RANNEY LIBRARIES
A New Educational Paradigm: Empowering Learners for Success

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Executive Summary

The following proposal highlights the initiative to transform the Paulus and Searle libraries into state-of-the-art media centers—“libraries of the future”—that will empower Ranney students for optimal success in the 21st century. Today’s students and educators need access to current and emerging hardware, software, and digital tools necessary for multimedia production, teleconferencing, digital storytelling, and more. Today’s learning spaces also need to accommodate and facilitate collaborative work with others, both locally and globally.

The library of the future is the hub of informational and communication technologies and the conduit for the acquisition of 21st century skills such as ICT - information and communication technologies. Transforming Ranney’s libraries into flexible, media-rich, collaborative media centers will provide students with the foundation necessary to master the critical 21st century skills and literacies demanded of them in the new global knowledge economy. Ranney’s library media specialists and teachers will be able to use the new spaces together to facilitate research and discovery using a variety of resources, seamlessly integrating technology throughout the learning process. Ranney students will thrive as accomplished information seekers, users, and producers who are able to demonstrate and share their knowledge using an array of digital media and communication skills.

The following proposal also highlights exciting expansions and enhancements to the libraries’ online resources, programs, and services:

- **Expanding access and services:**
  - New web-based library catalog
  - “Ranney Virtual Media Center”—a new, interactive website with information and resources for students, teachers, and parents
  - “Ranney LibGuides”—an online digital content repository featuring research guides, subject guides, digital tools, tutorials, and more

- **Enhancing the collection:**
  - NOOK e-Readers available for circulation
  - iPads loaded with educational apps
  - 24/7 Access to over 1,000 reference e-Books
  - Additional subscription databases
  - Subscriptions to web 2.0 applications and tools
  - Inter-library loan services

**PAULUS LIBRARY RENOVATION HIGHLIGHTS**

- Creation of a multimedia lab with iMac workstations, an interactive whiteboard, teleconferencing equipment, and a lounge area dedicated to free voluntary reading
- Updated modular seating throughout the library to provide collaborative and flexible workspaces

**SEARLE LIBRARY RENOVATION HIGHLIGHTS**

- Updated computers, shelving, workstations, circulation desk, and self-checkout
- Updated loft area, skylights, and additional windows
- Dedicated areas for reader’s theatre, storytelling, and activities

Ranney School’s commitment to renovate the Paulus and Searle libraries is an extension of the commitment to provide every student at Ranney with a 21st century education, setting the stage for success in school and beyond. We invite you to turn the page for more exciting details!
A Changing Landscape
With the advent of digital technologies, social networks, mobile devices, and global communities, students are exposed to an unprecedented amount of content that is constantly available at their fingertips. Today’s students will graduate into a global economy that demands multiple literacies; where collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, innovation, and creativity are a necessity. Despite growing up as “digital natives,” students need guidance and instruction to master these technologies, literacies, and higher level thinking skills in order to succeed in today’s workplace—and tomorrow’s ever expanding professional horizons.

The future relies on today’s students developing the critical thinking, reasoning and resource skills to produce individual work and interact collaboratively with others to solve real world problems. In order for Ranney students to master these multiple literacies and competencies, a significant commitment must be made to transform the Searle and Paulus libraries into state-of-the-art media centers capable of providing the 21st century learning and teaching environment that today’s education demands for tomorrow’s future needs. Our students will require state-of-the-art technology: laptop computers, interactive whiteboards, audio/video equipment, digital cameras, e-Readers, and digital tools. Investing in the physical renovation and acquisition of state-of-the-art technologies will ensure that Ranney students have the opportunities they need to acquire the skills and literacies needed for lifelong learning and optimal success.

