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This research study investigates the impact of year-round education on middle school libraries. Interviews were conducted with six media specialists practicing in year-round middle schools. Participant responses helped to determine how the year-round schedule affects the media staff; the delivery of services to students and faculty; and the library's collection, equipment, and facility. Findings indicate that the year-round calendar impacts many procedural aspects of scheduling and circulation. The interviews revealed how year-round media specialists developed new procedures. Communication and collaboration were also impacted. Here the media specialists took advantage of the forward-planning required by teachers to increase collaboration; they used technology in creative ways to increase communication with students and staff. Results showed that the year-round calendar increased "wear and tear" on the equipment, collection, and facility, as well as affected how equipment was checked out and stored. The interviews showed areas where the year-round calendar had little impact in the media center: staff size, ordering and processing materials, total books that students can check out, number of copies in the collection, and amount of lost or overdue books.

Headings:

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IMPACT OF YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION ON MIDDLE SCHOOL LIBRARIES

by
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Introduction

Across the United States, year-round education has exploded in popularity. The number of year-round schools has grown from 400 in the late 1980s to 3,045 during the 2005-2006 school year (National Association for Year-Round Education). More than 2.1 million students attend public, private, or charter schools that operate on a year-round schedule (National Association for Year-Round Education). Year-round education has become a common option for school districts that face budget cutbacks, failed bond referendums, and overcrowded schools. School districts often choose year-round education to cut costs, maximize building space, and uphold quality instruction (McChesney, 1996, p. 2).

Some districts convert traditional schools as an alternative to building new schools. Year-round schools, which are always in use, can hold 20-33 percent more students than traditional schools. On a year-round calendar, schools intersperse several blocks of learning with shorter, more frequent breaks throughout the school year (McChesney, 1996, p. 2). Year-round schools may operate on a single-track or a multi-track schedule. On a single-track schedule, students attend school 180 days, but take short vacations throughout the school year. For instance, on a single-track 45/15 schedule, all students and staff go to school for 45 days and then take vacation for 15 days. Schools repeat this schedule four times during the school year (Kneese, 2000, p. 2).

On a multi-track calendar, students attend school for 180 days each year, but schools stagger the schedule of learning blocks and vacation periods during the school year.

Literature Review

Despite the wealth of research on the effects of year-round education on students, teachers, and families, there is limited data on how the year-round calendar specifically impacts media specialists and the school library program. Only one study, a research report by Christine Allen, was found in the literature. Allen's report addresses the implications of the year-round calendar on elementary school libraries in California.

In 1990, when school officials in the Riverside (CA) Unified School District (RUSD) decided to convert seven elementary schools to year-round schools, they asked Allen, a district librarian, to research the potential effects of year-round education on elementary libraries. For her report, Allen interviewed district personnel, as well as principals and media staff at year-round schools that operated on a four-track 60-20 calendar. She gathered data from personnel in three counties on how year-round education affected district employees, media staff, teachers, and students, as well as various media centers' circulation procedures, collection, facilities, etc. In her report, Allen discussed the procedures other year-round media specialists applied, as well as gave suggestions for implementation in RUSD elementary libraries.

Allen's (1990) findings, described below, revealed that the year-round calendar significantly affects circulation, equipment, and collection maintenance in elementary school libraries:

- Media specialists repeated “booktalks, storytimes, and/or reading incentive programs” to accommodate tracks (p. 7).
- All of the media specialists indicated that they paid closer attention to the calendar (p. 8).
- None of the media centers noted an excessive number of lost materials (p. 8).
- In most cases, students were not allowed to check out books the week before they tracked out from school (p. 8).
- Media specialists had difficulty collecting library materials from teachers who packed up the materials (p. 9).
- Media centers closed for a week each year to perform inventory (p. 9).
- Some media centers completed ongoing inventories—“closing sections of the collection for inventory while keeping the library open” (p. 9).
- Media specialists reported that it was challenging to perform an inventory of the whole collection each year (p. 9).
- All of the media specialists stated that materials required more repair and did not last as long. As a result, media specialists spent more time maintaining the collection (p. 9).
- All of the media specialists found it necessary to collect several copies of certain titles (p. 9).
- “When possible, all equipment was checked-out to classrooms on a permanent basis (p. 9).”
- Media specialists noticed that equipment needed more repair (p. 9).

- “Large maintenance projects (painting, cleaning of carpets, etc.) were done at Christmas break, at a special ‘maintenance’ break in June, or in late afternoon/evenings after students and staff were gone” (p. 10).
- All of the media specialists indicated that there was more wear and tear on furniture and carpets due to “prolonged use with no ‘down time’” (p. 10).
- In some instances, the library was used to store teachers’ rolling carts (p. 10).

Although Allen’s report is the only study that specifically discusses the impact of the year-round calendar on media specialists and school library programs, there is much research on the advantages and disadvantages of year-round education on teachers, students, and families. School officials maintain that the year-round calendar positively affects teaching and learning. First, year-round teachers increase instructional time by spending less time reviewing at the beginning of the school year (Kneese, 2000, p. 3). Since year-round students learn continuously, they are less likely to lose math and reading skills when compared to traditional students who have a long summer vacation (Cooper, 2003, p. 2). In particular, special needs children, low socio-economic students, and ESL students might benefit from year-round instruction and remedial assistance during intersession (McMillan, 2001). In a study of year-round elementary schools in Durham, NC, remediation intersession students “helped to eliminate the need for review of previously learned content at the beginning of the next nine-week session” (Haenn, 1996, p. 6).

In addition to intervention programs, students benefit from intersession activities that supplement and enhance classroom activities by living in a tent in the mountains, studying oceanography, or performing drama (Glines, 1997, p. 3). Other schools offer

sports and hobbies, such as classes on gardening, photography, and soccer to students who were tracked out from school (Haser and Nasser, 2003, p. 1). Therefore, students may profit from enrichment and remediation activities during intercession.

Next, teachers report that the year-round calendar increases their professionalism and job satisfaction. When Timber Lane Elementary (Fairfax, VA) converted to a year-round calendar in 1998, some teachers insisted that they experienced less stress on a year-round calendar versus a traditional schedule. One teacher said:

On the traditional calendar, I was wiped out by April. To do a good job as a teacher took a lot out of me; I even thought of early retirement. Now, on a year-round education cycle, I get systematic breaks, the kids get breaks from me, and we're ready to work together again (Haser and Nasser, 2003, p. 2).

Diane Connolly, the school's vice principal, reported that her teachers were absent less often on a year-round calendar:

Because they get frequent breaks, teachers, don't need to take off as many mental health days. Also, teachers try to schedule their doctors' appointments during intercessions, so they don't have to take leave, which comes back around to the kids' benefit. If teachers take fewer days off, they're in the classroom more, and more learning is most likely going on than with a substitute. (Haser and Nasser, 2003, p. 2)

Haser and Nasser's (2003) findings at Timber Lane Elementary School may not be representative of all year-round schools, but they reveal that the year-round schedule may enhance a school's climate by decreasing stress and absenteeism among teachers.

In addition, on the year-round calendar, teachers have increased opportunities to plan and reflect on class activities. During intercessions, teachers often spend several days planning with other teachers. For instance, grade-level teachers at Timber Lane Elementary meet to “compare notes, plan, and talk about what lessons went really well and what needs to change” (Haser and Nasser, 2003, p. 2). In addition to collaborating with other teachers, teachers also evaluate their teaching practices during their three-week vacations. For example, one Timber Lane teacher says, “I have time during intercessions to just reflect about rearranging my classroom and tweaking my classroom management” (Haser and Nasser, 2003, p. 2). Thus, the year-round calendar allows teachers to renew themselves professionally before they begin a new instructional block.

