

1925

# Planning the School Library

American Library Association

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# Planning the school library

*What should be the location of the school library?*

Near to or adjoining the study hall and in a part of the building that is quiet and easily accessible. Good light is



North Central High School Library, Spokane, Washington  
View from main desk

imperative and windows should be so placed as to provide the maximum of light with the minimum necessity for shades or blinds. Movement between study hall and library should be easy, swinging doors or a short passageway being advisable. But the library should be a place apart and designed *for library use only*. A library alcove is best for the one-room rural school.

## *How much space is necessary for the junior or senior high school?*

**THE READING ROOM.** This should be sufficiently large to accommodate for any full period 10 to 25 per cent of the school's enrollment, the larger percentage being applicable to the school of 500 or under. In the very small school (100 or less) the minimum capacity should be equal to that of the average classroom. A convenient estimate for the floor space needed is 25 square feet per reader.

**CONFERENCE, CLASS AND LECTURE ROOMS.** In any but the very smallest library, at least one conference room should be provided. Larger libraries will provide from one to six extra rooms, depending on the size of the school and its methods of work.

**LIBRARIAN'S WORKROOM.** No matter how small the library, this should be provided. It may vary in size from a small alcove to a commodious workshop, but it should never be left out.

## *For the elementary school?*

**THE READING ROOM** should be sufficiently large to accommodate a class of from forty to fifty pupils.

**ADDITIONAL ROOMS.** One or more alcoves for smaller groups is advisable, and a librarian's workroom is a necessity.

## *What equipment and finish are needed?*

**OPEN WALL SHELVING** not over 7 feet high in the senior high school and 5 feet in the elementary school. Every available foot of wall space should be shelved, radiators being placed under windows so as not to waste space. All shelving should be adjustable, metal screw pins being best for wooden shelves. The regulation size for shelves is 3 feet by 8 inches, but there may be a limited number of sections with shelves 3 feet by 10 or 12 inches to accommo-

date large reference books or magazines. In computing shelf capacity, 8 volumes per linear foot is a safe estimate.

**WOODWORK AND WALLS.** Dark colors should be avoided. Light oak is excellent for woodwork and equipment, and it should have a dull finish. Ceilings may be cream or ivory white, the upper walls lichen gray or light buff.

**BOOKS.** Estimates vary. The smallest high school should have not less than 500 well selected titles. Larger schools will provide from 3 to 10 books per pupil.

**FURNITURE.** Reading tables (size 3 by 5 and 30 inches high), suitable chairs, librarian's desk or desks with drawers for vertical filing, card catalog and shelf list cases, pamphlet cases, legal size vertical files, magazine rack, newspaper rack, display bookcase, book truck, and at least one bulletin board.\* These are minimum essentials. Libraries will add map racks, cases for atlases, dictionary stands, display book trucks, lantern slides, films, victrola records and other equipment according to need. The elementary school library will provide low chairs and tables for little children or at least low benches and window seats.

**CUPBOARDS, WATER AND STORAGE.** Built-in cupboards for supplies, running water, and storage space for magazines (10- or 12-inch shelving) and for books not ready for the shelves are all necessary. Most of these should be located in the workroom, but cupboards are sometimes conveniently made by enclosing space beneath window ledges.

**LIGHTING.** Table lights are neither necessary nor desirable. The library should be provided with daylight according to standard—twenty per cent of the floor area. For evening use, ceiling lights hung sufficiently low should be installed.

**FLOOR.** A noiseless floor covering is essential, because the furniture is not stationary and pupils must be allowed to

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\*Built-in magazine racks, newspaper racks and display cases are frequently less expensive and quite as satisfactory as detached pieces of furniture, and may be constructed by the local carpenter after designs furnished by the librarian.

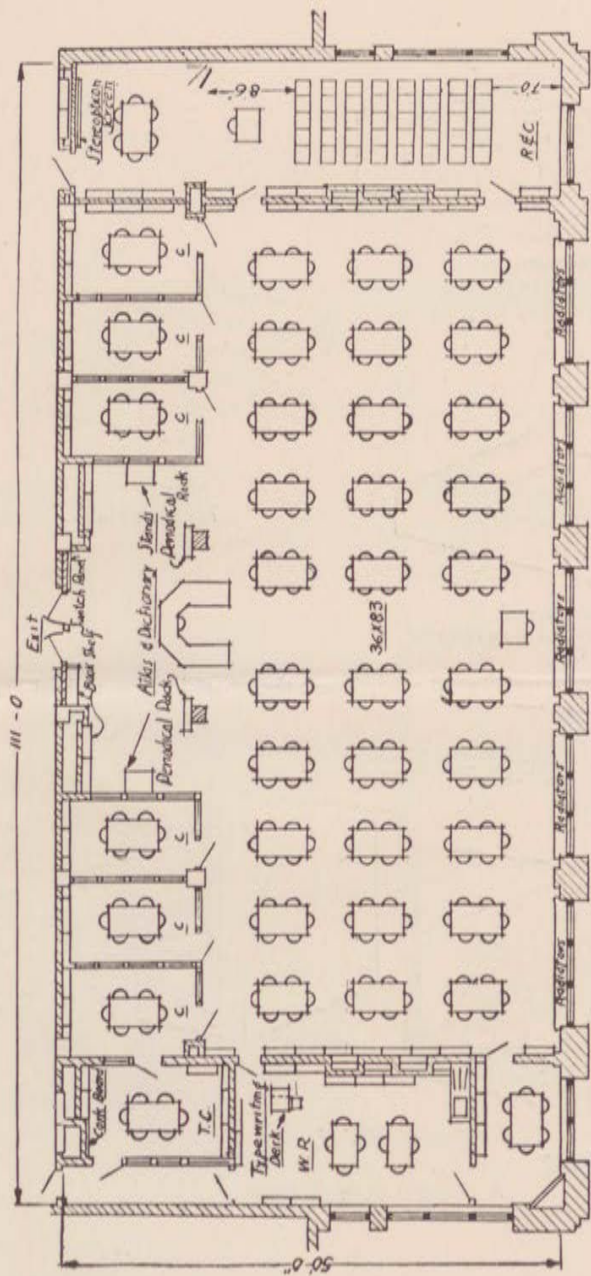
move about freely. Linotile is the best material, but a heavy linoleum is excellent.

