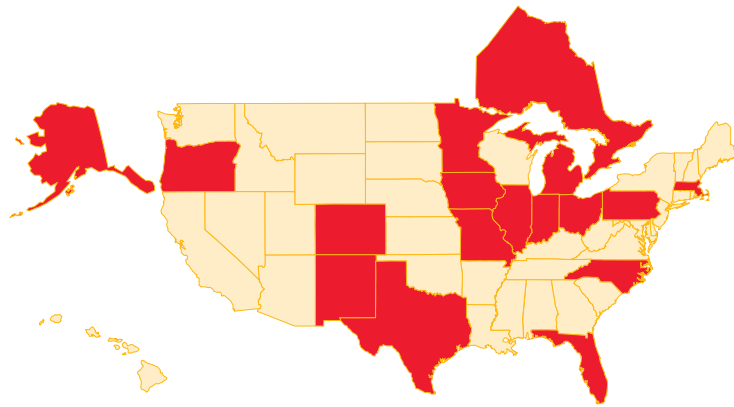


**UPDATED 2008**  
(THIRD EDITION)

**Research Foundation  
Paper**

# School Libraries Work!



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*“School library media centers can contribute to improved student achievement by providing instructional materials aligned to the curriculum; by collaborating with teachers, administrators, and parents; and by extending their hours of operation beyond the school day.”*

—“Close Up: NCLB—Improving Literacy through School Libraries,”  
*NCLB The Achiever*, September 15, 2004, Vol. 3, No 13.

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# Preface: School Libraries Work!

## School Libraries Provide Equal Opportunities for Learning and Achievement to All Students.

We live in the Information Age, and because we do, information literacy has become universal currency—the single common denominator required for success at any stage of life. This is especially true for our children who, now more than ever, must be equipped to access, use, and evaluate information competently in both print and electronic formats.

Resource-rich school libraries and credentialed school librarians play key roles in promoting both information literacy and reading for information and inspiration. When staffed by qualified professionals trained to collaborate with teachers and engage students meaningfully with information that matters in the real world, school libraries become sophisticated 21st-century learning environments that offer equal opportunities for achievement to all students, regardless of the socio-economic or education levels of the community.

This research foundation paper, updated from the 2006 edition of *School Libraries Work!*, brings together position statements from a variety of organizations and findings from nearly two decades of empirical studies that cite the measurable impact school libraries and library media specialists have on student achievement. It includes excerpts from a Congressional presentation made by the National Committee on Libraries and Information Science in June 2007; the results of new studies from Delaware, Indiana, Wisconsin, and the Canadian province of Ontario; as well as new data, statistics, resources, and strategies to help principals, school board members, teachers, and library media specialists support and improve their library media centers.

Since *School Libraries Work!* was first released in 2004, more than 200,000 copies have been distributed in print to school administrators across the country. As you will see, mounting evidence affirms that school libraries staffed by certified library media specialists *do* make a measurable difference on school achievement. Whether that achievement is measured by standardized reading achievement scores or by global assessments of learning, school libraries and library media specialists are a powerful force in the lives of America's children.



# NCLIS

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Libraries and Information Science

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## For Immediate Release

### NCLIS Support for State Certified School Librarians

**Washington, DC USA July 02, 2007**—At a meeting held on June 4–5, 2007 the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science addressed the clear link between school library media programs and student achievement.

“As we search for ways to improve the academic achievement of our nation’s children, we must understand the fundamental contribution school libraries make to student learning outcomes,” said Dr. Beth Fitzsimmons, NCLIS Chairman.

“From our perspective,” she continued, “a critical part of the comprehensive and renewed strategy to ensure that students learn to read and are effective users of information and ideas is the requirement that every school have a school library and that school libraries be staffed by highly qualified, state certified school library media specialists.”

Chairman Fitzsimmons said the Commission was heartened by the bi-partisan legislation introduced in the House and Senate on June 27, 2007. “The SKILLS Act (Strengthening Kids’ Interest in Learning and Libraries), sponsored by Senators Jack Reed and Thad Cochran and Representatives Raul Grijalva and Vernon Ehlers, was an essential step in ensuring that students across this country have the resources and support they need.”

In addressing these critical library resources, Chairman Fitzsimmons noted that Representative Grijalva’s remarks introducing the legislation clearly articulated the need. He stated, “school libraries often serve as a second classroom” and “our children are losing out on qualified professionals trained to collaborate with teachers and engage students meaningfully with information that matters to them both in the classroom and the real world.”

*“From our perspective, a critical part of the comprehensive and renewed strategy to ensure that students learn to read and are effective users of information and ideas is the requirement that every school have a school library and that school libraries be staffed by highly qualified, state certified, school library media specialists.”*

— C. Beth Fitzsimmons, Ph. D.,  
Chairman, National Commission  
on Libraries and Information Science  
(NCLIS), June 2007

The following resolution was then approved by the Commission:

### NEED FOR STATE CERTIFIED SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS

**Whereas**, the more than 62,000 state certified school library media specialists in public schools and 3,909 state certified school library media specialists in private schools in the United States fill multiple roles in K–12 schools—teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator—ensuring that students and staff are effective users of information and ideas; and

**Whereas**, multiple studies have affirmed a clear link between school library media programs and student achievement when those libraries are staffed by an experienced school library media specialist; and

**Whereas**, to be a critical part of a comprehensive and renewed strategy to ensure that students learn to read, every school library should be staffed by a highly qualified, state certified school library media specialist and every school should have a school library;

Now, be it therefore:

**RESOLVED**, that the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), respectfully advises the Congress that:

- ◆ schools be provided with adequate resources to provide up-to-date print and non-print materials in all school library/media centers;
- ◆ school library media specialists be added to the “highly qualified” classification;
- ◆ every school library be staffed by a highly qualified, state certified school library media specialist.

—Excerpted with permission from the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, July 2007. For a complete copy of this press release, visit <http://www.nclis.gov/news/pressrelease/pr2007/NCLISNewsRelease-SupportCertifiedLibraryMediaSpecialists2007-03.pdf>

## ABOUT NCLIS

The U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) is a permanent, independent agency of the Federal government charged by Public Law 91-345 to advise the President and Congress on national and international library and information policies, to appraise and assess the adequacies and deficiencies of library and information resources and services, and to develop overall plans for meeting national library and information needs.

For more information about the NCLIS and reprints of other NCLIS publications, visit:  
<http://www.nclis.gov>

*“One of the cornerstones of No Child Left Behind is teaching children how to read. School libraries play a critical role by providing children with books and resources so that they can improve their reading skills and achieve at high levels.”*

—Margaret Spelling, Secretary of Education. Improving Achievement through School Libraries. July 2006.  
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/lsl/factsheet.pdf>



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## SUMMARY:

An abundance of evidence strongly supports the connection between student achievement and the presence of school libraries with qualified school library media specialists. When library media specialists work with teachers to support learning opportunities with books, computer resources, and more, students learn more, get better grades, and score higher on standardized test scores than their peers in schools without good libraries.

## Why Care About School Libraries?

### SCHOOL LIBRARIES ARE CRITICAL FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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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. From Alaska to North Carolina, more than 60 studies have shown clear evidence of this connection between student achievement and the presence of school libraries with qualified school library media specialists.

### SCHOOL LIBRARIES HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN TEACHING

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Today's library media specialists are important instructional partners or consultants in supporting and expanding existing curriculum. These specialists are working with teachers to change what is possible in the classroom and support exciting learning opportunities with books, computer resources, and more.

### SCHOOL LIBRARIES ARE LEADING THE WAY FOR TECHNOLOGY USE IN SCHOOLS

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No longer are school libraries just for books, they have become "school library media centers" with computer resources that enable children to engage meaningfully with a wide variety of information. These centers with trained staff support the use of electronic information resources not just in the center, but help to integrate these resources in classrooms and throughout the curriculum.