Some school districts can afford to increase their teachers’ salaries when they elect to convert schools to the year-round schedule instead of building new schools. On a year-round calendar, teachers can earn extra money by working twelve months, teaching during intersession, or substitute teaching (Kneese, 2000, p.2). In her literature review, Kneese explains that often specialty teachers who teach media, art, band, technology, etc. receive two additional months of pay as twelve-month employees in a year-round school as opposed to ten months of pay in a traditional school (p. 2). Specialty teachers earn a higher salary because they teach more days across several tracks. Also, teachers can choose to teach during intersession for additional pay. Some teachers at Timber Lane Elementary School, for example, teach classes on gardening, photography, soccer, etc. to students who are tracked out from school (Haser and Nasser, 2003, p. 1). Other teachers earn extra pay by substitute teaching at their school or other schools during intersessions.

Thus, teachers on a year-round calendar have multiple opportunities to increase their salaries.

While year-round education offers many advantages, critics argue that it presents challenges for parents and teachers. First, some teachers struggle to remain organized in a year-round school. Since a year-round school is always in use, teachers must move each time they track out for vacation. At most multi-track schools, teachers move classrooms four times a year. Each time they track-out for vacation, teachers must pack up their classroom materials and put them inside a moveable cabinet, which is kept in a storage room. When the teachers return, they move into a different classroom. Since teachers move frequently, it is important that custodial assistance is available on moving days to ensure that teachers track in and out of their classrooms efficiently. Unfortunately, teachers report that they often lose materials when they pack up their belongings. Therefore, some teachers may find it time consuming and difficult to change classrooms every several times each year (Kneese, 2000, p. 4).

In addition to organizational concerns, the year-round calendar can create scheduling conflicts for teachers and parents. For instance, teachers who sponsor extracurricular activities may discover that their activity continues during their three-week vacation. To address the issue, teachers might donate their vacation time to help with the club or sport, or ask another teacher to share the responsibility (Kneese, 2000, p. 4).

Also, year-round teachers may find it challenging to fit continuing education into their schedule. Teachers may need to attend workshops or classes during the summer in order to renew their licenses, receive additional certification, or pursue advanced degrees.

Since year-round schools are in session at that time, teachers must secure a substitute teacher in order to participate in the workshop. Therefore, the year-round calendar can cause problems for teachers who wish to attend staff development during the summer (Kneese, 2000, p. 5).

Finally, the year-round calendar can produce scheduling problems for families. Parents and teachers often find it difficult to schedule family vacations if two children are on different year-round tracks. Another issue arises when one child attends a year-round school, and another child goes to a traditional school. If a teacher and her child follow different calendars, then the teacher may need to arrange childcare while she is working, and her child is on vacation (McChesney, 1996, 2). As a result, finding childcare and a common vacation time for the entire family can be challenging for parents and teachers.

In sum, a growing number of school districts are choosing year-round education as a popular solution to overcrowding and budget cutbacks. Supporters argue that year-round education intersperses blocks of instructional time with shorter, more frequent breaks; enriches teaching and learning; and increases teacher professionalism, job satisfaction, and reflection. On the other hand, critics challenge that year-round education produces organizational and scheduling conflicts among teachers and families.

Methodology

This research study was qualitative rather than quantitative in nature. Using Allen's (1990) report as a theoretical model, six media specialists, representing four year-round middle schools, were interviewed to better understand how year-round education affects media specialists and school library programs. By interviewing the subjects, this

study provided a greater depth of information on the effects of year-round education on middle school libraries than would have been available from other research tools.

The design and methodology used in the study were approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The subjects' names and contact information were collected from the school district's website. All subjects were invited via email to participate in the study. (See Appendix A for the recruitment email.) The email described the study, explained the participant's rights, and included a list of interview questions. All subjects were mailed a consent form through the school district's courier mail system. Upon receipt of the signed consent form, interviews were arranged at the subject's convenience. (See Appendix B for the consent form.)

The subjects comprised a small but purposeful sample. All six of the participants were certified media specialists, held a master's degree in library science, and practiced in one of the four year-round middle schools in the XYZ School System. The XYZ School System is a large school district in a large area that includes over 100 schools in both urban and rural communities. All of the schools operated on a 45-15 multi-track calendar. The subjects were all twelve-month employees who had worked as media specialists for seven years or less. (Please see Table 1 for an overview of participant demographics.) To protect the privacy of each subject, pseudonyms were used for names and schools. For instance, Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony worked at School A; Ms. Brown and Ms. Baker worked at School B, etc.

The subjects were interviewed individually in their schools—either in the subject's office or in a secluded area of the library. The interviews varied in length from 30 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes. Upon invitation to participate in the study, subjects

were given a list of questions to review before the interview if they desired. (See Appendix C for a list of interview questions.)

Each interview focused on answering the following research questions:

- In what ways, does year-round education impact the media staff?
- What effect, if any, does the year-round calendar have on the delivery of services to students and faculty?
- In what ways, if any, does the year-round schedule affect the library's collection, equipment, and facility?

Guiding the interview questions were the following variables, also identified in Allen's (1990) report, which were used to assess the effects of the year-round calendar on the media staff, students, and faculty, as well as on the library's collection, equipment, and facility:

- staffing
- scheduling
- services to staff
- teaching methods
- services to students
- programs
- circulation
- ordering and processing
- maintenance of library collection
- "wear and tear" on equipment, collection, and facility
- equipment check-out and storage

- completion of facility maintenance projects

Each interview began with the same set of questions but was adapted to the subject's responses. During the interview, detailed notes were taken to ensure accuracy. In some cases, follow-up questions via email were necessary to clarify aspects from the interview. After interviewing each subject, the qualitative data was organized and analyzed to determine patterns among media specialists and school library programs in the district's four year-round middle schools.

Table 1. Overview of Participant Demographics

Media Specialist	School	School District	Years as a Media Specialist	Years as a Middle School Media Specialist	Years in a Year-Round School
Adams	A	XYZ	3.5	3.5	3.5
Anthony	A	XYZ	3	2	2
Baker	B	XYZ	5	5	5
Brown	B	XYZ	7	6	0.5
Clark	C	XYZ	4	4	13
Davis	D	XYZ	2.5	1.5	1.5

Results

The results of interviews with six media specialists, representing four year-round middle schools, are reported below. Common practices and themes that emerged throughout the interviews are addressed in the discussion section.

Impact on Media Staff, Faculty, and Students

Staffing

The year-round schedule had no effect on the size of the media staff, which is based on student enrollment.

Each year-round middle school has two full-time media specialists and one full-time assistant. All of the media specialists are twelve-month employees. At three out of the four schools, the media assistant works twelve months each year. At School A, the assistant is an eleventh-month employee.

Volunteers

All of the media specialists reported that parent volunteers follow the year-round calendar and track in and out of the library according to their child's schedule.

At School B, the year-round calendar does not seem to affect the number and quality of volunteers. Ms. Brown and Ms. Baker say that they do not have any problems recruiting volunteers. They have three dedicated parent volunteers from three different tracks who track in and out with their child. When volunteers are not available, the media staff assumes their duties.

