All That Glitters is Not Gold:
Positive Changes and New Challenges for School Library Supervisors

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COLLEGE OF INFORMATION STUDIES

About the Lilead Project

The Lilead Project at the University of Maryland's iSchool is supported by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS). It studies the value, roles, and responsibilities of the individuals who hold the position of library supervisor in their school district. In 2012 and 2014, the Lilead Project surveyed supervisors in the largest districts nationwide. This is the first national study since the 1960s to examine the work of supervisors.

Research Questions

- What changes have supervisors seen in funding for programs?
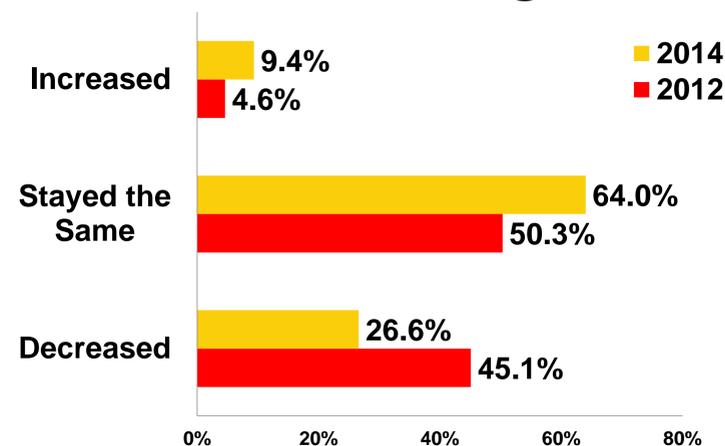- What changes have supervisors seen in staffing at the building level?

Study Design

- *Methodology*: Mixed methods online survey; 120 questions in four categories: position and office profiles; roles and responsibilities; challenges, changes, and trends; demographics.
- *Survey Population*: 290 districts in 50 states, including 280 districts with student populations of 25,000 or more, plus the largest districts in each of 10 states without a district with 25,000 students.
- *Responses*:
  2012: 166 supervisors (61% response rate)
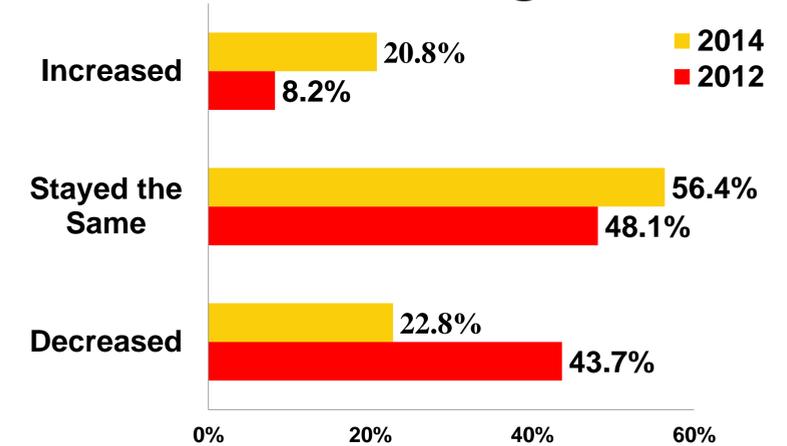 2014: 151 supervisors (57% response rate)

Findings

During each survey, the supervisors were asked to report how funding, staffing, and the availability of qualified candidates had changed from the previous school year.
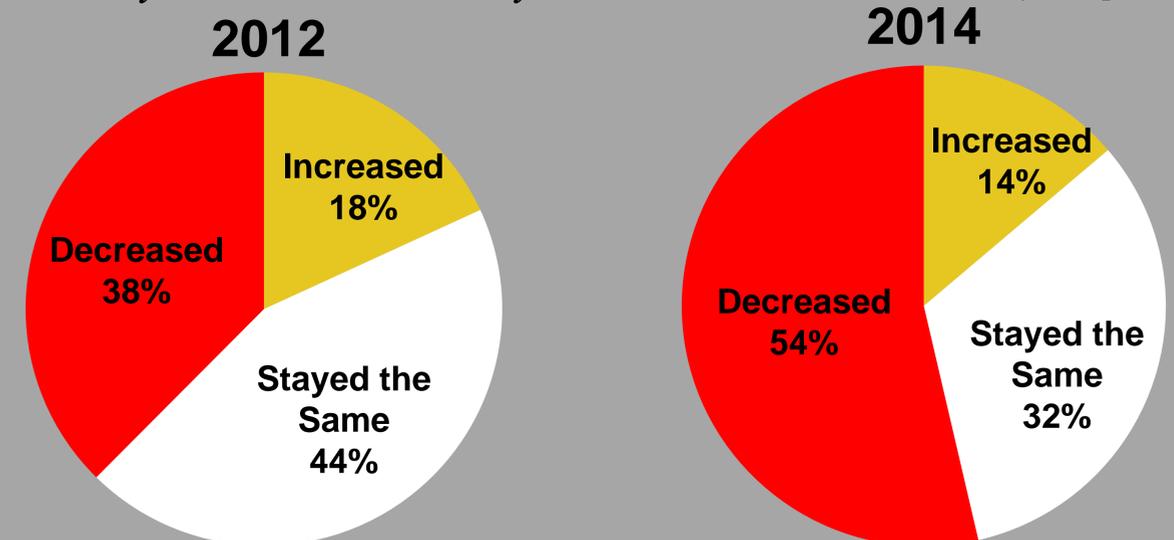
Funding

	2014	2012
Increased	9.4%	4.6%
Stayed the Same	64.0%	50.3%
Decreased	26.6%	45.1%

Staffing

	2014	2012
Increased	20.8%	8.2%
Stayed the Same	56.4%	48.1%
Decreased	22.8%	43.7%

"I am having trouble finding qualified candidates… I hired 15 teachers to work in school libraries and only one had a library credential." – 2014 Survey Respondent

Availability of Qualified Candidates (vs. previous year)

2012

Increased 18%
Stayed the Same 44%
Decreased 38%

2014

Increased 14%
Stayed the Same 32%
Decreased 54%

Conclusions and Continued Research

Despite the encouraging findings on funding and staffing, the data suggests that school libraries now face a new challenge of finding qualified candidates for school library positions. This poster presents a small portion of the findings from this study. For additional information from the Lilead Project and the survey, please visit lileadproject.org.