## SCHOOL LIBRARIES INSPIRE LITERACY

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When learners of all ages have the opportunity to read stories and explore information that matters to them, various forms of literacy and numeracy can emerge. Research has shown that school libraries have the tools to inspire literacy in learners of all ages.

## SCHOOL LIBRARIES DON'T MATTER WITHOUT HIGHLY QUALIFIED LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS

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Research has shown that school libraries staffed by qualified library media specialists are needed to have a positive impact on student academic achievement.

—“*Why Care About School Libraries.*” Excerpted with permission from the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, March 2005. For a complete copy of this position paper, including all citations, visit [www.nclis.gov/info/WHYCAREABOUTSCHOOLLIBRARIES.pdf](http://www.nclis.gov/info/WHYCAREABOUTSCHOOLLIBRARIES.pdf)

### AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LIBRARY...

- ◆ Is accessible to the total school community, on site or remotely
- ◆ Is cost effective because one book is used by many
- ◆ Provides flexible scheduling and timely access to the collection by all students
- ◆ Offers a broad range of materials—reference, fiction, and nonfiction
- ◆ Addresses a broad range of reading levels
- ◆ Minimizes loss through cost-effective tracking systems
- ◆ Supports learning to read and reading to learn with informational and imaginative text and literature
- ◆ Adds new resources throughout the school year to keep collections dynamic
- ◆ Creates a sense of ownership that is shared by the entire school community

—Roscello, Frances and Patricia Webster (2002). *Characteristics of School Library Media Programs and Classroom Collections: Talking Points*. Albany, NY: Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Continuing Education, New York State Education Department.

*“We must understand the fundamental contributions school libraries make to learning outcomes. First, when school librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to enrich curriculum content, they help create more authentic learning experiences. Second, school library collections inform, educate, entertain, and enrich students at all levels.... When students are able to...explore information that is meaningful to them, they not only learn faster but their literacy skills grow rapidly; they learn how to learn.”*

—C. Beth Fitzsimmons, Ph.D.,  
Chairman, NCLIS. Excerpted from a  
letter to President George W. Bush,  
February 13, 2006, introducing  
*School Libraries Work!*

#### **SUMMARY:**

Effective school libraries are much more than books. They are learning hubs, each with a full range of print and electronic resources that support student achievement. Today's school libraries must be gathering places for people of all ages and all interests to explore and debate ideas. School libraries have the most significant impact on learning outcomes when they are supervised by a library media specialist, who works collaboratively with teachers, to help all students develop a love of reading, become skilled users of ideas and information, and explore the world of print and electronic media resources.

## **School Libraries Are Much More Than Books!**

### **How School Libraries and Library Media Specialists Impact Student Academic Achievement**



#### **The Program**

##### **SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAMS INFLUENCE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT WHEN:**

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- ♦ Library media specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to teach and integrate literature and information skills into the curriculum.
- ♦ Library media specialists partner with classroom teachers on projects that help students use a variety of resources, conduct research, and present their findings.
- ♦ Library media specialists are supported fiscally and programmatically by the educational community to achieve the mission of the school.



## The Professional

### LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS ENRICH THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS WHEN:

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- ♦ They teach skills and strategies students need to learn and achieve.
- ♦ They are partners in educating students, developing curricula, and integrating resources into teaching and learning.
- ♦ They teach the skills students need to become effective users of ideas and information.
- ♦ They seek, select, evaluate, and utilize electronic resources and tools and instruct teachers and students in how to use them.

*“Credentialed school library media professionals promote, inspire, and guide students toward a love of reading, a quest for knowledge, and a thirst for lifelong learning.”*

—“In Support of Credentialed Library Media Professionals in School Library Media Centers.”  
A Summary of a Board Resolution of the International Reading Association. May 2000.

## The Place

### SCHOOL LIBRARIES ARE TRUE PLACES OF OPPORTUNITY WHEN:

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- ♦ All students can strive for and achieve success.
- ♦ Quality collections are provided, in print and online, that support the curriculum and address a variety of learning needs.
- ♦ Students can develop a love of reading and literature.
- ♦ Library media specialists help students explore the world around them through print and electronic media.
- ♦ Students can work individually or in small groups on research and collaborative projects.

—American Library Association. (2003). Toolkit for School Library Media Programs. Chicago: American Library Association.

*“Libraries must purchase a sufficient number of new books per student, and they must make a concentrated effort to replace older materials for each classroom and school library on an annual basis.”*

—“Providing Books and Other Print Materials for Classroom and School Libraries.”  
A Position Statement of the International Reading Association, 1999.

*“Classroom collections are most appropriate for learning to read; school libraries are most appropriate for reading and reinforcing the reading process.”*

— Frances Roscello, AASL  
President 2003–2004

## School Libraries Support the Reading Program.

A school library and a classroom collection of reading material both support the school reading program. One cannot substitute for the other. One—the school library—is a collection of resources that are organized according to a standard system with materials catalogued and classified for universal accessibility. The other—the classroom collection of reading materials—is organized and leveled to service the individual classroom.

Classroom teachers and reading teachers need a leveled selection of materials to teach students how to read. Research tells us that leveled classroom collections are most effective when augmented by rotating collections and individual student selections suggested by the school library media specialist.

By providing proactive support for in-class reading instruction, school library media specialists demonstrate their commitment to helping schools meet reading goals. For teachers, they provide catalogued sets of material in searchable formats and data on material use. For students, they provide collections for research, skill building, and pleasure that support reading motivation.

### SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS HELP SCHOOLS MEET READING AND LEARNING GOALS WHEN:

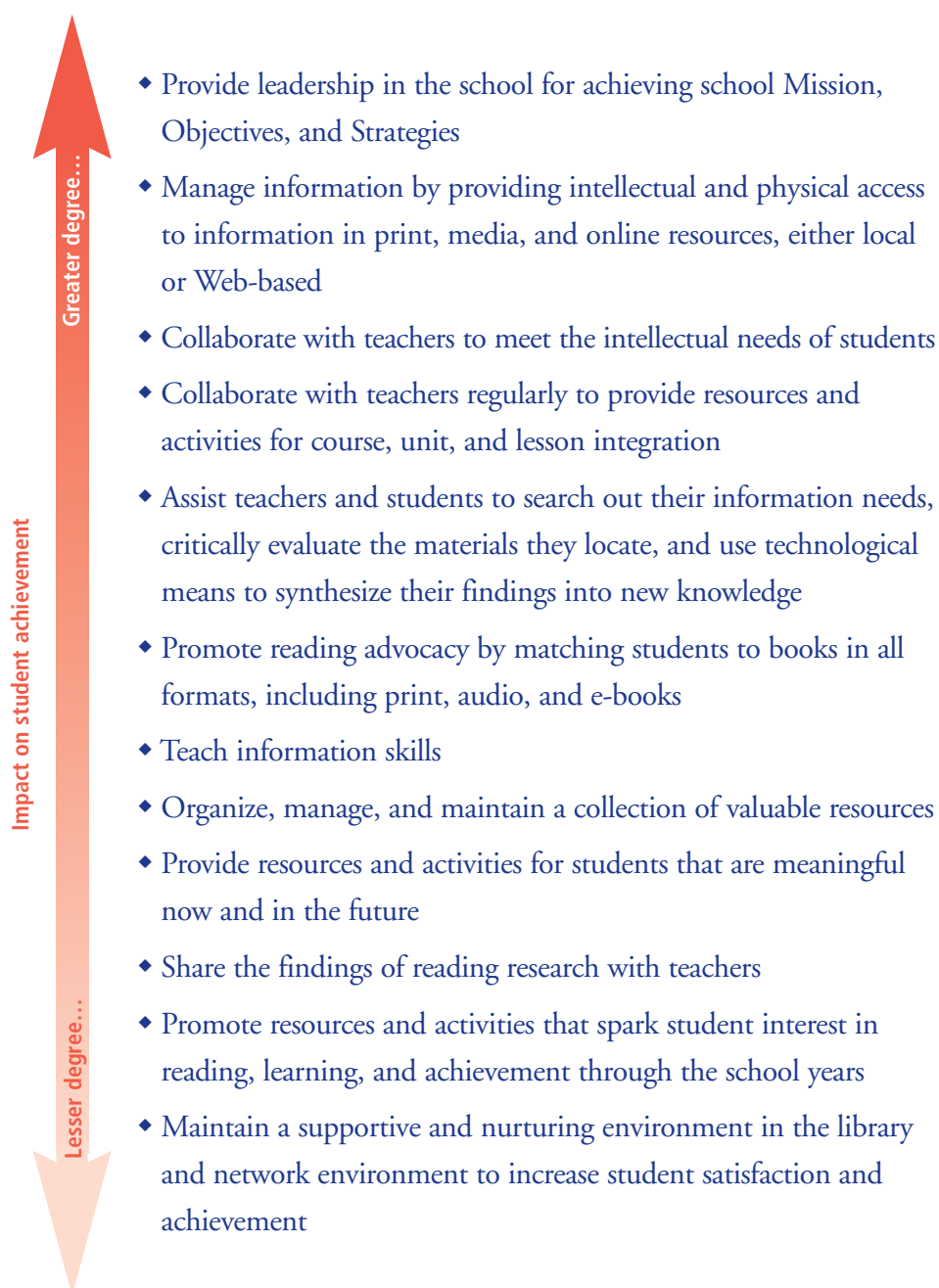
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- ◆ They provide collaborative programs for reading instruction.
- ◆ They select resources to meet the learning needs of all students.
- ◆ They assure that technology, teaching, and learning are integrated seamlessly.
- ◆ They select resources that support national/state learning standards.
- ◆ They select resources that enhance leveled classroom collections.
- ◆ They provide imaginative materials that promote reading motivation.
- ◆ They encourage students to seek, access, and use information independently.
- ◆ They provide for free voluntary reading, individual reading selection, and reading guidance.