Ms. Anthony and Ms. Adams have difficulty recruiting and retaining volunteers. The number of volunteers has dwindled since the beginning of the year, and presently they have only one consistent volunteer. However, the media specialists admit that there is not a strong need for volunteers in their library because the media assistant shelves from 12:00-1:00 each day. If a volunteer is unavailable, the media staff takes on additional responsibilities, such as shelving library materials.

Ms. Clark says that each year it becomes increasingly difficult to recruit volunteers. The media staff spends a great deal of time training and retaining volunteers, yet most are not consistent or committed. Currently, Ms. Clark has three or four volunteers who come faithfully each week. According to Ms. Clark, scheduling volunteers can be challenging, so she color-codes on a calendar when each group is tracked out and pencils in the name of the parent volunteer who is unavailable at that time.

At School D, Ms. Davis has trouble enlisting and scheduling volunteers. Recently, she struggled to secure enough parents to staff the book fair until PTA members volunteered to work at the event. Currently, Ms. Davis does not have any regular volunteers.

Scheduling

The year-round calendar significantly impacted scheduling in year-round media centers.

In all four media centers, the media specialists encourage teachers to bring their students to the library before and after they track out in order to return, renew, and check out materials. At School B, each track visits the library on a rotating basis. Ms. Baker emails the teachers on each track every three weeks to remind them to bring their classes to the library. Ms. Brown notes that teachers have a “track in/track out” mindset and seem very aware of time. They are always looking ahead and planning their next units of instruction around the calendar. Teachers plan their lessons carefully to ensure that they complete an area of study before they track out for three weeks. As a result, Ms. Brown

observes that teachers prefer to plan far in advance. For instance, it is common for teachers to schedule a time in the library 3-4 weeks in advance. They plan their units around the calendar and reserve the library before they track out.

According to Ms. Davis, it is challenging to schedule school-wide events and meetings because one group of teachers and students is unable to participate due to the track out schedule. To accommodate all tracks of students, Ms. Davis schedules the book fair and other special events over two weeks when one group is tracking out and another group is tracking into school. Also, Ms. Davis says that she has to schedule most meetings and training sessions at two different times since one group of staff always is tracked out from school. If possible, Ms. Davis tries to schedule staff training on Thursdays, which are workdays for tracked out teachers.

Communication

The media specialists emphasized the importance of communication in a year-round school.

Due to the nature of the year-round calendar, one group of students and staff is missing from the school at all times. As a result, the school community is susceptible to holes in communication. According to Ms. Brown, it is a constant challenge to keep the school community informed. She strives to keep teachers abreast by sending emails, but only some of the tracked out teachers read their school emails during their vacation. Other media specialists also make announcements over the intercom, on the school TVs, and on Blackboard, which is an online discussion board. The media specialists use a

variety of communication strategies to keep everyone informed, encourage collaboration, and motivate students to visit the library.

Services to Staff

All of the media specialists strive to increase collaboration and communication by always knowing which teachers were tracked in and out of school, as well as by being aware of what skills or unit each teacher was teaching at any given time.

To stay informed, all of the media specialists indicated that they collaborate with teachers during their planning periods, at department meetings, or on professional learning teams. For instance, Ms. Clark and Ms. Davis plan their schedules around teachers' availability and attempt to collaborate with teachers during their planning periods. Also, most media specialists participate in monthly department meetings. Ms. Anthony and Ms. Adams serve on professional learning teams in which they meet twice a week to plan lessons and collaborate with teachers. Ms. Anthony participates in the seventh grade social studies team, while Ms. Adams takes part in the sixth grade science team. According to several of the media specialists, however, the year-round schedule creates gaps in communication and collaboration. For example, Ms. Adams says that she always has to remember that one teacher is tracked out during the biweekly meetings with the social studies department. As a result, the media specialists have to work even harder to communicate with teachers and give them equal opportunities to collaborate and participate in library activities.

Due to the nature of the year-round calendar, each track is at a different place in the curriculum. Ms. Adams sees this as an advantage because she can repeat successful

lessons with different groups of students. Also, since the teachers are at different places in the curriculum, they do not have to share library materials. As a result, Ms. Adams does not have to worry about not having enough resources to support the same project. For instance, all of the sixth grade science teachers may assign the same project, but because of the year-round calendar, students use library materials at different times. Ms. Clark also strives to be familiar with each teacher's place in the curriculum pacing guide¹, so she can share library materials and integrate library skills with classroom instruction.

Teaching

According to the media specialists, teaching on the year-round calendar involved planning, organization, and repetition.

In March, April, and May, Ms. Anthony and Ms. Adams schedule orientation sessions for the following school year. When the new school year begins in July, Ms. Adams gives nine orientations to three tracks of students. Three weeks later, she leads three more orientation sessions when the last group of students tracks into school at the beginning of August. When Ms. Adams introduces the last track of sixth grade students to the media center, she has to remember that they are unfamiliar with the library and the school—even though most students have been in school for three weeks.

Media specialists also mention that the year-round calendar influences the sequence of library activities. With students tracking out at different times and being at different places in the curriculum, media specialists find it challenging to remember and schedule the correct sequence of activities for each track. For instance, Ms. Clark tries to

schedule the dictionary skills lesson before the world almanac lesson. Last year Ms. Anthony attempted to teach introductory reference skills to all sixth grade students. However, due to scheduling conflicts, only half of the sixth graders received the instruction.

Programs

The year-round calendar was a factor when the media specialists want to plan grade-level or school-wide events. When scheduling an event, the media specialists consider how it impacts the entire school and ensure that all tracks have equal opportunities to participate.

When planning events, the media specialists examine the year-round calendar carefully. They purposely choose one or two weeks in the calendar when one track of students is preparing to track out and another is planning to track into school. For instance, when scheduling poetry breaks, Ms. Adams sets aside two weeks during the last week of one track out and the first week of another track in to visit classrooms and read poetry. Also, when Ms. Baker plans a paperback book swap during National Library Week, she considers how the date affects all tracks. To accommodate all tracks of students, events take longer in a year-round library. For example, the Scholastic Book Fair and Teen Read Week usually last two weeks, which is twice as long as in a traditional media center.

The media specialists attempt to distribute events fairly across all tracks to ensure that one track of students is not overlooked or not given the opportunity to participate in library contests, guest speakers, etc. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the year-round

calendar, one group of students always misses one-time or short-term library events. For instance, students who are tracked out miss the special events and guest speakers that Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony plan during Read Across America Week.

All of the media specialists reported that the year-round calendar affects Battle of the Books and Newbery Book Club.

Media specialists at each school sponsor a Battle of the Books team and Newbery Book Club. Students on the Battle of the Books team read from a required list of books and represent their school in the district's quiz-bowl competition. In the Newbery Book Club, students read and discuss new books that are eligible for the Newbery Medal.

Ms. Adams serves as the sponsor for the Battle of the Books team, which meets once a week after school. She selects dedicated students whom she strongly encourages to attend meetings even when they are tracked out from school. However, sometimes students are unable to attend meetings when the parent is unable to provide transportation.

Ms. Anthony holds Newbery Book Club meetings during lunch. Since the club meets during the school day, she does not require students to attend meetings when they are tracked out from school. Therefore, to keep all of the club members informed, Ms. Anthony maintains an online discussion board on Blackboard where she posts book titles and encourages students to respond on the discussion thread.

