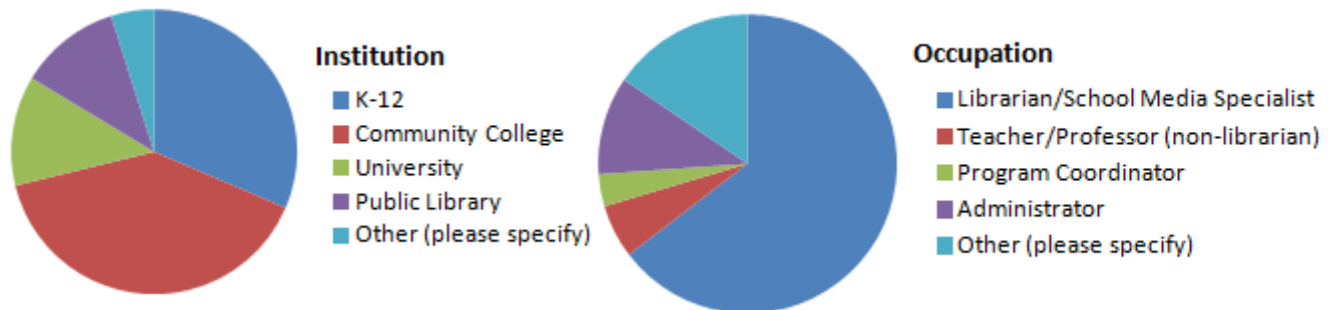# Library Support for Accelerated Learning Programs

In late 2014, ILAGO conducted a national online survey regarding library support for accelerated learning programs. The survey was widely distributed via listservs for public libraries, public and private K-12 schools, and community colleges and universities. The survey had 226 respondents.
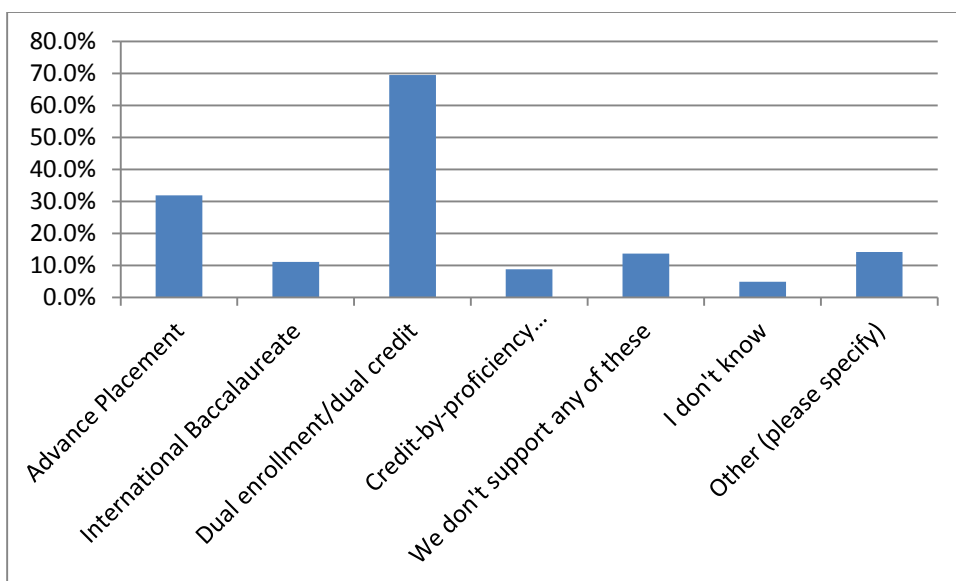
Respondent Demographics

K-12 and community colleges were well represented, followed by universities. The vast majority of respondents were library professionals.

Types of Accelerated Programs Supported

Overwhelmingly, dual credit programs were the most common accelerated learning program represented in the survey.

How Do Students Access College-level Materials?