—Roscello, Frances and Patricia Webster (2002). *Characteristics of School Library Media Programs and Classroom Collections: Talking Points*. Albany, NY: Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Continuing Education, New York State Education Department.

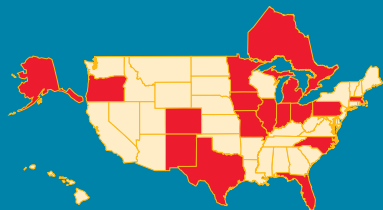
# Certified School Library Media Specialists and School Libraries Are Vital to High Achieving Schools.

Direct correlation can be made between student achievement and school library programs led by library media specialists whose dual teaching certification uniquely qualifies them to...



## SUMMARY:

The role of the library media specialist is diverse. He or she is at once a teacher, an instructional partner, an information specialist, and a program administrator. Library media specialists play an essential role in the learning community by ensuring that students and staff are efficient and effective users of ideas and information. They collaborate with teachers, administrators, and others to prepare students for future successes.



# ~~16~~ <sup>19</sup> States <sup>and 1 Province</sup> Can't Be Wrong.\*

## More State Studies Demonstrate the Benefits of School Libraries and Library Media Specialists on Student Academic Achievement.

### SUMMARY:

A substantial body of research since 1990 shows a positive relationship between school libraries and student achievement. The research studies show that school libraries can have a positive impact on student achievement—whether such achievement is measured in terms of reading scores, literacy, or learning more generally. A school library program that is adequately staffed, resourced, and funded can lead to higher student achievement regardless of the socio-economic or educational levels of the community.

### ALASKA (LANCE, 1999)

- ♦ Students in Alaska's secondary schools with full-time teacher-librarians were almost twice as likely as those without teacher-librarians to score average or above-average on California Achievement Tests (CAT5).
- ♦ The more often students receive library/information literacy instruction from library media specialists, the higher the test scores.

### COLORADO (LANCE, 1993; LANCE, 2000)

- ♦ The size of the school library staff and collection explained 21% of variation in 7th grade Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) reading scores, while controlling for socio-economic conditions (1993).
- ♦ Elementary school students with the most collaborative teacher-librarians scored 21% higher on Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) reading scores than students with the least collaborative teacher-librarians (2000).

**NEW!**

### DELAWARE (TODD, 2005–6)

- ♦ Data collected from this study shows that 98.2% of students were helped by the school library in their learning process, when the school libraries had state certified, full-time school librarians, flexible schedules, active instructional programs for information literacy development, and a networked information technology infrastructure.
- ♦ Students in grades 3–5 saw the school library helping strongly with their reading interests, finding stories, improving reading, and helping them enjoy reading more.
- ♦ Students highly valued the school librarian as teacher, particularly when the school librarian provided individual and class instruction centering on independent information seeking, Internet searching and site evaluation, judging information quality, and interpreting and analyzing information to develop their own ideas.

- ◆ Students make tangible links between the diverse types of help provided through school libraries and their achievement, particularly when performing better in research tasks and obtaining better grades.

#### FLORIDA (BAUMBACH, 2002)

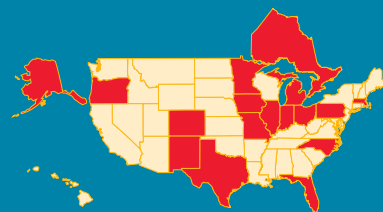
- ◆ In elementary schools where library programs are staffed 60 hours per week or more, there is a 9% improvement in test scores over those staffed less than 60 hours.
- ◆ In middle schools where library programs are staffed 60 hours per week or more, there is a 3.3% improvement in test scores over those staffed less than 60 hours.
- ◆ In high schools where library media programs are staffed 60 hours per week or more, there is a 22.2% improvement in test scores over those staffed less than 60 hours.

#### ILLINOIS (LANCE, RODNEY, AND HAMILTON-PENNELL, 2005)

- ◆ Flexible scheduling is one of the hallmarks of a fully realized school library. For schools to benefit as much as possible from strong libraries, access to them needs to be as flexible as possible, enabling teachers and students to work with the library media specialist and other staff and use the library as a classroom or study space as needed.
- ◆ In Illinois high schools, 11th grade ACT scores are highest when there is a high degree of true collaboration between library media specialists and classroom teachers in a wide spectrum of activities.

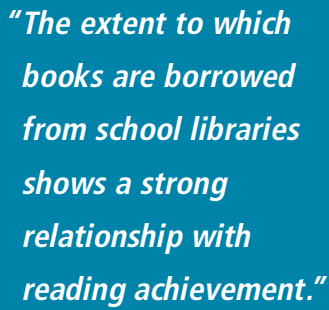
#### INDIANA (CALLISON, 2004)

- ◆ The tenure and capabilities of an elementary school's library media specialist is a strong predictor of student proficiency in language arts development. Sixth grade student scores are typically well above average on all portions of the ISTEP (Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress) when the school's library media specialist has been with the same school full-time for at least three years and excels at both information access and administrative services.
- ◆ Higher performing school library media specialists and programs may be a function of a more enriching learning environment that includes a supportive administration, collaborative teachers, and an up-to-date resource and technology base.



*"Higher performing school library media specialists and programs may be a function of a more enriching learning environment that includes a supportive administration, collaborative teachers, and an up-to-date resource and technology base."*

—Callison, Daniel et al. 2004 Survey of Indiana School Library Media Programs: A Collaborative Project Between the Association for Indiana Media Educators & Indiana University—Indianapolis, School of Library and Information Science.