Both Ms. Baker and Ms. Brown speak about the challenges of holding team meetings when one or more members is absent due to the track out schedule. Although Ms. Brown has 12 students on her Battle of the Books team, she never recalls a meeting

in which all of the members were present. Due to family vacations or lack of transportation, some Battle of the Books members are unable to attend meetings when they are tracked out from school. In her attendance book, Ms. Brown keeps the year-round calendar and records the dedicated students who attend Battle of the Books meetings when they are tracked out from school. When Ms. Baker schedules Newbery Book Club meetings, she knows that everyone will not be able to attend due to the year-round calendar. According to Ms. Baker, it can be difficult to build spirit and rapport among team members when all of the members are not present at a given time.

Ms. Clark expects Battle of the Books and other club members to be committed. She holds meetings before and after school because she requires members to attend meetings when they are tracked out. Ms. Clark says that she has to consider the year-round calendar to ensure that she does not plan meetings when the same group of students is tracked out from school.

According Ms. Davis, a sixth grade language arts teacher sponsors the Newbery Book Club, which only meets when the teacher is tracked into school. Ms. Davis sponsors the Battle of the Books team, which is comprised of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. She holds meetings at lunch for each grade level, as well as practice competitions after school. However, Ms. Davis says that even when the team meets after school, it is rare to have all members present because tracked out students are taking family vacations or involved in other extra curricular activities.

Circulation

All of the media specialists stated that the year-round calendar did not influence the

number of books that students could check out.

At Schools B, C, and D, students are allowed to check out three books for three weeks at any time. At School A, sixth graders are limited to three books, while seventh and eighth grade students can check out an unlimited number of books.

All of the media specialists allowed students to check out materials before they track out.

Two of the media specialists commented that they encourage students to check out books to read while they are tracked out from school, but the media specialists did not indicate if they observe students check out more books before they track out from school.

All of the media specialists reported that the year-round schedule affects how they collect fines and materials.

The media specialists give regular print and verbal reminders to prompt students to return and renew their library materials. For example, Ms. Baker and her staff remind students all the time to return their overdue books and print overdue notices the week before students track out from school. At the circulation desk, the staff posts a written reminder to override due dates to ensure that students' materials are not due when they are tracked out from school. With four tracks of students, School C essentially operates as four different schools with four circulation due dates. As a result, Ms. Clark constantly changes due dates to correlate with when students are tracked in and out of school. She also distributes circulation notices frequently to motivate students to return books, especially before and after they track out from school. Even with these regular

reminders, however, when students return to school, often they are unaware of the items they still have checked out. Finally, Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony print overdue notices before students track out and encourage them to stamp the correct due date in the back of their books. When checking out materials to students, the media specialists manually change the due dates on two stamps and check the calendar to ensure that books are not due when students are tracked out from school.

At half of the middle schools, the media specialists charged students overdue fines while they are tracked out from school.

At Schools A and C, students accrue overdue fines while they are tracked out from school. The media specialists charge five cents per day for each overdue book. However, Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony give students a few days grace period, while Ms. Clark tries to be lenient and forgive part of the fine when students return to school. Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony adjust the due date so that library materials are not due while students are tracked out from school. However, some students forget to renew or return books before they track out. As a result, they might have a small fine when they return to school.

The media specialists at Schools B and D do not charge overdue fines when students are tracked out from school. At School B, Ms. Baker and Ms. Brown adjust the due date, so books are not due while the student is tracked out from school. As a result, students are allowed to keep the books longer—sometimes up to a month.

In all of the libraries, the media specialists organized students in Athena (the automated circulation system) to reflect the year-round schedule.

All of the media specialists classify students by grade, track, and teacher. At Schools A and D, the media specialists sort students by homeroom teacher. Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony sort students by homeroom teacher, so they can put overdue notices in the homeroom teachers' mailboxes. Ms. Davis also organizes students by homeroom teacher in Athena, but she prints overdue notices for each track and places them in the language arts teachers' mailboxes. Ms. Davis finds it simple to match a student's grade and track with his/her language arts teacher. Ms. Davis distributes overdue notices through language arts teachers because they bring their classes to the library for circulation.

The media specialists at Schools B and C sort students by language arts teacher. Ms. Baker and Ms. Brown place overdue notices in the language arts teachers' mailboxes. Also, at School B, the first number in a student's patron identification number correlates with his or her track number. For instance, the patron numbers for track one students begin with a "1." At School C, Ms. Clark sorts students by their language arts teacher and organizes them into twelve groups in Athena: Track 1 Grade 6, Track 1 Grade 7, Track 1 Grade 8, etc.

In all of the media centers, the media specialists made global changes in Athena at the end of June or during the first week in July.

In these year-round schools, most students conclude their school year at the end of June and begin a new school year during the second week in July. At School C, Ms.

Clark enters new grade and teacher information for each student in June, while the media specialists at Schools A, B, and D perform these changes during the first week in July.

Ms. Baker and Ms. Brown say that they enter incoming sixth graders, convert rising seventh and eighth graders, and delete graduating eighth graders. At School A, Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony work quickly to ensure that students can check out materials during their first week of school. Into Athena, they upload an Excel file, which contains each student's new grade, track, and homeroom teacher. Ms. Davis also downloads updated student data when she turns over student records during the first week in July.

Ordering and Processing

In three out of four media centers, the year-round schedule seemed to have little or no effect on when or how the media specialists ordered and processed library materials.

Only Ms. Clark indicated that her staff struggles to find time to process new materials because of the year-round schedule. Therefore, on certain days, Ms. Clark makes processing a priority, especially if a teacher plans to use specific materials, such as new biographies, on a particular date. At Schools A, B, and D, the media specialists reported the year-round calendar does not have an effect on how they order and process materials. For instance, the media specialists at School B stated that they work within the budgets constraints from the front office when they place two large book orders each year. Unlike traditional schools, however, Ms. Brown and Ms. Baker begin ordering materials in July when the new school year begins. At School A, the staff buys and processes materials in the fall. Ms. Anthony says that teachers and students are their first

priority, but they always find time to process new materials. Ms. Davis places a large order in the spring after she receives the Book Fair proceeds in January.

Impact on Library Collection, Equipment, and Facility

Library Collection

In three out of four media centers, the media specialists noted that the year-round calendar affects collection maintenance and repair.

Only Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony reported that the year-round schedule does not have an effect on collection maintenance and repair. However, several media specialists mentioned that they struggle to find time to weed and repair materials because the library is in constant use. Ms. Clark and Ms. Davis, for instance, repair books when students return them or bring torn pages or broken spines to their attention. At School B, volunteers repair the majority of the books, while Ms. Brown and Ms. Baker weed a section in the collection as needed. For example, recently their staff weeded materials in the countries collection and ordered replacement books.

The year-round calendar seemed to have little effect on the number of lost or overdue materials by students and staff.

Several of the media specialists admitted that it is difficult to predict how the number of lost or overdue materials at a year-round school compares to a traditional school. From their perspectives, however, most of the media specialists felt that their media centers did not have more lost or overdue materials than a traditional media center. Ms. Clark, for example, says that her library does not have many lost books, mostly

because they charge fines and constantly send out circulation notices to students.