Empowering Learners
At the forefront of Ranney School’s integration of 21st century skills are the Paulus and Searle libraries—dynamic highways of information, media, and technology. Every student in every grade—from our youngest learners just discovering the world beyond home to our seniors independently researching topics of personal interest for Capstone projects—benefits from the collaborative instruction, resources, and programs provided by Ranney’s library media programs. Students at every grade level and developmental stage are enabled to gain deep content knowledge through the inquiry process while learning critical information and technological literacies. In addition, students with special learning needs benefit from and are supported by the variety of technology and media available in the libraries.

Today’s librarians are highly skilled media specialists who teach students how to access, evaluate, organize, manage, and use a myriad of information, communication, and technological resources ethically and responsibly to create and share knowledge. Library media specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to facilitate student acquisition of deep curricular knowledge, enabling students to understand and create the synthesis of information and media that will ensure the acquisition of 21st century skills.

Fully equipped, flexible, and media-rich learning spaces will provide increased opportunities for collaborative planning, teaching, and learning. Increased access to digital media resources and tools for research and multimedia production will allow Ranney Students and teachers to experiment with educational innovations made possible with emerging technologies. Additionally, with access to state-of-the-art facilities and technologies, students and teachers at Ranney will be able to benefit from the following activities, services, and programs:

- Multimedia production and digital storytelling
- Reader’s theater
- Virtual book clubs
- Increased teleconferencing capabilities to interact with authors, scientists, and professionals
- Project-based learning opportunities with students around the world
- Using and creating educational apps
- Immediate access to e-Books on portable devices
- Participatory learning and assessment with interactive white boards
- Scanners and software for creating digital portfolios of student work
Empowering Educators

Library media specialists provide the framework for collaborative instruction and professional development to cultivate 21st century educators. Today’s educators also need to become skilled in the technology and media tools that are currently available—and those that are on the horizon. Library media specialists facilitate the integration of technology into all subject and skill areas, and understand the importance of promoting technologies like teleconferencing, iEarn (International Education and Resource Network), e-books and e-Readers, digital storytelling, and ePals as dynamic resources that teachers and students can use to connect around the world.

Library media specialists play a key role in instructing teachers on using and integrating a wide range of information, communication, and digital technologies into the classroom. Transforming the libraries into state-of-the-art media centers will provide increased opportunities for library media specialists to model the use of media and emerging technologies in instruction. Teachers will have top-notch interactive tools at their disposal, and will be able to work with library staff on projects from beginning research to presentation, utilizing diverse resources and a variety of digital tools to assess student learning. With state-of-the-art media centers, students will benefit from teachers who are equipped with the resources and skills they need to provide an exceptional and relevant education to Ranney students.

About the Libraries

THE SEARLE LIBRARY
Built from the founding of the Tinton Fall’s campus of Ranney School, the Searle Library is the original library on campus, and originally served all three divisions. The Searle Library now serves eight levels of Lower School students ranging from Beginners to fifth grade, with an emphasis on supporting emerging and early readers through a range of literacy programs, and instruction in accessing information and developing emerging research and inquiry skills, culminating with a 5th grade Capstone research project. Today the Searle Library maintains weekly scheduled classes for all Lower School students, guided by a library curriculum that scaffolds information literacy skills to prepare students for more rigorous research in the Middle and Upper Schools.

THE PAULUS LIBRARY
Built in 2001, the Paulus Library is situated in the center of the Middle and Upper School Academic Complex and serves as the hub of inquiry research, literature, and information technologies for students in grades six through twelve. Library media instruction and programs focus on developing students’ ability to access, evaluate, and use information effectively, creatively, and responsibly, and on encouraging free voluntary reading for learning and pleasure. Information, communication, and technology tools are integrated into the library curriculum to engage students in the information-to-knowledge journey.

LIBRARY CIRCULATION
As enrollment at Ranney has grown, so have the library media programs. The Paulus Library has seen steady growth in the circulation of print materials for research and leisure reading, while the Searle Library continues to circulate over 5,000 books per year in coordination with weekly library visits and literary programs!
Paulus Library programs are designed to support literacy, a love of learning, and engagement with information and technology tools. Students in the middle grades visit the library during advisee time for booktalks, sustained silent reading, and literary activities in coordination with the English department. The Paulus Library operates on a flexible schedule to allow students to receive information literacy instruction that is integrated within classroom research assignments. Additionally, all new students receive orientations to library resources, procedures, and policies to facilitate the development of independent research and information literacy skills.