*Indiana—Callison (continued)*

- NEW!**

- ◆ Across grade levels, Indiana students tended to perform better on state tests where principals: valued teacher-library media specialist collaboration, supported flexible library scheduling, met regularly with the library media specialist, and had the library media specialist serve on key school committees.
- ◆ At the elementary level, Indiana schools averaged better test results where the library media specialist believed principals and teachers understood the library media specialist roles as school leader, curriculum designer, administrator, and teacher.
- ◆ At the elementary level, Indiana schools averaged better test results where teachers initiated collaboration with the library media specialist and believed they were better teachers when engaged in such collaboration.
- ◆ Both elementary and middle schools in Indiana tended to perform better on tests where the library media specialist took the initiative to provide teachers with resources needed to design instruction.
- ◆ Like Indiana elementary schools, high schools tended to have better test results where teachers reported initiating collaboration with their library media specialist on the design and delivery of instruction.

- ◆ Comparing Iowa elementary schools with the highest and lowest ITBS reading scores, the highest scoring students use more than 2½ times as many books and other materials during library visits.
- ◆ Iowa reading test scores rise with the development of school library programs. The relationship between library program development and test scores is not explained away by other school or community conditions at the elementary level.

- ◆ At each grade level, schools with library programs have higher Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) scores.

- ♦ At the elementary and middle/junior high school levels, students score higher on the MCAS test when there is a school library program.

#### **MICHIGAN** (RODNEY, LANCE, AND HAMILTON-PENNELL, 2003)

- ♦ At elementary schools with the highest Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) reading scores, teachers and students are 4 times as likely to be able to visit the library on a flexibly scheduled basis, compared to their counterparts at the lowest scoring schools.
- ♦ MEAP reading test scores rise with the extent to which the state's school library programs are headed by certified library media specialists.

#### **MINNESOTA** (BAXTER AND SMALLEY, 2003)

- ♦ In Minnesota schools with above-average student scores on the grade 3, 5, and 8 reading tests, 66.8% were schools where the library media specialist worked full-time.
- ♦ Student reading achievement in elementary and secondary schools is related to increases in school library program spending.
- ♦ Twice as many schools with above-average scores had full-time library media specialists.

#### **MISSOURI** (QUANTITATIVE RESOURCES, LLC, 2003)

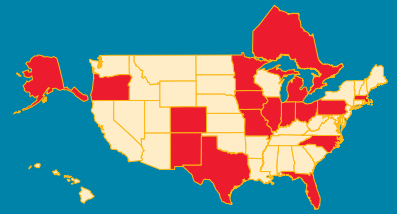
- ♦ School library services exert a 10.6% statistically significant impact on student achievement.
- ♦ The weighted average index scores from the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) rose with the availability of school library program services.
- ♦ The relationship between school library program services and student achievement was not negated by other school or community demographics.

#### **NEW JERSEY** (IN PROGRESS)

#### **NEW MEXICO** (LANCE, 2002)

- ♦ New Mexico middle schools with the highest New Mexico Achievement Assessment Program (NMAAP) language arts scores are twice as likely as the lowest scoring schools to provide access to licensed databases via a school library network.
- ♦ New Mexico achievement test scores rise with the development of school library programs.

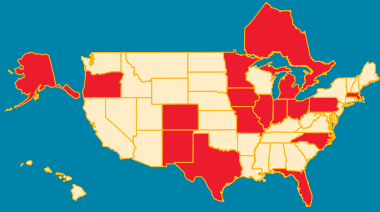
#### **NEW YORK** (IN PROGRESS)



*“Reading development is a process for attaining literacy by integrating oral and written language experiences into the literature and content areas. Spoken language, reading, and writing are learned simultaneously. As students read “real books” and write to communicate, learning becomes relevant, interesting, and motivational and prepares students for lifelong learning.*

—“Resource Based Instruction: Role of the School Library Media Specialist in Reading Development.” A Position Statement of the American Association of School Librarians. Revised July 1999.





*"Every classroom should have a library of materials that is large and diverse enough to provide daily opportunities for students to read self-selected materials. In addition, every school should have a fully funded library that meets the highest of state and/or national standards and a licensed, full-time library media specialist."*

—Report of the NEA Task Force on Reading, 2000. p. 7.

(continued)

#### **NORTH CAROLINA** (BURGIN AND BRACY, 2003)

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- ♦ School library programs in North Carolina elementary, middle, and high schools have a significant impact on student achievement—as measured by scores on standardized reading and English tests.
- ♦ Scores on standardized reading and English tests in the schools included in this study tended to increase when libraries in the schools had newer books, and were open and staffed more hours during the school week.

#### **OHIO** (TODD, KUHLETHAU, AND OELMA, 2004)

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- ♦ *Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries* reveals that 99.4% of students in grades 3 to 12 believe school libraries and their services help them become better learners.
- ♦ The study shows that an effective school library, led by a credentialed library media specialist, plays a critical role in facilitating student learning for building knowledge.

#### **OREGON** (LANCE, RODNEY, AND HAMILTON-PENNELL, 2001)

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- ♦ Teacher-librarians from high schools with the best Oregon Statewide Assessment reading/language scores are twice as likely as their colleagues from the lowest scoring schools to plan collaboratively with classroom teachers, and their students are more than three times as likely to visit the library as part of a class or other group.
- ♦ The relationship between school library program development and test scores is not explained away by other school or community conditions at the elementary or middle school levels or by other school conditions at the high school level.
- ♦ Whatever the current level of development of a school's library program, these findings indicate that incremental improvements in its staffing, collections, and budget will yield incremental increases in reading scores.

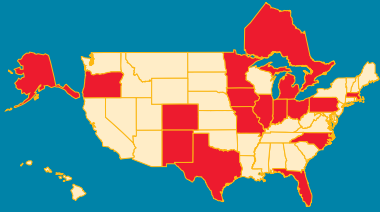
#### **PENNSYLVANIA** (LANCE, RODNEY, AND HAMILTON-PENNELL, 2000)

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- ♦ The success of any school library program in promoting high academic achievement depends fundamentally on the presence of adequate staffing—specifically each library should have at least one full-time certified library media specialist with at least one full-time aide or support staff member. For all three tested grades, the relationship between such staffing and Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) reading scores is both positive and statistically significant.







***"Credentialed school library media professionals promote, inspire, and guide students toward a love of reading, a quest for knowledge, and a thirst for lifelong learning."***

—*"In Support of Credentialed Library Media Professionals in School Library Media Centers." A summary of a Board Resolution of the International Reading Association. May 2000.*  
[http://www.reading.org/downloads/resolutions/resolution00\\_library\\_media\\_professionals.pdf](http://www.reading.org/downloads/resolutions/resolution00_library_media_professionals.pdf)

*Wisconsin (continued)*

- ♦ Wisconsin schools implement the librarian as a teacher model. In schools with best practice library media programs, the library is the hub of the school. The library media specialist is highly visible, is an integral part of the faculty, and makes significant contributions to the curriculum and instructional practices, possessing broad, cross-grade curricular knowledge. The library media specialist acts as an innovator, transformation agent, and a technology integration leader. Teachers view the library media specialist as an indispensable source of ideas, help, and support and continuously seek the expertise of their library media specialist.

**NEW!**

#### **ONTARIO, CANADA (KLINGER, 2006)**

- ♦ The presence of a teacher-librarian was the single strongest predictor of reading enjoyment for both grade 3 and 6 students.
- ♦ Schools with teacher-librarians could be expected to have reading enjoyment scores that were 8 percentage points higher than average.
- ♦ Reading enjoyment is strongly and positively linked to student achievement.
- ♦ Schools with professionally trained school library staff could be expected to have reading achievement scores that were approximately 5.5 percentage points higher than average in grade 6 EQAO results.
- ♦ Schools without trained library staff tend to have lower achievement on grade 3 and 6 EQAO reading tests, both in terms of average achievement and attaining Level 3 or higher.