According to Ms. Baker, the number of lost or overdue materials never seems to be a problem. Ms. Brown finds that students are less likely to lose books since the school years are back-to-back and because lost and overdue fines stay on a student's library account from year to year. At School A, Ms. Adams says that teachers are less likely to pack up library materials since they stay in the same classroom throughout the year. She also reports that teachers are conscientious about returning materials before they track out. However, if a teacher forgets to return a book or video before he/she tracks out from school, then Ms. Adams usually finds the missing item in the teacher's room. Only Ms. Davis noted that there are more lost or overdue materials at her school due to the larger staff and student population. Ms. Davis also commented that sometimes she has to track down equipment, cords, and videos that teachers pack when they track out of school.

The year-round schedule did not have a significant impact on the number of copies in the collection.

One might reason that a media center that operates year-round school should have multiple copies of certain titles since it serves more students than a traditional school. However, the interviews reveal that the year-round calendar has little effect on the number of copies in the collection. Only Ms. Clark reports that she purchases additional copies of paperbacks, Battle of the Books titles, poetry, biographies, and reference materials due to the larger student population. The other media specialists also collect multiple copies of popular titles, Battle of the Books titles, and materials that support the curriculum, but they do not attribute it to the year-round schedule.

Two media specialists mention that they reserve books for students when all available copies are checked out. Ms. Anthony comments that sometimes the year-round schedule can be problematic when a student wants to read a book that is being reserved for a student who is tracked out for three weeks. In these cases, Ms. Anthony takes the book off reserve and checks it out to the student who is in school.

Equipment

Five out of six media specialists indicated that equipment is used constantly in a year-round school.

The media specialists reported that the equipment gets more wear because it is always in use. As a result, equipment needs to be repaired and replaced more often. According to Ms. Anthony, she constantly troubleshoots and purchases equipment. Ms. Davis finds it frustrating that she has to replace more equipment, such as lamps, cords, and camcorders, due to the larger staff at a year-round school. Also, half of the media specialists commented that there rarely is an opportunity to clean equipment, such as VCRs, overhead projectors, and computers.

At a traditional school, most equipment is checked out to the teacher. In a year-round school, however, some equipment is checked out to a classroom or pod on a permanent basis.

According to Ms. Anthony, the year-round calendar does not have much impact on how equipment is checked out. Unlike the teachers at Schools B, C, and D, the teachers at School A do not track in and out of their classrooms every nine weeks.

Instead, they use the same classroom for the entire school year. As a result, teachers keep equipment in their classrooms during track out.

At School B, most equipment is checked out to a classroom instead of to a teacher. The media specialists do not store as much equipment because it is kept in the classrooms all year. Ms. Baker notices an increase in equipment issues when teachers track into a new classroom and move around the furniture and equipment. Consequently, when teachers track into a classroom, they sometimes discover broken equipment or need assistance setting up computers, AVerKeys², etc. For instance, a teacher might find that the previous teacher pulled out the plugs out for *unitedstreaming*³ and need help hooking up the equipment again.

Two media specialists note that sometimes teachers pack up library material when they move out of their classrooms. At times, Ms. Davis finds it frustrating when she has to track down items. Often teachers forget that the items do not belong to them and should remain in the classroom. At School C, Ms. Clark sends track-out reminders to encourage teachers to return equipment before they track out from school. Sometimes, however, Ms. Clark has to track down digital cameras or videos that teachers packed up when they tracked out from school.

In all four schools, the overhead projector, TV, computers, and monitors remain in a classroom for the entire year.

In most year-round schools, the teachers use a classroom for nine weeks and then move out of the classroom when they track out from school. When they return to school three weeks later, the teachers track into a new classroom. Table 2 below shows the

equipment that remains in each classroom when a teacher moves out of the room every nine weeks. In all four schools, the overhead projector, TV, computers, and monitors remain in a classroom for the entire year. The majority of the media centers also check out a VCR, CD players, and cassette players to each classroom on a permanent basis. In one or two of the media centers, the media specialists also check out the following equipment to classrooms: a DVD player, AVerKey, and presentation cart. At School B, the media specialists check out VCRs to the social studies, science, health, ESL, and special programs classrooms for the entire year. Two media specialists note that they check out laptops to teachers on a permanent basis.

Table 2. Equipment Checked Out to Classrooms on a Permanent Basis

	School A	School B	School C	School D
Overhead Projector	X	X	X	X
TV	X	X	X	X
VCR	X	X		X
DVD Player	X			
CD Player	X	X		X
Cassette Player	X	X		X
LCD Projector				
A VerKey	X	X		
Laptop Computer	X (checked out to teachers on a permanent basis)		X (checked out to teachers on a permanent basis)	
Computer	X	X	X	X
Monitor	X	X	X	X
Digital Camera				
Video Camera				
Podium				
Microphone				
Headphones				
Speakers				
Binding Machine				
Rechargeable Batteries				
Presentation Cart	X			

In three out of four media centers, the media specialists checked out equipment to pods on a permanent basis.

A pod refers to the physical area where a group of teachers on the same track have their classrooms and storage room. School B is the only school that does not check out any equipment to pods. (See Table 3 below.) Of the four media centers, School A checks out the most items to each pod: a VCR, DVD player, LCD projector, laptop computer,

and speakers. In addition, each pod shares a presentation cart that contains an LCD projector, speakers, and DVD/VCR combo. Ms. Clark checks out a VCR and AVerKey to each pod at School C. At School D, teachers in each pod share a VCR and TV.

Table 3. Equipment Checked Out to Pods on a Permanent Basis

	School A	School B	School C	School D
Overhead Projector				
TV				X
VCR	X		X	X
DVD Player	X			
CD Player				
Cassette Player				
LCD Projector	X			
AVerKey			X	
Laptop Computer	X			
Computer				
Monitor				
Digital Camera				
Video Camera				
Podium				
Microphone				
Headphones				
Speakers	X			
Binding Machine				
Rechargeable Batteries				
Presentation Cart	X			

All of the media centers allow teachers to check out the following items for a limited time: DVD player, LCD projector, digital camera, video camera, headphones, microphones, or speakers.

All of the media centers allow teachers to check out the following items for a limited time: DVD player, LCD projector, digital camera, video camera, headphones, microphones, and speakers. (See Table 4 below.) Also, in the majority of the media

centers, the teachers can check out VCRs, CD players, cassette players, podiums, and binding machines. In addition, one or two media centers circulate AVerKeys, laptop computers, rechargeable batteries, and presentation carts.

Table 4. Equipment Checked Out to Teachers for a Limited Time

	School A	School B	School C	School D
Overhead Projector				
TV				
VCR	X	X	X	
DVD Player	X	X	X	X
CD Player	X	X	X	
Cassette Player	X	X	X	
LCD Projector	X	X	X	X
AVer Key	X		X	
Laptop Computer		X		X
Computer				
Monitor				
Digital Camera	X	X	X	X
Video Camera	X	X	X	X
Podium	X	X	X	
Microphone	X	X	X	X
Headphones	X	X	X	X
Speakers	X	X	X	X
Binding Machine	X	X	X	
Rechargeable Batteries	X	X		
Presentation Cart	X	X		

Inventory

None of the media specialists closed the library to perform an inventory of library materials.