Searle Library programs aim to immerse our younger students in literacy to spark their curiosity and demonstrate how the materials can be used for research and for pleasure. In past years we have hosted a variety of events throughout the Lower School grade levels. The types of programs vary, including author visits twice a year, puppeteers, and storytellers who dramatically reenact folktale stories passed down in the oral tradition. Each of our twenty eight homerooms visit the library once in a six day cycle, and also have the opportunity to use the library for reader’s theater, research, or other projects during open hours.

Expanding Access and Services
The Ranney Libraries are responding to the imperative of developing students and teachers for the sophistication of 21st century teaching and learning. As information and resources increasingly migrate online, so too are the resources, programs, and services provided by the libraries. While planning for 21st century learning spaces, library staff is working to expand online access to resources, programs, and services while reprioritizing collection development goals:

VIRTUAL ACCESS AND SERVICES
The Ranney libraries are extending services significantly through an expanded virtual presence:

- **Destiny**, the new web-based library catalog, is now online. Destiny enables students and staff to search and reserve library materials anytime, anywhere. Students can now take advantage of additional features such as rating and recommending books to others and virtually browsing the library shelves.

- Currently in development, “Ranney Virtual Media Center,” the new dedicated website for the Searle and Paulus libraries, will provide an online interactive space for students, staff, and parents to explore library resources, news, events, programs, reading resources, student work, and more. Ranney Virtual Media Center will include links to local college and university resources, as well as links to authoritative research-based resources on the Internet such as subject directories, academic search engines, and free e-Book collections.

- **Ranney LibGuides**, an exciting online repository for digital resources also currently in development, will complement the new library website and feature guides for research, subject, digital tools, information literacy skills, and more.

Enhancing Library Collections

TRANSITIONING COLLECTIONS
Collection development goals for both libraries are shifting to prioritize digital acquisitions. Within the next three to five years, the proportion of print and digital resources will shift to include more subscription databases, e-Books, e-Readers, and online digital media tools:

![Library Acquisitions Chart](chart.png)
PRINT Holdings

Library collections have always existed as dynamic repositories of information, constantly changing to meet the needs of school curricula, new bodies of knowledge, and the interests of students. The school library media specialists at Ranney work to maintain current, accurate, and relevant collections to meet these needs for all students at every grade level and developmental stage:

- Because the Paulus Library supports research for students from the middle grades to seniors researching independent college level theses, the library media collection will consist of core print titles based on curricular needs and student interests, as well as a strong print fiction collection to encourage free voluntary reading at all grade levels.

- The Searle Library will continue to feature a strong collection of picture books and print materials to enable young students to develop reading skills and a love for literature in all forms.

As part of the commitment to providing quality resources for Ranney students, both libraries have goals to achieve print collections with “exemplary status,” defined by industry standards as maintaining at least 20 items per student, and an average copyright date of 1998 or later. Below are graphics from the 2010 collection analysis summaries for both libraries, which reveal progress towards this goal:

**PAULUS LIBRARY FOLLETT TITLEMAP SUMMARY (12/10)**

**SEARLE LIBRARY FOLLETT TITLEMAP SUMMARY (12/10)**
DIGITAL MEDIA
All Ranney students now have access to more than 65 online subscription databases for research and over 1,000 reference e-Books available 24/7 from any device with an Internet connection. Teachers have access to streaming video and educational accounts for Web 2.0 applications. Both libraries lend digital video cameras for personal and classroom use, and all library staff work to integrate the use of Web 2.0 tools into library programs, research, and classroom assignments.

