

FAST FACTS

Recent Statistics from The Library Research Service

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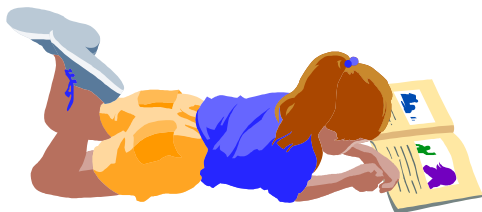
Student Use of Library Media Programs Key to NAEP Success

The National Center for Education Statistics recently released the long-awaited results of its latest survey on school library media programs, **School Library Media Centers: 1993-94** (NCES 98-282). Though access to the resulting data file is severely restricted, some of the report's summary tables by state permit some rudimentary impact assessment when combined with average state reading scores from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).*

Combined, three variables—the ratio of students to library media specialists, weekly LMC visits per student, and weekly circulation per student—explain 51 percent of the variation in NAEP reading test scores for 1994.



A comparison of mean (average) values on these three key statistics indicates that states with above average reading scores (213 or higher) have schools where students:



- have greater access to library media specialists (519 v. 635 students per LMS, $r = -.542$, $p > .01$).
- visit school library media centers more frequently (.85 v. .80 weekly visits per student, $r = .633$, $p > .01$), and
- borrow more books and other materials (1.5 v. 1.2 weekly loans per student, $r = .395$, $p > .05$).

* In this context, test scores for the fourth grade must be taken as a proxy indicator of school success at all grade levels, as the LM data from NCES are not grade-specific.

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Keith Curry Lance ■ Director ■ Library Research Service
State Library & Adult Education Office ■ Colorado Department of Education
Library & Information Services Department ■ University College ■ University of Denver
201 East Colfax Avenue, Suite 309 ■ Denver, Colorado 80203-1799

Tel.: 303.866.6737 ■ Fax: 303.866.6940 ■ E-mail: lance_k@cde.state.co.us ■ Web site: www.lrs.org

Doubtless, there are many other related variables—within and beyond library media programs—which influence these relationships. Nonetheless, these findings are consistent with those reported in **FAST FACTS** No. 141 (August 15, 1998), *Library Media Specialists & Technology Linked to Higher CSAP Test Scores* as well as those reported in **The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement** (1992, 1993). Such relationships are being further explored in a new Colorado study—tentatively titled **How School Librarians Help Kids Meet Standards**—scheduled for early 2000 publication. For more information about the LRS’s research on school library media programs, visit www.lrs.org.