According to the media specialists, inventory takes place during school hours at the end of June. At School A, since the library never closes, students and staff continue to check out materials while Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony perform an inventory at the end

of June. Prior to inventory, the media specialists encourage Track 1 students in May and Track 2, 3, and 4 students in June to return overdue materials before they track out. To perform the inventory, the media staff borrows a scanner from the district's media services department. Ms. Adams and Ms. Anthony purposely wait to complete their inventory in June—when traditional media centers in the district are finished using the scanner. At School B, the library remains open during inventory. The media specialists require students to return materials before inventory begins at the end of the school year. The staff sets up a computer and scanner in the library stacks. Ms. Brown or Ms. Baker uses one of her workdays to hire a substitute teacher to inventory a section of the collection. Like the other media specialists, Ms. Davis and Ms. Clark report that inventory takes about a week at the end of June. Ms. Clark stops circulation in May for Track 2 and at the end of June for Tracks 1, 3, and 4. Students are not allowed to check out books during the inventory process. However, if a student needs a book for a class assignment, then the media specialists check it out as an overnight book.

Facility

The majority of the media specialists noticed more “wear and tear” on equipment, collection materials, and the library facility since the library operates year-round.

Most of the media specialists comment that there is more wear and tear because the library never closes. For example, Ms. Clark observes increased “wear and tear” on all materials and equipment, as well as on the carpet, which was replaced last year after 14 years. Also, Ms. Baker says she is beginning to replace equipment, especially overhead projectors and printers that were new when the school opened 7-8 years ago. In

a year-round library, Ms. Brown says that media specialists do not have opportunities to clean during the summer. According to Ms. Brown, “summer cleaning” does not exist. Instead, every day is “business as usual” since the library is always open. Ms. Brown explains that unlike media specialists on a traditional calendar, year-round media specialists do not have days when they can work in the library without students. As a result, the facility suffers. The year-round calendar also impacts the life of equipment and books, which the staff tries to repair and replace as students and staff return them or bring them to their attention.

Half of the year-round media specialists reported that they do not adapt to the “wear and tear” on the equipment, collection, and facility any differently than media specialists at traditional schools.

Many of the media specialists comment that they simply try to take care of library equipment and materials for as long as possible and to replace them as needed. Ms. Anthony strives to repair items promptly and to maintain equipment and materials for as long as the budget will allow. According to Ms. Brown, her staff performs maintenance constantly. They pull materials from circulation until a staff member or volunteer can repair or reorder them. When Ms. Clark falls behind in maintenance, she sets aside a day to clean overhead projectors or repair books and equipment.

Almost all of the media specialists stated that increased “wear and tear” has not required them to allocate more library funds for replacement and repair.

Five out of six media specialists indicate that they have not allocated additional library funds for replacement and repair. According to Ms. Anthony, her principal recognizes the importance of the media center and provides funds for replacement and repair as needed.

In the past, Ms. Davis has used school start-up money to replace items, such as LCD projectors. However, she is concerned that future funds may not be available to repair and replace items when the start-up money is gone. Of the six media specialists, only Ms. Clark admits that the PTA spends more money on equipment and books, especially paperbacks, DVD players, and VCRs since the school is open year-round.

Most library maintenance projects, such as painting or carpet cleaning, were completed throughout the school day, during the first week in July, over Christmas vacation, or on holidays and weekends.

Ms. Anthony says that the library remains open during most maintenance projects at School A. Last year, the library was closed for two to three hours when the library was being painted. At School B, the media specialists remark that there is no time to complete maintenance projects during the school day since the library is always open. Therefore, painting takes place when students and staff are in school. A crew cleans the carpets during the first week in July, over Christmas vacation, or on other holidays. According to Ms. Davis, the library is rarely affected by maintenance projects. She explains that crews clean the tile floors in the workrooms during one weekend in the summer. At School C, library maintenance projects are completed during the week of Christmas vacation, the first week in July, and most frequently on the weekends. Ms. Clark explains that often

library staff cannot work during Christmas vacation due to carpet cleaning. In 2006, the library closed for two school days and over Memorial Day weekend to install new carpet.

The library is not used to store teachers' rolling carts when they are tracked out.

All of the media specialists report that teachers store their materials in classrooms or storage rooms. At School A, for example, teachers have their own classrooms where they keep their supplies when they track out. Teachers at School B store their carts in the track-out rooms in each pod. At School C, there are two designated storage rooms one each hallway—one for math and science teachers and another for language arts and social studies teachers.

Discussion

This study was designed to investigate how the year-round schedule impacts middle school libraries. Participating in this study were six media specialists, who represented the four year-round middle schools in the XYZ School System. The following pages describe common themes that emerged from exploring the effects of a year-round media center on the media staff, teachers, and students, as well as on the library's collection, equipment, and facility.

The interviews clearly indicated that the calendar significantly impacts planning, scheduling, communication, and circulation. Media specialists found it challenging to schedule events and meetings when one group of teachers and students is missing at all times. When scheduling events, the media specialists considered how it would impact the entire school and attempted to distribute events fairly across all tracks. They strived to

ensure that one track of students was not overlooked or not given the opportunity to participate in library events. To accommodate all tracks of students, the media specialists spread events over two weeks when one group was tracking out and another group was tracking into school. To meet the scheduling needs of teachers, the media specialists scheduled most meetings and training sessions at two different times. In addition, the media specialists acknowledged that it can be challenging to hold team meetings for Battle of the Books or Newbery Book Club when one or more members is absent due to the track out schedule.

According to the media specialists, it is a constant challenge to keep the school community informed. Since one group of students and staff is missing from the school at all times, the school community is prone to holes in communication. The interviews revealed that the media specialists use a variety of communication strategies to keep everyone informed, with email and Blackboard being the most common technological means. In the future, a wiki also might be a useful communication tool for the media specialists and teachers. Since the media specialists mentioned that a teacher is always missing from their meetings, a wiki could bring staff together by enabling them to build collaboratively on one another's work as they offer suggestions, write lessons, or compile data.

All of the media specialists encouraged communication by collaborating with teachers during their planning periods, at department meetings, or on professional learning teams. They attempted to enhance collaboration and communication by being aware of which teachers were tracked in and out of school, as well as by being conscious of what skills or unit each teacher was teaching at any given time. The media specialists

used curriculum pacing guides to facilitate collaboration and communication with teachers. Pacing guides are calendars of instruction, which give teachers a realistic time frame for pacing skills and concepts throughout the school year (Queen & Kaskey, 1997). Since teachers on a year-round calendar seemed more likely to plan in advance, pacing guides could have a positive effect on collaboration. Media specialists could consult the pacing guide regularly and initiate conversations and planning with teachers.

The media specialists noted that teaching on a year-round calendar involves planning, organization, and repetition. Due to the nature of the year-round calendar, each track is at a different place in the curriculum. Some media specialists saw this as an advantage because they could repeat successful lessons and not worry about several classes sharing the same materials. As a result, the staggered group of students in the media center created a demand for materials that was more cyclical

Media specialists also mentioned that the year-round calendar influences the sequence of library activities. As a result, the media specialists found it challenging to schedule the correct order of teaching activities. This finding provides greater evidence why media specialists might consider using a process model, such as the Big6 when teaching information literacy skills. The Big6 emphasizes integrating information and technology skills with classroom learning rather than teaching information literacy skills, such as keyword searching or note taking in isolation (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 2007).

Findings also showed that the year-round calendar influenced library policies, procedures, and routines. For instance, the media specialists gave students frequent oral and written reminders to check out, return, and renew materials before they tracked out from school. Also, half of the schools charged students overdue fines while they were

tracked out from school. In addition, the media specialists organized students by grade, track, and teacher in Athena to reflect the year-round schedule. Before the new school began the second week in July, the media specialists entered new grade and teacher information for each student in Athena.