The year 2009-2010 saw a particular growth of technology resources in the Searle Library. Students were introduced to five Sony E-Readers in 2009, featuring titles for a variety of grade levels. In 2010, the acquisition of eight laptops and a SMART Board provided students ease of mobility when accessing our online catalog and online subscription databases. This year, the Searle librarians are using a new SMART Board to engage young learners in participatory and active learning experiences, and iPads to provide students with the digital literacies that are becoming necessary at younger and younger ages.

In May 2011, an exciting pilot program will be initiated to circulate NOOK e-Readers to students in both libraries. Funded by proceeds from the October 2010 RSPA book fairs, the e-Readers will provide students with nearly immediate access to an expansive digital library of reading materials as well as additional features such as scalable text, audio capabilities, and integrated dictionary and note-taking tools.

INTER-LIBRARY LOAN
To meet the demands of Ranney’s rigorous research and curricular needs, beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, students will have access to a statewide inter-library loan service, enabling students to borrow materials from hundreds of participating New Jersey schools, colleges, and university libraries. Inter-library loan services will provide Ranney students with access to a multitude of additional scholarly resources and the ability to request materials not available in our local collection. Additionally, through relationships with area colleges and universities, Ranney students can now visit nearby Monmouth University and Brookdale Community College to utilize their academic and scholarly resources.
Creating Libraries of the Future at Ranney

What does a library of the future look like?

Gone is the library as a space of silent study.
Gone is the library as a warehouse of books, confined by walls and accessible only during the school day.

The library of the future is an active, dynamic learning space where students can be heard working individually and collaboratively with all types of media to access, evaluate, use, and transform information into knowledge. Today’s students are no longer just passive consumers of information. With the explosion of communication technologies and social media, students are now authors on a global stage who expect to interact with and share information to create and express their own ideas. The library of the future must evolve beyond being just a place to access information; the needs of today’s students and teachers demand that the library adopt elements of a “learning commons”—a space where students learn to manage, organize, and use all forms of information and media to create, produce, and share their knowledge; a place where students engage with literature and information using current and emerging digital media tools.

A learning commons is not just a physical space—it is ubiquitous. To meet the needs of digital natives who are tethered to portable devices and constantly connected through social media, the library of the future must provide a virtual presence, extending its branches to provide an online information and media portal where students and teachers can receive 24/7 guidance in accessing resources, instruction, and tools at the time of need.

What would this learning commons look like? What would it sound like? In a 21st century library based on the learning commons model, you will see students:

• Actively engaged in the learning process, using a blog or wiki to journal their research process.
• Asking questions, exploring print and digital resources, and transforming essential questions into a thesis statement to proudly present their own voice in their thesis paper.
• Navigating apps on an iPad touch-screen to practice handwriting or phonics.
• Creating multimedia book talks and book trailers to promote their favorite books.
• Recording podcasts to share analysis of weekly current events with the school community.
• Raising their hands, eager to participate in demonstrating a concept on an interactive whiteboard.
• Critically evaluating information found on Wikipedia in a hands-on lesson.
• Downloading the latest bestseller on a Kindle, Nook, or iPad.
• Adding comments in Google Docs for a collaborative project with students in Argentina.
• Asking their favorite author a question through Skype, while the author sits in her home halfway across the globe.
• Eagerly checking out a new picture book or graphic novel and requesting specific titles of interest.
• Emphatically presenting their opinions on an issue during a student-run book club.
• Rehearsing their part for reader’s theater.
• Blogging about their experience at the virtual science fair.
• Waiting at the door for the media center to open, and requesting “just one more minute please!” when the library closes.

Mastering 21st Century Skills

To meet the challenge of preparing students for success in the 21st century, leaders in education, business, government, and technology organizations joined together in 2002 to form The Partnership for 21st Century Skills. The Partnership advocates a vision for 21st century education consisting of an integrated Framework for 21st Century Learning which “…presents a holistic view of 21st century teaching and learning that combines a discrete focus on 21st century student outcomes (a blending of specific skills, content knowledge, expertise and literacies) with innovative support systems to help students master the multi-dimensional abilities required of them in the 21st century” (“Partnership for 21st Century Skills: Overview” para. 1).