## **School Libraries DO Work.**

### **"TO BECOME LIFELONG READERS, STUDENTS MUST HAVE..."**

- ♦ Access to current, quality, high-interest, and extensive collections of books and other print materials in their school libraries, classrooms, and public libraries;
- ♦ Contact with adults who read regularly and widely and who serve as positive reading role models;
- ♦ Certified library media specialists and classroom teachers who demonstrate their enthusiasm for reading by reading aloud and booktalking;
- ♦ Time during the school day dedicated to reading for pleasure, information, and exploration..."

—*"The Value of Independent Reading in the School Library Media Program."*  
A Position Statement of the American Association of  
School Librarians. Revised July 1999.

# The Indiana Study:

## How Students, Principals, and Teachers Benefit from Strong School Libraries

—Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Becky Russell. (2007) How Students, Teachers, and Principals Benefit from Strong School Libraries: The Indiana Study—2007. Indianapolis, IN: Association for Indiana Media Educators. <http://www.ilfonline.org/AIME/INfinalreportNextSteps.pdf>

### SUMMARY:

In Fall 2006, an LMS-nominated and self-selected sample of 293 library media specialists, 99 principals, and 422 teachers responded to surveys. The surveys explored qualitative issues impacting test scores concerning the perceptions of library media specialists, principals, and teachers.

Issues addressed included: the value of libraries and library media specialists to principals; the value of library media specialists and teacher involvement, particularly when tied to a specific activity and activity frequency; assessments of teaching to information literacy standards; and perceptions of both principals and teachers about the role of the library media specialist. Predictably, schools performed best where both principals and teachers perceived of the library media specialist as a reading motivator, teacher, instructional resources manager, in-service provider, and school leader.

The most significant findings from the Indiana study, summarized in the following charts, expand our understanding about the relationships between these three educators and how those relationships benefit not only educators, but also students.

### Impact of LMS, Principal, and Teacher Perceptions on ISTEP+ Results

Across grade levels, better-performing schools tended to be those whose principals placed a higher value on:

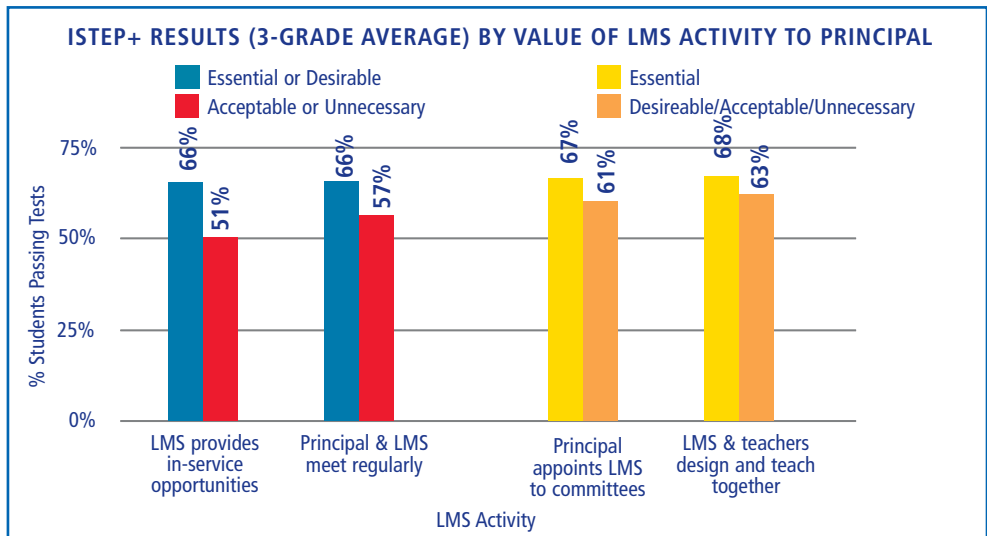
- ◆ The library media specialist providing in-service opportunities to classroom teachers (proportional increase in test results of 29.5% from schools whose principals placed a lower value on the LMS as in-service provider to schools whose principals placed a higher value on that role)
- ◆ regular meetings between themselves and their library media specialist (16.9%)
- ◆ having their library media specialist serve on key school committees (10.2%)
- ◆ collaboration between the library media specialist and teachers in the design and delivery of instruction (7.8%)

*“Both [principals and library media specialists] touch the educational lives of every student through their interactions with students and teachers. However, the school library media specialist works with all the students, all the teachers, and all the curriculum all the time. While principals want to do this, they are often taken away to carry out other duties.”*

—Woolls, Blanche. (2008). The School Library Media Manager, 4th Edition. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited (in publication).

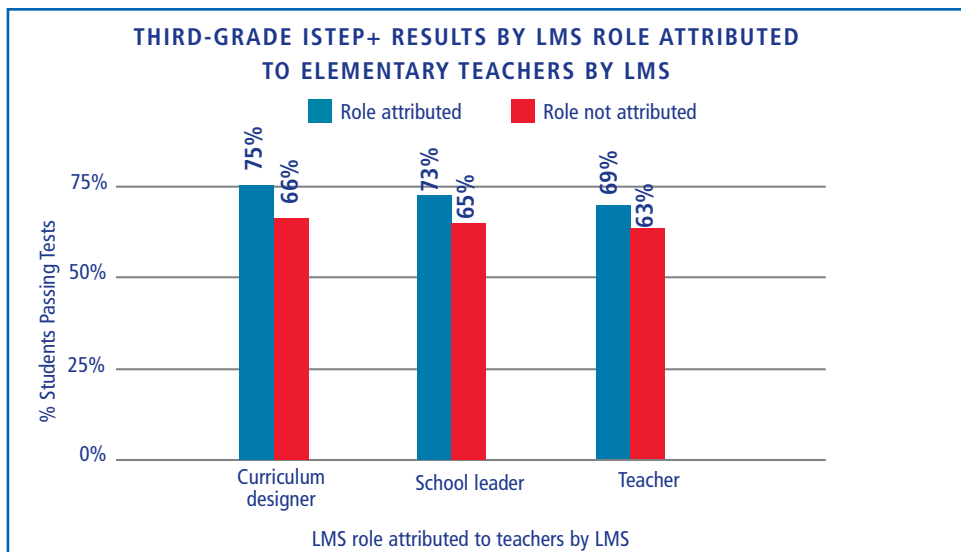
*“Overall, both elementary and middle schools tended to perform better on tests where the library media specialist took the initiative, on at least a weekly or monthly basis, to provide teachers with resources needed to design instruction. Like elementary schools, high schools tended to have better test results where teachers reported that they initiate collaboration with the library media specialist on the design and delivery of instruction at least weekly or monthly.”*

—Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Becky Russell. (2007). How Students, Teachers, and Principals Benefit from Strong School Libraries: The Indiana Study—2007. Indianapolis, IN: Association for Indiana Media Educators. [tp://www.ilfonline.org/AIME/INfinalreportNextSteps.pdf](http://www.ilfonline.org/AIME/INfinalreportNextSteps.pdf)



At the elementary level, schools averaged better test results where there were:

- ♦ library media specialists who believed that their principals and teachers saw them as school leaders, curriculum designers, fellow administrators (in the case of principals), and fellow teachers (in the case of teachers)
- ♦ teachers who reported collaborating with the library media specialist more frequently at their own initiative, and who believed that they teach to information literacy standards better when they engage in such collaboration
- ♦ both the library media specialist and teachers were more familiar with the document that correlates information literacy and academic standards



Overall, both elementary and middle schools tended to perform better on tests where the library media specialist took the initiative, on at least a weekly or monthly basis, to provide their teachers with resources needed to design instruction.

Like elementary schools, high schools tended to have better test results where teachers reported that they initiate collaboration with the library media specialist on the design and delivery of instruction at least weekly or monthly.