As one might expect, the majority of the media specialists observed more “wear and tear” on equipment, collection materials, and the library facility as a result of greater use over a compressed period of time. They reported that they do not have opportunities to clean during the summer or have workdays when they can work in the library without students. The library always remained open, and every day was “business as usual.” As a result, they commented that the facility suffers, and the year-round calendar shortens the life of equipment and books. Some media specialists mentioned that they struggle to find time to weed and repair materials because the library is in constant use. Most of the media specialists simply try to repair and replace books and equipment promptly as needed. For the most part, library maintenance projects, such as painting or carpet cleaning, are completed throughout the school day, during the first week in July, over Christmas vacation, or on holidays and weekends. Allen’s report (1990) also discovered that crews not only completed maintenance projects over Christmas and at the end of the school year, but also after hours on school days as well (p. 10).

In 1990, Allen indicated that elementary media centers closed for a week to perform inventory (p. 9). However, the current results showed that all of the middle school media centers remained open during inventory, which lasted about a week and took place during school hours at the end of June. In most of the media centers, students and staff continued to check out materials while the media staff performed an inventory.

The interviews indicated that the year-round calendar affected how equipment was checked out and stored. The current study supported Allen's (1990) findings that some equipment was checked out to a classroom or pod on a permanent basis (p. 9). As a result, the media specialists did not have to store as much equipment. In all four schools, the overhead projector, TV, computers, and monitors remained in a classroom for the entire year. In the majority of media centers, media specialists checked out equipment to pods on a permanent basis. All of the media centers circulated the following items for a limited time: DVD player, LCD projector, digital camera, video camera, headphones, microphones, or speakers. A couple media specialists validated Allen's (1990) findings that sometimes teachers pack up library materials when they move out of their classrooms (p. 9). Unlike Allen's report, however, none of the media specialists in the current study stated that teachers stored their materials in classrooms or storage rooms (p. 9).

The interviews also revealed areas where the year-round calendar had little impact on the media center. For instance, the calendar had no effect on the size of the media staff. Also, School C and D's difficulties in recruiting and retaining volunteers may be more related to the socioeconomic status of the schools' neighborhoods rather than to the fact that the schools operate year-round. Furthermore, in three out of four media centers, the year-round schedule seemed to have little or no effect on when or how the media specialists ordered and processed library materials. Most media specialists stated that they worked within the budgets constraints when they placed large book orders each year. In addition, the study validated Allen's (1990) data that the year-round calendar did not impact the number of lost or overdue materials by students and staff (p. 8). Most of the

media specialists felt that their media centers did not have more lost or overdue materials than a traditional media center.

In 1990, Allen discovered that year-round media specialists found it necessary to collect several copies of certain titles (p. 9). In the current study, however, the year-round calendar did not have a significant impact on the number of copies in the collection. Most of the media specialists did not purchase multiple copies of popular titles because of the larger student population at the year-round school.

The media specialists validated Allen's 1990 data that year-round media centers experience increased wear and tear due to constant use (p. 9). Yet, the media specialists in the current study did not adapt to the wear and tear on the equipment, collection, and facility any differently than media specialists at traditional schools. Many of the media specialists commented that they simply try to take care of library equipment and materials for as long as possible and to replace them as needed. In her report (1990), Allen predicted that year-round media centers would need to budget funds for repairing and replacing library materials. However, in the present study, almost all of the media specialists indicated that the increased wear and tear had not required them to allocate more library funds.

Conclusions

The results of this study illustrate the impact of the year-round calendar on middle school media specialists and the school library program. Interviews with six year-round media specialists showed that the calendar influences scheduling, circulation procedures, and collection maintenance. On the other hand, the data also exposed areas where the year-round calendar has little impact in the media center: staffing, ordering and

processing materials, total books that students can check out, number of copies in the collection, and amount of lost or overdue books.

Based on the findings in this study, the year-round schedule affects certain areas of the school media center. Yet, literature on the impact of the year-round calendar on media specialists and school library programs is lacking. As the number of year-round schools grows rapidly, more media specialists will find themselves in this learning environment. By implementing the suggestions below, media specialists can help ensure that the transition to a year-round media center will be a successful experience for students and staff:

- Review circulation policies and procedures. Will students be allowed to check out materials while they are tracked out from school? Will students accrue fines while they are tracked out from school?
- Decide how students will be organized in the automated circulation system. Will students be organized by name, grade, track, or teacher?
- Decide when student records will be updated in the automated circulation system. On the year-round schedule, media specialists typically have less than a week to add and delete student records before the new school year begins.
- Adopt an equipment check-out policy. Decide which items, if any, will be checked out to classrooms and pods for the entire school year.
- Consider how and when an annual inventory will be performed. Will students be allowed to check out materials during inventory? How will an equipment inventory be taken if the items are always in use? Will inventory take place at the end of June, the beginning of July, or on an ongoing basis?

- Discuss the library budget with the principal. Perhaps the year-round schedule will impact how much funding the media center receives, when funds are available for a new school year, or when book orders are due.
- Consider possible effects on library events, programs, and clubs. For instance, how will events be scheduled to accommodate all tracks of students and staff? What strategies will be used to increase communication and to promote library events? Will students be required attend library clubs, such as Battle of the Books or Newbery Book Club when they are tracked out from school? When will meetings be held to give students increased opportunities to attend?
- Implement strategies to increase collaboration and communication with staff members. Meet with teachers regularly during department meetings and on professional learning teams. Be aware of when teachers are tracked in and out of school, when they have planning periods, and what skills they are teaching.
- If possible, schedule library maintenance projects, such as carpet cleaning and painting during Christmas vacation or during the first week of July to avoid closing the media center to students and staff (Everhart & Atalig, 2003).

Building on the methodology used in the current study, further research is suggested to explore scheduling and communication issues that media specialists face in year-round schools. Such a study may show how other media specialists schedule meetings and events when one group of teachers and students is missing at all times. Also, additional interviews with media specialists might reveal ways to keep the school community informed, as well as how to increase collaboration through communication.

Furthermore, additional research is necessary to better understand how circulation procedures reflect the year-round schedule. For instance, research might investigate if media specialists allow students to check out books before they track out from school, how they collect fines and materials, and if students accrue fines when they are tracked out. Also, it may be beneficial to study how media specialists classify students in the automated circulation system, as well as examine how and when media specialists turn over student records annually. Such findings would support or contradict the findings in the current study.

Finally, further research might explore areas in the current study where the year-round calendar had no significant effect on the media center. For instance, the study might examine if the calendar affects the number of media staff and the length of their contracts. Also, research is suggested to assess if the year-round schedule affects the library budget, as well as how or when media specialists order and process materials. Finally, additional investigation is needed to validate or refute the current study's findings that the calendar has little impact on the amount of lost or overdue books, total books that students can check out, or number of copies in the collection.

Therefore, while the current study provides a preliminary glance into the impact of the year-round education on middle school media centers, additional research that addresses any of the articulated topics would go far to assist school library professionals in year-round media centers.

Notes

¹ A curriculum pacing guide gives teachers a realistic time frame for pacing skills and concepts throughout the school year.

² An AVerKey is scan converter that enables any computer application to be projected onto a TV.

³ *Unitedstreaming* is a resource from Discovery Education that gives teachers “on-demand access to 50,000 content-specific segments from 5,000 full-length educational videos” (<http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>).