The graphic below illustrates the Partnership’s framework, which proposes a solid foundation in core subject knowledge and 21st century themes combined with specific skills and literacies that are nourished through critical support systems.
The outline below further details the key elements included in the Framework for 21st Century Learning (“Partnership for 21st Century Skills: P21 Framework Definitions”):

**CORE SUBJECTS AND 21ST CENTURY THEMES**
- **Core subjects** include English, reading or language arts, world languages, arts, mathematics, economics, science, geography, history, government and civics.
- **Interdisciplinary themes** include global awareness; financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; health literacy; and environmental literacy.

**LEARNING AND INNOVATION SKILLS**
- **Creativity and Innovation**
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving**
  - Reason Effectively
  - Use Systems Thinking
  - Make Judgments and Decisions
  - Solve problems
- **Communication and Collaboration**
  - Communicate clearly
  - Collaborate with others

**INFORMATION, MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS**
- **Information Literacy**
  - Access and evaluate information
  - Use and manage information
- **Media Literacy**
  - Analyze media
  - Create media products
- **ICT (Information, Communications and Technology) Literacy**
  - Apply technology effectively
  - Solve problems
- **Communication and Collaboration**
  - Communicate clearly
  - Collaborate with others

**LIFE AND CAREER SKILLS**
- **Flexibility and Adaptability**
- **Initiative and Self-Direction**
  - Manage goals and time
  - Work independently
  - Be self-directed learners
- **Social and Cross-Cultural Skills**
  - Interact effectively with others
  - Work effectively in diverse teams
- **Productivity and Accountability**
  - Manage projects
  - Produce results
- **Leadership and Responsibility**

**21ST CENTURY SUPPORT SYSTEMS**
- 21st Century Standards
- Assessments of 21st Century Skills
- 21st Century Curriculum and Instruction
- 21st Century Professional Development
- 21st Century Learning Environments

© Partnership for 21st Century Skills

**How Do School Library Media Programs Impact Student Achievement in These Areas?**

School librarians of the past supplied resources and provided support. Today’s school library media specialists wear many hats as leaders, instructional partners, information specialists, teachers, and program administrators (“Empowering Learners” 17). In response to the needs of today’s students and educators, school library media specialists are rolling up their sleeves and retooling to help students and teachers become skilled users of current and emerging information and communication technologies.
School library media specialists:

- Collaborate with teachers in all curricular areas to **design, deliver, and assess integrated instruction** that strengthens students’ ability to access and use information to derive deep meaning from curricular content and personal interests.

- Design participatory and active learning experiences through the use of multiple forms of media and tools that build information and media literacy skills while **fostering critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity**.

- **Guide students through the inquiry research process** and help students learn the critical skills of navigating through information in diverse formats, reading for information, evaluating the information they find, and using that information ethically and responsibly.

- **Encourage students to learn with and use new and emerging technology tools** such as iPads, e-Readers, blogs, wikis, multimedia, teleconferencing, and podcasts to actively create and share knowledge.

- Provide a warm and welcoming environment where **inquiry, creativity, discovery, cooperation, and collaboration are encouraged** as students become independent and self-directed learners.

- Maintain a virtual library of online resources, instructional aides, and tools to **provide 24/7 access to library media services**.

- **Foster a love of reading** through diverse literature collections that provide access to books in print and digital formats at all levels, and active literacy programs that encourage students to interact with stories, authors, and texts.

- **Provide professional growth opportunities for teachers** in developing information literacy competencies and integrating current and emerging technologies into instruction.

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**What Does the Research Show?**

Research reveals that school libraries are critical for student achievement—school library media specialists play a pivotal role as instructional partners and consultants who support and expand school curriculum, lead technology integration, and inspire literacy (“School Libraries Work” 4-5). According to the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, “Across the United States, research has shown that students in schools with good school libraries learn more, get better grades, and score higher on standardized test scores than their peers in schools without libraries” (“School Libraries Work” 4).