A majority indicated that high school participants had the same access to college-level materials as college students at the credit-granting institution. However, the comments (n=120) revealed that *only students in dual enrollment programs had equal access*. The comments showed that students in other types of accelerated learning programs typically accessed college materials through these main ways:

1. Statewide database access
2. Had to travel to college campus to access databases as a community user would
3. If they wanted to check out books at the college, the majority indicated the student or their district had to obtain/purchase a community user card to gain borrower privileges
4. A few respondents indicated that the high school either negotiated with a college or university for special access, or subscribed to resources on their own.

Although several respondents indicated that students had access to college materials at their high schools, the comments showed that in many cases this access was either provided by a statewide program or the students were dually enrolled in the college and had access to the college's electronic resources while at their local high school.
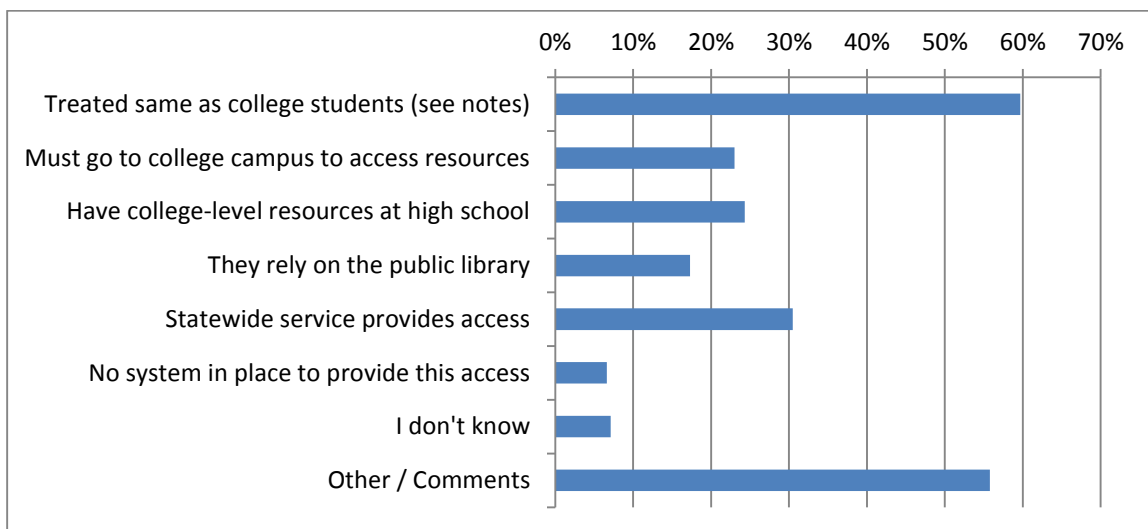

Notable Responses

Some respondents noted that because students had to come to campus to access resources, they didn't utilize them very often (particularly books). A few addressed this by creating or buying into an existing courier service to have books delivered to the high school.

Many respondents were from states that have statewide resource sharing. For example, respondents from Ohio frequently mentioned the value of the statewide OhioLink book sharing consortium, as well as InfOhio for statewide access to databases.

How Do Students Receive College-Level Information Literacy Instruction and Reference Help?