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Appendix A: Recruitment Email

Dear _____,

I am library science student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For my master's paper, I am conducting a research study on the impact of year-round education on middle school media centers.

If you choose to participate in this study, I will interview you for an hour. During the interview, I will ask you questions about the impact of the year-round calendar on students, faculty, and library staff, as well as on the library's collection, equipment, and facility. Attached you will find the questions that I will ask during the interview.

Within the next three days, you will receive a consent form through courier mail. If you agree to participate in the study, please sign the consent form, seal the envelope, and return it through courier mail. After I receive your consent form, I will email you to arrange a time to interview you.

If you have questions or concerns, you may call me at 919_____ or email me at _____. You can also contact my advisor, Dr. Evelyn Daniel, at 919_____ or _____.

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to IRB_subjects@unc.edu.

Thank you for considering participation in this study. I hope that I can share your views with the library science profession and use your responses to better understand how year-round education impacts middle school media centers.

Sincerely,
Rachel Click

Appendix B: Consent Form

**University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Adult Participants
Social Behavioral Form**

IRB Study #07-0172

Consent Form Version Date: February 11, 2007

Title of Study: Impact of Year-Round Education on Middle School Libraries

Principal Investigator: Rachel E. Click

Telephone Number: 919-_____

Email Address: _____

UNC-Chapel Hill Department: School of Information and Library Science

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Evelyn Daniel

Telephone Number: 919-_____

Email Address: _____

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. To join the study is voluntary. You may refuse to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason, without penalty.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help people in the future. You may not receive any direct benefit from being in the research study. There also may be risks to being in research studies.

Details about this study are discussed below. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study. You will be given a copy of this consent form. You should ask the researcher or faculty advisor named above any questions you have about this study at any time.

What is the purpose of this study?

You are being asked to participate in this study because you serve as a media specialist in a year-round middle school.

The purpose of this research study is to understand the impact of year-round education on middle school media centers. We also want to learn how the year-round calendar affects the delivery of media services to students and faculty, as well as impacts the library's collection, equipment, and facility.

How many people will take part in this study?

If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of approximately eight people in this research study.

How long will your part in this study last?

The interview will take less than one hour. You can choose to stop the interview at any time.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

I will ask you questions about the impact of the year-round calendar on students, faculty, and library staff, as well as the effects on the library's collection, equipment, and facility. Attached you will find some of the questions that I will ask you during the interview. I will take notes about what you say. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer, for any reason.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?

Research is designed to benefit society by gaining new knowledge. You may benefit from new information on year-round education as a result of your participation in this research study.

What are the possible risks or discomforts involved from being in this study?

I do not think you will experience any discomfort or risk from the interview.

How will your privacy be protected?

Every effort will be taken to protect your identity as a participant in this study. On the notes from the interview, I will use pseudonyms for your name and school (i.e., Ms. Adams from School A). I am the only person who will know your real name and school. All records will be secured in a locked cabinet. Files on my laptop computer will be secured with password protection. When the study is completed, all hard copy data will be shredded, and all related computer files will be deleted or destroyed.

Participants will not be identified in any report or publication about this study. Although every effort will be made to keep research records private, there may be times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of such records, including personal information. This is very unlikely, but if disclosure is ever required, UNC-Chapel Hill will take steps allowable by law to protect the privacy of personal information. In some cases, your information in this research study could be reviewed by representatives of the University, research sponsors, or government agencies for purposes such as quality control or safety.

Will you receive anything for being in this study?

You will not receive anything for taking part in this study, but your information is very important to us.

Will it cost you anything to be in this study?

There will be no costs for being in the study

What if you have questions about this study?

You have the right to ask, and have answered, any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions, or concerns, you should contact me at 919-332-8772. You can also contact me or my advisor at the phone numbers and email addresses listed on the first page of this form.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to IRB_subjects@unc.edu.

Participant's Agreement:

I have read the information provided above. I have asked all the questions I have at this time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Signature of Research Participant

Date

Printed Name of Research Participant

Appendix C: Interview Questions

University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Interview Questions

IRB Study #07-0172

Consent Form Version Date: February 11, 2007

Title of Study: Impact of Year-Round Education on Middle School Libraries

Principal Investigator: Rachel E. Click

Telephone number: 919-_____

Email Address: _____

UNC-Chapel Hill Department: School of Information and Library Science

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Evelyn Daniel

Telephone Number: 919-_____

Email Address: _____

Subject's Pseudonym: _____

Background Information

- How long have you worked as a media specialist?
- How long have you worked as a media specialist in a middle school?
- How long have you worked in a year-round school?
- Does your school operate on a 45-15 four-track plan or another multi-track schedule?

Feedback on Year-Round Education

- How do you feel about year-round education?
- What are some advantages?
- What are some disadvantages?

Impact on Media Staff, Faculty, and Students

Staffing

- What is the size of your media staff?
- Are you a 12-month employee?
- What effect, if any, does the year-round schedule have on the number of media staff and/or volunteers?
- What effect, if any, does working year-round have on staff development?
- What effect, if any, does working year-round have on continuing education?
- What effect, if any, does working year-round have on workdays?
- What effect, if any, does working year-round have on your family schedule?

Scheduling of Class Visits

- In what ways, if any, does the year-round calendar affect how you schedule class visits?

Services to Staff

- In what ways, if any, does the year-round calendar affect how you serve the school staff?
- In what ways, if any, does the year-round calendar affect your collaboration with teachers?

Teaching

- In what ways, if any, does the year-round schedule influence your teaching methods?
- For instance, do you find that you have to repeat orientation sessions or book talks for each track?

Services to Students

- In what ways, if any, does the year-round calendar influence how you serve students?

Programs

- What effect, if any, does the year-round calendar have on library-sponsored events or clubs, such as Battle of the Books or Newbery Book Club?

Circulation

- In what ways, if any, do your circulation procedures reflect the year-round schedule?
- In what ways, if any, does the year-round calendar affect the number of books students can check out, when materials are due, or how you collect fines and overdue materials?
- Do you allow students to check out materials before they track out?
- In what ways, if any, do you organize students in Athena (automated circulation system) to reflect the year-round schedule?

Ordering and Processing

- In what ways, if any, does the year-round schedule influence when or how you order and process library materials?

Impact on the Library Collection, Equipment, and Facility

Library Collection

- What effect, if any, does the year-round calendar have on collection maintenance and repair?
- What effect, if any, does the year-round calendar have on the number of lost or overdue materials by students and staff?

- In what way, if any, does the year-round schedule influence the number of copies of particular titles in the collection?

Equipment

- What effect, if any, does the year-round calendar have on equipment?
- What effect, if any, does the year-round schedule have on how equipment is checked out and stored?
- What equipment, if any, is checked-out to classrooms on a permanent basis?
- What equipment, if any, is a teacher allowed to checkout for a limited time?
- In what ways, if any, does the year-round schedule affect how often or the way in which you perform an inventory of library materials?

Facility

- Since the library operates year-round, have you noticed that there is more “wear and tear” on equipment, collection materials, and the library facility itself?
- If so, what, if anything, do you do to adapt to the “wear and tear” on the equipment, collection, and facility?
- Has increased “wear and tear” required you to allocate more library funds for replacement and repair?
- What effect, if any, does the year-round calendar have on the completion of library maintenance projects, such as painting or carpet cleaning? When are these projects completed during the school year?
- How often, if ever, is the library used to store teachers’ rolling storage carts when they are tracked out?