighting in all areas. In addition, many non-print materials may need areas of controlled lighting for viewing purposes and this requirement must be met.

The library should have a defined and well-lighted parking area for library patrons. The availability of parking near the library will facilitate the use of the library by the general public.

The security of the patron and the facility should be of primary importance when a combined operation is considered. The installation of a uniform security for all materials is recommended where circumstances make it desirable.

Adequate facilities are an integral factor in the provision of good library service. Basic standards to be considered in facility planning are included in the bibliography.

### Bibliography

- Aaron, Shirley L. *A Study of Combined School-Public Libraries*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1980.
- American Library Association. *Minimum Standards for Public Library Systems*, 1966. Chicago: American Library Association, 1967.
- American Library Association and the Association for Educational Communication and Technology. *Media Programs: District and School*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1975 and Washington: Association for Educational Communication and Technology, 1975.
- Association of College and Research Libraries. *Guidelines for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Statement on Quantitative Standards for Learning Resource Programs*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1979.
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of Educational Media. *Media Program Recommendations*. Raleigh: N.C. Dept. of Public Instruction, 1981.
- North Carolina Library Association Public Library Section. *Standards for Public Libraries in North Carolina*. Raleigh: North Carolina Library Association, 1976.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. *Standards of the Commission on Secondary Schools*. Atlanta: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, 1979.

\_\_\_\_\_. Commission on Colleges. *Standards of the College Delegate Assembly*.

Atlanta: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Woolard, Wilma Lee Broughton. *Combined School/Public Libraries: A Survey with Conclusions and Recommendations*. Metuchen, N.J. and London: Scarecrow Press, 1980.



## Joseph Ruzicka South, Inc.

### WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A BINDERY?

- Your collection deserves the binding excellence attained through 222 years experience.
- Certified by the Library Binding Institute, we offer you a choice.
- Select Class "A" binding or try our Superflex.
- Both are fully guaranteed in materials and workmanship.

### SERVICE, QUALITY, AND FAIR PRICES... THE RUZICKA WAY.

Come by for a personal tour of our facilities.  
Call or write for particulars.

911 Northridge Street • P. O. Box 21568 • Greensboro, North Carolina 27420  
Telephone (919) 299-7534

*An Equal Opportunity Employer*