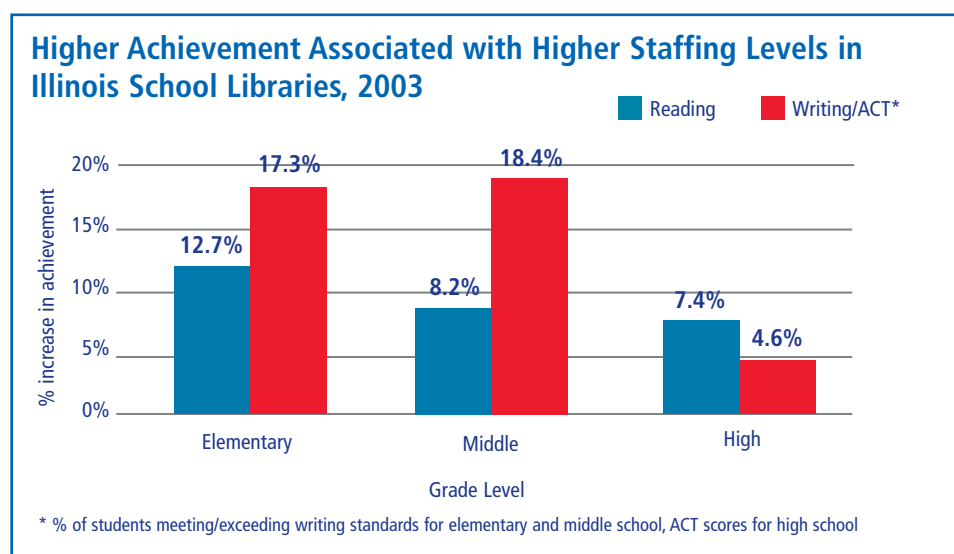
# The Illinois Study:

## Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners

(LANCE, RODNEY, AND HAMILTON-PENNELL, 2005)

The charts following illustrate the most significant findings from the Illinois study. They capture, indisputably, the correlation of higher test scores at all grade levels in schools:

- ♦ where school libraries are staffed more fully
- ♦ where access to school libraries is flexibly scheduled
- ♦ where educational technology is more widely available to augment the local collection and extend access to online resources into the classroom
- ♦ where larger collections are available
- ♦ where school libraries are better funded



The principal assets of a strong school library program are those who staff it—**both library media specialists and others**. Typical elementary, middle, and high schools responding to the survey reported 42, 49, and 70 hours per week of total library staffing respectively. As this chart shows, **increased library staffing is linked to higher reading performance** for all grade levels, stronger writing performance at the elementary and middle school levels, and higher ACT scores at the high school level.

### SUMMARY:

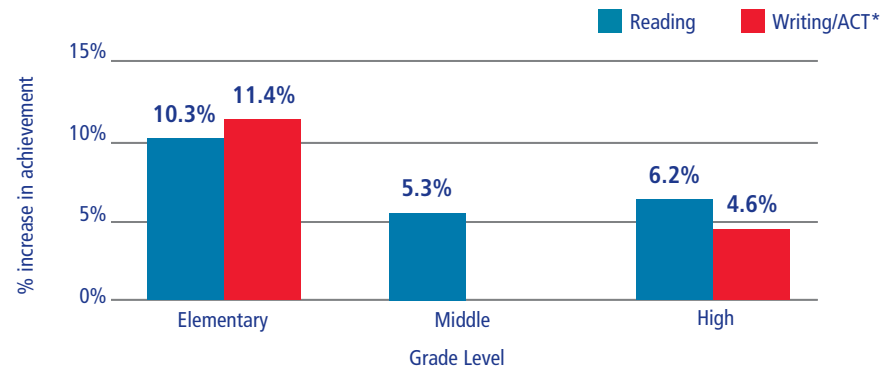
In Fall 2003, 657 Illinois schools representing all grades and regions were surveyed about their school library's staff, hours, educational technology, expenditures, and collections. The evidence produced from those surveys indicates that school libraries contribute measurably to the academic achievement of students, as reflected by their test scores at all levels. Furthermore, evidence indicates that such links between high-quality school programs cannot be explained away by socio-economic factors or by key school conditions, such as per pupil spending and teacher-pupil ratio. Indeed sometimes, taking these variables into account revealed an even greater impact by school libraries and library media specialists than was previously masked by other variables.

(continued)

*“As important as it is for school libraries to have larger print collections, the currency of the materials in those collections is also important.”*

—Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners: The Illinois Study. 2005. <http://www.islma.org/pdf/ILStudy2.pdf>

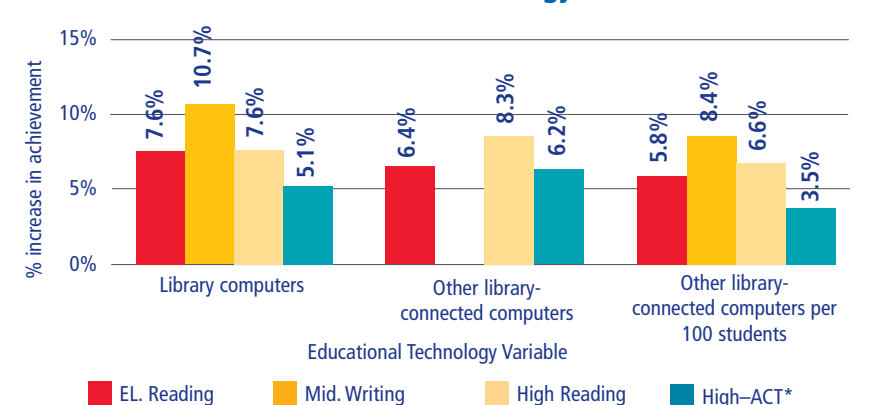
### Higher Achievement Associated with More Hours of Flexible Scheduling in Illinois School Libraries, 2003



\* % of students meeting/exceeding writing standards for elementary and middle school, ACT scores for high school (narrowly fails statistical significance test at middle and high school levels)

**Flexible scheduling** continues to exert a positive effect on test scores, regardless of per pupil spending, teacher-pupil ratio, or students’ race/ethnicity. Elementary schools with flexibly scheduled libraries performed **10% better in reading** and **11% better in writing** on the ISAT tests of fifth graders than schools with less flexibly scheduled libraries. Where high school libraries were more flexibly scheduled, more 11th graders met or exceeded PSAE reading standards than their counterparts with less flexibly scheduled libraries. High schools with more flexibly scheduled libraries also had **5% higher ACT scores** than schools with less flexibly scheduled libraries.

### Higher Achievement Associated with Illinois School Libraries Being More Accessible Via Educational Technology, 2003

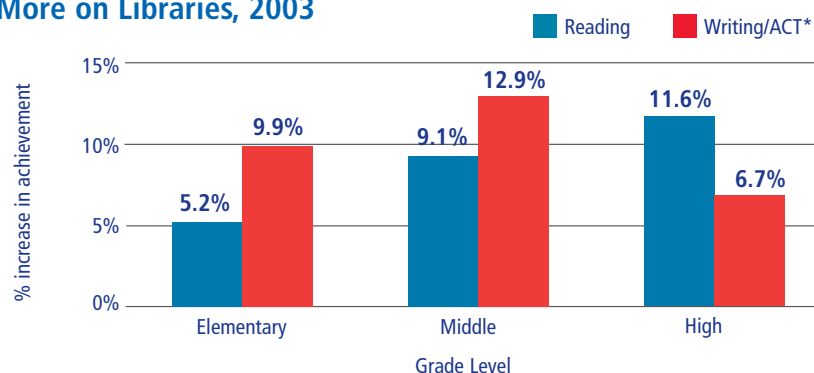


\*% of students meeting/exceeding reading/writing standards for elementary and middle school, ACT scores for high school

At every grade level, schools with more library and library-connected computers—particularly, in the latter case, **Internet computers** relative to the school’s enrollment—average higher test scores. The presence of more library computers is associated with percentage increases of:

- **8% for 5th- and 8th-grade ISAT reading performance**
- **almost 11% for 8th-grade ISAT writing performance**
- **just over 5% for 11th-grade ACT scores**

### Higher Achievement Associated with Illinois Schools Spending More on Libraries, 2003



\*% of students meeting/exceeding reading/writing standards for elementary and middle school, ACT scores for high school

Just as test performance associated with library spending increases from one grade level to the next, so does the independence of this effect from other school and community conditions. For elementary schools, the relationships between library spending and ISAT reading and writing performance were obscured by the control variables. For middle schools, those relationships remained when per pupil spending, teacher-pupil ratio, or students' race/ethnicity were taken into account. For high schools, the relationships between library spending and both measures of achievement persist, despite household income and the other three control variables.

