

A National Study of  
Planetarium Directors Operating Public-School-Owned Planetaria

by

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NATIONAL SURVEY OF PLANETARIUM DIRECTORS OPERATING  
PUBLIC-SCHOOL-OWNED PLANETARIA

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ABSTRACT

This is a descriptive quantitative study of public-school-owned and operated planetarium facilities across the United States. A random sample of 210 planetarium directors was selected, and 131 were used in the data analysis to benchmark current practices involving public school planetaria in five domains: (1) the job of planetarium director, (2) the curriculum used in public school planetaria, (3) the organization of the planetarium, (4) the facility, and (5) the directors.

Data were collected over a 10-week period in the spring of 1999 with a mail survey containing 72 questions. Frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to report the descriptive data. Results and conclusions are organized around each of the five domains.

The major conclusion is that planetaria in the nation's public school systems are not in the educational mainstream as much as they were 20 years ago. Although some facilities appear to be well maintained and have added automation and new video equipment, a majority of the facilities are not properly maintained or supported by school administrators.

DEDICATION

To: My Mother and Father who always stressed the importance of a college education.

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