

Preparing a Library Budget

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“A dollar spent in the library is a dollar spent on every student in the school.”

~Joan Smith, Teacher-Librarian,
Central Technical School

The continued standardization of procedures across the Toronto District School Board has resulted in changes in budget allocation procedures. Although a standard amount is given to each school for the purchase of library resources, the principal has the final responsibility for all budget allocations within the school. It is important that teacher librarians submit a budget proposal and discuss the needs of the school library with the administration and/or the school budget committee. The budget proposal should provide the rationale and allocation for all library resources, including print, multi-media, on-line subscriptions, periodicals, and supplies.

When preparing a library budget, it is important to:

- Look at the collection as a whole and set priorities
- Anticipate the demands of new curriculum, including the change of topics in different grade levels
- Develop an on-going program to update print reference materials
- Plan to acquire appropriate online databases
- Carefully examine the duplication of learning resources available in different formats
- Support literacy initiatives in the school enhancing the lifelong love of reading
- Survey students and staff to determine critical needs, including the professional development needs of teachers
- Replace lost and damaged resources as appropriate
- Survey the condition of your paperback collection to determine replacement
- Provide access to current, quality, high interest books and other print materials to create life-long readers
- Identify and support the needs of all students, e.g. ESL, Enrichment, Special Education, dual language

After considering all of the criteria mentioned above, a budget proposal can be developed using a template like the one below, for either elementary or secondary. Examples follow for both an elementary and a secondary school using different formats.