### As a result of the Illinois research study, it is recommended that:

- ◆ Access to school libraries should be scheduled as flexibly as possible.
- ◆ A high-quality school library, at any grade level, requires at least one library media specialist plus support staff.
- ◆ Computers that provide access to library resources—both in the library and elsewhere in the school—should be available to facilitate student performance.
- ◆ School libraries should be funded to maintain their traditional collections as well as to expand their reach beyond the library's walls via educational technology.
- ◆ Students achieve academically when their visits to libraries bring them into contact with library media specialists as teachers and co-teachers.

*"In short, the findings of this study and its predecessors support the belief that powerful libraries—and librarians—do, indeed, make powerful learners."*

—Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell.  
Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners: The Illinois Study. 2005.  
<http://www.islma.org/pdf/ILStudy2.pdf>



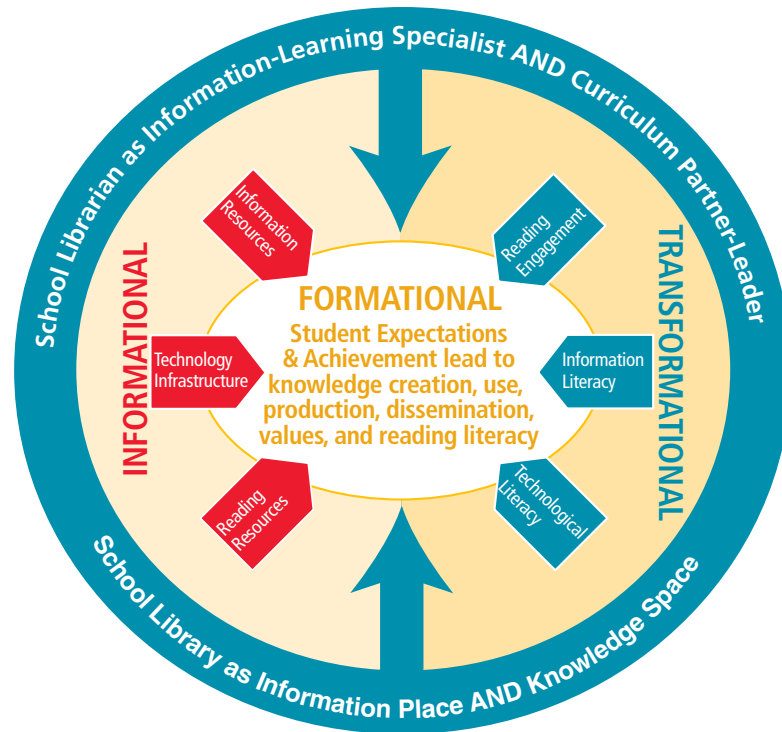
## SUMMARY:

The Ohio study sought to understand how students benefit from school libraries and to quantify the school library's relationship to student learning. Nearly 100% of the students who took part in the research study indicated that the school library, its services, and library media specialists have helped them with their learning. The data shows that an effective school library program led by a credentialed library media specialist plays a critical role in facilitating learning, in general, and information literacy, in particular. The data also highlights the impact school library media specialists have when working both as an information-learning specialist and as an educational partner-leader to implement a whole-school library program which articulates library literacy standards and provides learning-oriented development that aligns with achievement goals for the entire school.

# The Landmark Ohio Study

## 13,000 Students Can't Be Wrong

(TODD, KUHLETHAU, AND OELMA, 2004)



## MODEL OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY AS A DYNAMIC AGENT OF LEARNING

Model posits that as a dynamic agent of learning, a school library's intellectual and physical infrastructure centers on three essential interactive and iterative components:

### 1. INFORMATIONAL— The information resource and information technology infrastructure

- Current, multi-perspective, multi-format resources with readability levels aligned with the local curriculum
- State-of-the art technology to acquire, organize, create, and disseminate information and function as a gateway to information
- Reading resources for curriculum and personal pursuits



## 2. TRANSFORMATIONAL—Instructional interventions

- Development of information access and knowledge-building competencies
- Development of media and technological skills for information access and knowledge creation
- Development of approaches to promote and encourage reading for academic achievement and lifelong learning

## 3. FORMATIONAL—Student outcomes

- Students create new knowledge through effective information seeking and use competencies
- Students develop transferable skills for sustaining knowledge beyond the classroom
- Students can use technology and information tools to produce new knowledge and demonstrate achievement

### As a result of the Ohio research study, it is recommended that:

- ♦ **ALL** school library programs provide instructional intervention, through a credentialed library media specialist, which centers on the development of information literacy skills for inquiry learning.
- ♦ **ALL** school libraries, including elementary schools, be staffed with credentialed library media specialists who have educational certification and who engage in collaborative instructional initiatives to help students learn and achieve.
- ♦ **ALL** library media specialists have a clearly defined role as information-learning specialists.
- ♦ **ALL** school libraries provide a learning-centered space supported by a strong technology infrastructure.
- ♦ **ALL** stakeholders engage in action-oriented discussions to maximize learning opportunities through school libraries.

—Todd, Ross J., Carol C. Kuhlthau, and OELMA. (2004). Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries. Columbus, OH: Ohio Educational Library Media Association. <http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning/default.asp>

*"In Ohio, the provision of opportunities to learn through effective school libraries is critical to ensure that no student is left behind."*

—Ross J. Todd, Carol C. Kuhlthau, and OELMA. Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries, 2004. <http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning/default.asp>

*"When effective school libraries are in place, students do learn.*

*13,000 students can't be wrong."*

—Ross J. Todd, Carol C. Kuhlthau, and OELMA. Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries, 2004. <http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning/default.asp>

## Resources:

# Impact of School Libraries and Library Media Specialists on Student Academic Achievement

## ALASKA

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<http://www.library.state.ak.us/pdf/anc/infoemxs.pdf>

Lance, Keith Curry, et. al. (1999). Information Empowered: The School Librarian as an Agent of Academic Achievement in Alaska Schools. *Anchorage, AK: Alaska State Library.*

## COLORADO

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[http://www.ala.org/aasl/SLMR/slmr\\_resources/select\\_lance.html](http://www.ala.org/aasl/SLMR/slmr_resources/select_lance.html)

Lance, Keith Curry, Lynda Wellborn, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. (1993). The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement. *Spring, TX: Hi Willow Research and Publishing.*

<http://www.lrs.org/documents/lmcstudies/CO/execsumm.pdf>

Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. (2000). How School Librarians Help Kids Achieve Standards: The Second Colorado Study. *Spring, TX: Hi Willow Research and Publishing.*

## DELAWARE

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<http://www2.lib.udel.edu/taskforce/surveys/titlepage.doc>

<http://www2.lib.udel.edu/taskforce/phasetwo.doc>

Todd, Ross J. (2005). Report of the Delaware School Library Survey 2004. *Georgetown, DE: Governor's Task Force on School Libraries.*