Indeed, extensive research studies led by Keith Curry Lance and his research team since 1990 have shown that adequately staffed, resourced, and funded school libraries have a significant positive impact on student achievement (“School Libraries Work” 10). These impact studies have been replicated in over twenty states from Alaska to New York, with initial findings just released from the 2009 New Jersey study by Ross Todd and his research team at the Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries (CISSL) on behalf of the New Jersey Association of School Librarians. The CISSL study surveyed the status of school library programs in New Jersey schools. Data from Phase 1 of the study are consistent with Lance’s previously published studies and confirm that New Jersey’s school libraries contribute to student learning in many ways, including:

- Helping students meet curriculum standards;
- Developing a wide range of information handling competencies;
- Providing students with the intellectual and technical scaffolds they need to learn and to be ethical and productive consumers and producers of information;
- Nurturing and supporting students as readers by contributing to the reading and literacy agenda of schools (CISSL 3).

It is evident from this body of research that school library media programs play a critical role in helping students master the information, literacy, and content skills they need to succeed in school and beyond, and that supporting strong school library media programs results in increased student achievement.
Achieving the Vision

To achieve success, it is necessary to have a clear vision of where you are, where you want to go, and what you need to get there. The following statements have been created to serve as unified guiding principles for all media center goals, objectives, and initiatives:

**RANNEY MEDIA CENTERS VISION STATEMENT**

The Ranney School library media program is the physical and virtual learning commons of the school, where learners utilize 21st century skills, resources, and technologies to transform the vast world of information into deep knowledge, fostering a lifetime love of inquiry and learning.

**RANNEY MEDIA CENTERS MISSION STATEMENT**

In partnership with teachers, the Ranney School library media program empowers learners to be critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users and producers of information in a global information society. Through access to diverse media and resources, guidance through the inquiry process, and participation in dynamic media and literacy programs, learners utilize 21st century technologies to develop and demonstrate the ability to inquire, think critically, and gain deep knowledge of curriculum topics and personal interests, enabling them to be successful and independent learners—in school and beyond.

With the new student-centered vision and mission statement, the Ranney libraries are positioned to empower learners for optimal success. Although the Ranney libraries have expanded online library programs and services and have begun to acquire technology to meet the needs of today’s learners and educators, in order to fully create spaces that facilitate 21st century learning and teaching, the physical spaces in both libraries also need to be updated to accommodate the educational experiences we would like to provide. Enhancing the infrastructure of the libraries to support the significant technology and media upgrades and programming that will best meet the complex needs of our students and teachers will set the stage for individual success and collective productivity.
Creating 21st Century Learning Spaces

Both libraries also have unique needs to accommodate the diverse curriculum, instruction, programs, and developmental needs of a wide range of students. Below are highlights of planned renovations and updates for both libraries, with floor plans and estimated budgets:

PAULUS LIBRARY
Renovation of the Paulus Library involves the creation of a multimedia lab within the existing space adjacent to the librarian’s office. The new multimedia lab will be separated from the rest of the library by a glass wall to create distinct working spaces that allow multiple classes to use the facility at the same time, thereby increasing functionality.

THE NEW MULTIMEDIA LAB WILL INCLUDE:

- 18 iMac computers to enable a 1:1 student to computer ratio for classroom instruction
- An interactive whiteboard and projector with mounted video camera to increase opportunities for teleconferencing
- Adobe Creative Suite software and other multimedia applications installed on all computers for creative projects

NEW TECHNOLOGY:
Plans for acquiring additional technologies for student and staff use include the purchase of:

- Additional flip video cameras
- Digital cameras
- Document cameras
- iPads

NEW SEATING:
To encourage free voluntary reading, new lounge chairs will be arranged adjacent to the fiction section. Additionally, worn tables and chairs will be replaced throughout the media center with new modular furniture to facilitate flexible arrangements for collaborative work.

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