TELEPHONE. In larger schools, both outer and inner service is desirable, especially connection with the school office, the public library and the museum. The outer telephone should be located in the librarian's office or the workroom.

### *How can expert advice be secured?*

The school librarian should be your best adviser. Employ a well-trained one *before* you start building. Put her in touch with your architect and see that they work together. Consult also with the supervisor of libraries in your state department of education, with the librarian of your state, county or city library, or with the American Library Association, 86 East Randolph Street, Chicago, Illinois. For additional information consult the following books and pamphlets:

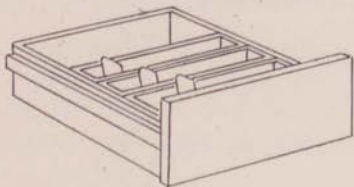
- Certain, C. C. Public school libraries: the school library as an architectural problem. Parts 1 and 2. Detroit Journal of Education, April and June, 1922.
- Certain, C. C. Some sociological sidelights on the school library. School and Society, Sept. 15, 1923. Discusses the "one-way" desk.
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- Donovan, J. S. School architecture; principles and practices. Macmillan, c1921. Chapter on school libraries.
- Illuminating Engineering Society. Reports. 80th Street and East End Avenue, New York City.
- N.E.A. Committee on Library Organization and Equipment. Standard library organization and equipment for secondary schools of different sizes. American Library Association, 86 E. Randolph Street, Chicago. Price, 40 cents.
- Pritchard, Martha, and others. Library service for schools. Massachusetts Department of Education. Bulletin No. 9, 1920.
- School libraries (pamphlet). Library Bureau, 316 Broadway, N. Y.
- U. S. Education Bureau. High school buildings. Bulletin, 1922, No. 23.
- Catalogs from: Library Bureau, 316 Broadway, N. Y.; Gaylord Brothers, Syracuse, N. Y.; Democrat Printing Company, Madison, Wisconsin.
- Plans, blueprints and photographs of existing school libraries, Library Bureau.



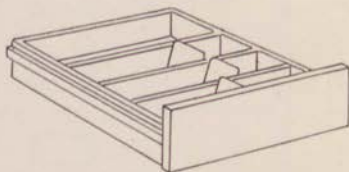
A Model High School Library Plan—Detroit.

*Symbols*

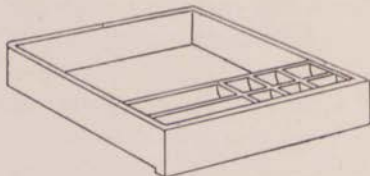
- T.C. Teachers' Conference room
- C. Conference room
- W.R. Work room
- REC. Recitation room



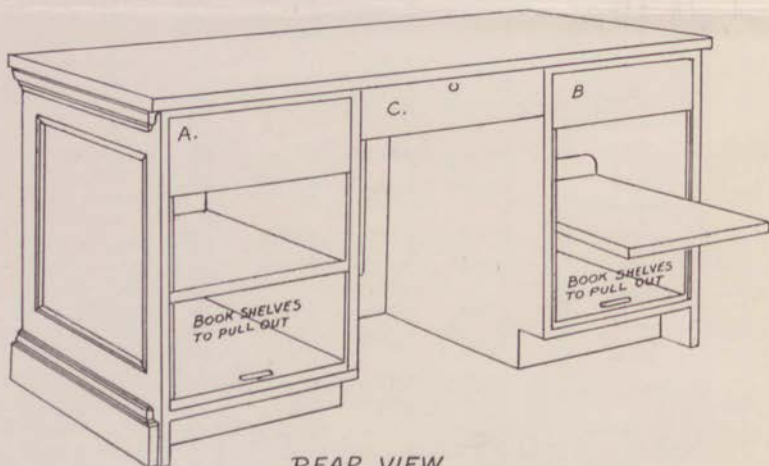
*DRAWER - A*  
EQUIPPED WITH ROLLER SLIDES  
4 REMOVABLE TRAYS.  
FOR CARDS 5" HIGH X 3" WIDE



*DRAWER - B*  
EQUIPPED WITH ROLLER SLIDES  
3 CROSSWISE COMPARTMENTS  
FOR CARDS 3" HIGH X 5" WIDE



*DRAWER - C*  
BOX DRAWER WITH PEN TRAY  
TO LOCK



*REAR VIEW*

*Courtesy Library Bureau*

**A Simple Charging Desk**



*Courtesy Library Bureau*

*TWO SECTIONS SHOWN WITH  
ONE PAIR OF ENDS*

### Wall Shelving

These shelves are adjustable. Note holes for metal pins





An Intermediate School Library



A Library in a Platoon School