## FLORIDA

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<http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/makingthegrade/>

Baumbach, Donna. (2002). Making the Grade: The Status of School Library Media Centers in the Sunshine State and How They Contribute to Student Achievement. *Spring, TX: Hi Willow Research and Publishing.*

## ILLINOIS

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<http://www.islma.org/pdf/ILStudy2.pdf>

Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. (2005). Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners: The Illinois Study. *Canton, IL: Illinois School Library Media Association.*

## INDIANA

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<http://www.ilfonline.org/Units/Associations/aime/Data/index.htm>

Callison, Daniel et al. 2004 Survey of Indiana School Library Media Programs: A Collaborative Project Between the Association for Indiana Media Educators & Indiana University—Indianapolis, School of Library and Information Science. *Presented at the 2004 AIME Conference, Indianapolis, IN, November 2004.*

## INDIANA

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<http://www.ilfonline.org/AIME/INfinalreportNextSteps.pdf>

Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Becky Russell. How Students, Teachers, and Principals Benefit from Strong School Libraries: The Indiana Study—2007. *Indianapolis, IN: Association for Indiana Media Educators.*

## IOWA

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<http://www.iowaacaonline.org/about/Make%20The%20Connection1.pdf>

Rodney, Marcia J., Keith Curry Lance, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. (2002). Make the Connection: Quality School Library Media Programs Impact Academic Achievement in Iowa. *Bettendorf, IA: Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency.*

## MASSACHUSETTS

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<http://web.simmons.edu/~baughman/mcas-school-libraries/Baughman%20Paper.pdf>

Baughman, James. (2002). School Libraries and MCAS Scores, (Preliminary Edition). *A Paper Presented at a Symposium Sponsored by the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Simmons College. Boston, MA.*

## MICHIGAN

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[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/hal\\_lm\\_schllibstudy03\\_76626\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/hal_lm_schllibstudy03_76626_7.pdf)

Rodney, Marcia J., Keith Curry Lance, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. (2003). The Impact of Michigan School Librarians on Academic Achievement: Kids Who Have Libraries Succeed. *Lansing, MI: Library of Michigan.*

## MINNESOTA

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[http://metronet.lib.mn.us/survey/final\\_report.pdf](http://metronet.lib.mn.us/survey/final_report.pdf)

Baxter, Susan J. and Ann Walker Smalley. (2003). Check It Out! The Results of the School Library Media Program Census, Final Report. *St. Paul, MN: Metronet.*

## MISSOURI

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<http://www.dese.mo.gov/divimprove/curriculum/librarystudy/plainenglish.pdf>

Quantitative Resources, LLC. (2003). Show-Me Connection: How School Library Media Center Services Impact Student Achievement, 2002–2003. *Jefferson City, MO: Missouri State Library.*

## NEW MEXICO

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<http://www.stlib.state.nm.us/files/NMStudyforDistribution.pdf>

Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. (2002). How School Librarians Improve Outcomes for Children: The New Mexico Study. *Sante Fe, NM: New Mexico State Library.*

## NORTH CAROLINA

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<http://www.rburgin.com/NCschools2003/>

Burgin, Robert and Pauletta Brown Bracy. (2003). An Essential Connection: How Quality School Library Media Programs Improve Student Achievement in North Carolina. *Spring, TX: Hi Willow Research and Publishing.*

## OHIO

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<http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning/default.asp>

*Todd, Ross J., Carol C. Kuhlthau, and OELMA. (2004). Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries: The Ohio Research Study. Columbus, OH: Ohio Educational Library Media Association.*

## OREGON

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[http://www.oelma.net/Oregon\\_Study/OR\\_Study.htm](http://www.oelma.net/Oregon_Study/OR_Study.htm)

*Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. (2001). Good Schools Have School Librarians: Oregon School Librarians Collaborate to Improve Academic Achievement. Terrebonne, OR: Oregon Educational Media Association.*

## PENNSYLVANIA

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<http://www.statelibrary.state.pa.us/libraries/lib/libraries/measuringup.pdf>

*Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. (2000). Measuring Up to Standards: The Impact of School Library Programs & Information Literacy in Pennsylvania Schools. Greensburg, PA: Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries.*

## TEXAS

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<http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/schlibsurvey/index.html>

*Smith, Ester G. (2001). Texas School Libraries: Standards, Resources, Services, and Students' Performance. Austin, TX: Texas State Library and Archives Commission.*

## WISCONSIN

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<http://www.dpi.wi.gov/imt/lmsstudy.html>

*Smith, Ester G. (2006). Student Learning through Wisconsin School Library Media Centers: Case Study Report. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.*

## ONTARIO, CANADA

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[http://www.accessola.com/data/6/rec\\_docs/137\\_eqao\\_pfe\\_study\\_2006.pdf](http://www.accessola.com/data/6/rec_docs/137_eqao_pfe_study_2006.pdf)

*Klinger, Donald. (2006). School Libraries and Student Achievement in Ontario (Canada). Toronto, CA: Ontario Library Association.*

## Additional resources:

*American Library Association. (2004). Your School Library Media Program and No Child Left Behind. Chicago: IL.*

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aaslbucket/AASLNCLBbrochureweb.pdf>

This brochure is designed to help building leaders recognize the school library media specialist's important role in helping schools meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

*Jones, Jami B. and Alana M. Zambone. (2007). The Power of the Media Specialist to Improve Academic Achievement and Strengthen At-Risk Students. Columbus, OH: Linworth Publishing Co.*

*Lance, Keith Curry and David V. Loertscher. (2005). Powering Achievement: School Library Media Programs Make a Difference: The Evidence. 3rd ed. Salt Lake City, UT: Hi Willow Research and Publishing.*

*Loertscher, David V. and Ross J. Todd. (2003). We Boost Achievement: Evidence-Based Practice for School Library Media Specialists. Salt Lake City, UT: Hi Willow Research and Publishing.*

*McGhee, Marla W. and Barbara A. Jansen. (2005). The Principal's Guide to a Powerful Library Media Program. Columbus, OH: Linworth Publishing Co.*

This is an excellent resource to assist principals in understanding how an exemplary school library program really works, and how important the library is to student achievement. This book provides media specialists with substantive information to help principals be effective practitioners and understand the influence a successful library media program has on students and teachers.

*National Center for Educational Statistics. U.S. Department of Education. Fifty Years of Supporting Children's Learning: A History of Public School Libraries and Federal Legislation from 1953–2000. Washington, DC: March 2005.*

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005311.pdf>

Examines the impact factors and legislation that have brought about

dramatic changes in the school library's status, as it moves from a provider of only books to a provider of a rich array of information resources that support learning today.

*National Center for Educational Statistics. U.S. Department of Education. School Library Media Centers: Selected Results from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002. Washington, DC: January 2005.*

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005302.pdf>

Provides an overview of the current state of school library media centers that serve U.S. 10th graders. This report presents data on school library media centers from two sources, school librarians and students.

Specifically this report provides information on the following topics:

- 1) school library media centers: who has them, and their organization;
- 2) library resources, staffing, and circulation; and 3) students' self-reported use and opinions of their school libraries. Findings for students are presented by the following characteristics: sex, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES), composite achievement test score in grade 10, student's school sector, student's school urbanicity, and student's school region.

*Pascopella, Angela. Heart of the School: The School Library Is as Valuable as Learning How to Read and Compute. But It's a Tough Sell for Administrators. District Administration, January 2005 v41 i1 p54(5).*

<http://www.districtadministration.com/page.cfm?p=960>

This article is about the media center as the heart of the school, and the key to improving learning.

*Schuckett, Sandy. (2004). Political Advocacy for School Librarians: You Have the Power! Columbus, OH: Linworth Publishing Co.*

*Sykes, Judith Anne. (2005). Brain-Friendly School Libraries. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.*

# Research Foundation Paper



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