The picture here is more diverse and complex, as there is no one approach that clearly stands out:
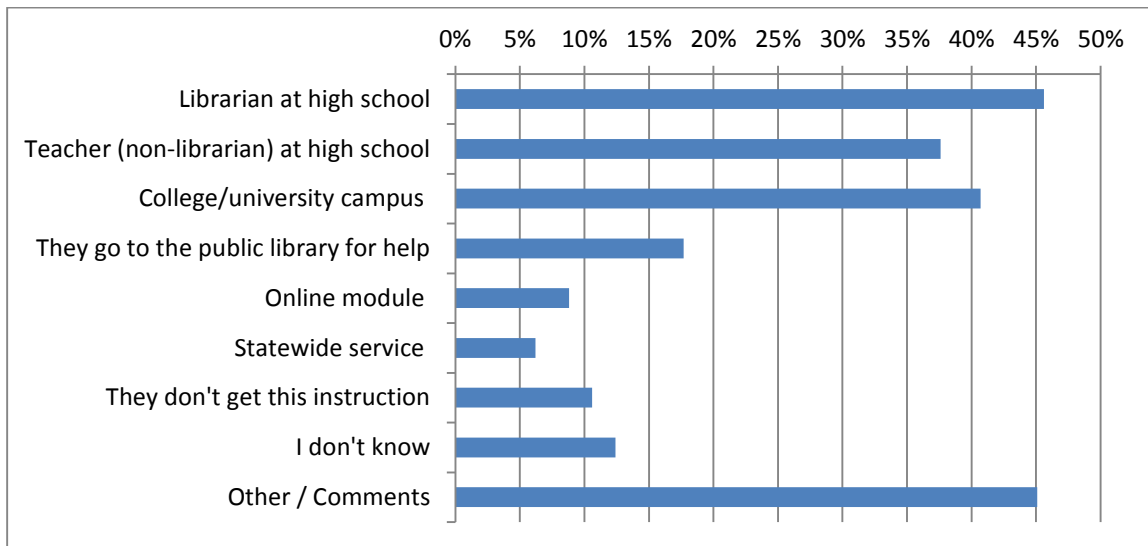
Respondents' comments (n=102) reflected the dynamic of library instruction at colleges and universities as a whole: information literacy instruction was provided when requested by the teacher. However, requests for library instruction rely on having a relationship with the class teacher. Those who included statistics indicated that a low percentage of partners requested library instruction (10-16%). Ten percent of respondents said they assumed someone was providing information literacy instruction, but weren't sure who or where this might take place. Another 9% mentioned the decline of school librarians as a factor impacting instruction.

Reference assistance is provided in a variety of ways, with many colleges and universities referring to their remote access options (phone, email and chat). Statewide and/or 24-hour chat reference was also frequently mentioned.

Notable Responses

Several respondents indicated that they were in the process of developing online modules to provide instruction to these students; several also said they were either involved in or preparing to provide synchronous remote instruction via video/web conferencing. Two mentioned a credit-bearing information literacy course available to high school students through the college. Some respondents indicated that academic librarians provide formal training and support for their partner teachers in the high schools, usually at in-services.

What Are the Take-Aways from Existing Programs?

Survey participants who are currently involved in supporting accelerated learning high school programs were asked to elaborate on their experiences. Those comments (n=121) revealed diverse approaches and ideas, as well as concerns they were still working to address. Below are both the concerns that were raised, as well as potential solutions that were employed by others.

Concerns	Respondent Approaches
Information technology issues: computers and networks at schools are outdated; also, filters at high schools blocking access to materials	Participating high schools need support to update IT. Also, work with school IT department to address filter blocking and create exceptions
High school teachers and librarians need professional development support	Librarians provide training at teacher in-services; college can assign a librarian to be high school liaison
Lack of awareness by high schools regarding what college/university can do	Colleges can develop handouts and online guides (LibGuide) outlining support options; also attend teacher in-services to develop relationships and outreach
Reference help	Educate students on their options for getting help from college partners, including remote options; make sure they know about any statewide reference services
Students are intimidated by unfamiliar college resources, including college librarians, and fall back on familiar ones	Bring students to campus for tours and instruction to help them become more comfortable; also colleges can create online guides (LibGuides) geared toward high school students' needs
Distance between participating high schools and partner colleges/universities	In-person instruction was identified as ideal, particularly by the students' familiar high school librarian; however, online and video conferencing options may meet needs
Decline of librarians in the high schools	Librarians at colleges/universities and public libraries are attempting to fill the gap, but identified that this approach was not sustainable; the lack of school librarians needs to be addressed at a higher level