

FAST FACTS

Recent Statistics from the
Library Research Service

ED3/110.10/No. 178

July 1, 2001

Librarians, Teachers & Principals Agree "Power Libraries" Lead to Higher Student Test Scores



POWER LIBRARIES PROJECT

Since 1998, selected Colorado school library media programs have been paired to encourage their mutual development. School library media specialists with "high performance" LM programs mentor "mini-grant" (or developing) schools. These LM staff, classroom teachers, and principals have made commitments to the improvement of their own LM programs. The high performance schools, in turn, take a fresh look at their own programs and recommit themselves to the support of those programs.

Recently, the Colorado State Library surveyed library media specialists (LMSs), classroom teachers, and principals at both high-performance and mini-grant schools to assess the impact of this program. While the samples are small, the message from the respondents is resounding. Librarians, teachers and principals agree that Power Libraries in schools lead to higher student test scores.

Responses to the Power Libraries project's evaluation survey are consistent with the findings of recent research on the impact of school library media programs on academic achievement, especially **How School Librarians Help Kids Achieve Standards: The Second Colorado Study**. (For more information on this and related studies, visit the Library Research Service website at <http://www.lrs.org/impact.asp>.)

Results from Mini-Grant Libraries

Thirteen (13) principals responded for mini-grant schools.

- All reported increased collaboration between classroom teachers and LMSs as a result of participating in the Power Libraries project.
- All but one reported that Power Library funding and assistance lead to long-term improvement in their LM programs.
- Five (5) out of seven (7) attributed improved test scores to changes in the LM program brought about by the project.



- All of those principals attributed the positive impact of the LM program on academic achievement to LM budget increases and the LMSs playing stronger leadership roles in their schools.
- Four (4) of those five (5) principals attributed test score gains to increased LMS-teacher collaboration.

Principal Comments

Our librarian is so important to the success of our students. We have raised our 3rd grade CSAP scores from 48% in 2000 to 58% this year. The librarian teams with teachers, plans collaboratively, and is an excellent resource for our teachers.

Our media specialist is already teacher of the year material. The staff voted her that honor this year.

CONTACT ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Keith Curry Lance, Director
Library Research Service
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

FAST FACTS – No. 178 – July 1, 2001
Librarians, Teachers & Principals Agree
“Power Libraries” Lead to Higher Student Test Scores

Ten (10) teachers responded for mini-grant schools.

- All indicated that having participated in the Power Libraries project led to long-term improvements in their LM programs and that those programs are now more important in the total school curricula.
- All five (5) of those responding to the question associating LM program improvements with test score increases agreed that the LM program did have a positive impact on academic achievement.
- Of those five (5), all believed that increased LMS-teacher collaboration explains that impact, and three (3) attributed the impact to more flexible scheduling, LM budget increases, and a stronger LMS leadership role in the school.

Eighteen (18) library media specialists (LMSs) responded from mini-grant libraries.

- All reported that their library media (LM) programs improved as a result of their participating in this project.
- All also reported that books and materials purchased as part of the project were highly useful in supplementing the standards-based instruction and assessment program in the school.

- Seventeen (17) out of 18 reported increased collaboration between classroom teachers and themselves.
- Fifteen (15) out of 18 reported that the LM program plays a more important role in the total school curricula.
- Seven (7) out of nine (9) indicated believing that changes in the LM program were related to improvements in CSAP scores, and all of those attributed the improvements to LM budget increases and increased collaboration between LM staff and teachers.

**Library Media Specialist
Comment**

Collaboration with teachers and my credibility with them have reached a new level. For the first time, I have the opportunity to be a real part of the accountability process. Before, we were not always aware who was getting the work done and who was not. The Power Libraries project gave our library program the credibility with both teachers and parents that we did not always have before.



Results from High Performance Libraries

Eleven (11) principals responded from high-performance schools.

- All 10 who responded to the question associating Power Libraries participation with long-term LM program improvements confirmed such a relationship.
- Five (5) out of seven (7) associated LM program improvements with higher student test scores, citing increased LMS-teacher collaboration for those gains.
- All 11 principals reported retaining full-time LMSs after completing the Power Libraries project, and nine (9) out of 11 indicated a greater likelihood that the position would remain at their schools as a result of the project.
- Student test scores, citing increased LMS-teacher collaboration for those gains.



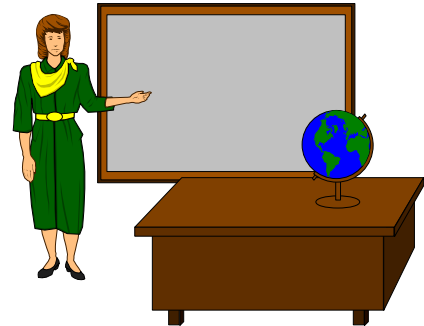
FAST FACTS – No. 178 – July 1, 2001
Librarians, Teachers & Principals Agree
“Power Libraries” Lead to Higher Student Test Scores

Six (6) teachers responded from high-performance schools.

- All associated participating in the Power Libraries project with long-term LM program improvements.
- Four (4) out of six (6) reported increased collaboration between LMSs and themselves.
- Three (3) out of five (5) associated LM program improvements with higher.

Twenty-one (21) library media specialists (LMSs) responded from high-performance libraries.

- All but one expressed the belief that participating in the Power Libraries project lead to long-term improvement in their LM programs.
- Seventeen (17) out of 21 reported increased collaboration with classroom teachers.
- Sixteen (16) out of 21 reported greater importance for the LM program in the total school curriculum.
- Fourteen (14) who responded to the question associating LM program improvements with better student test scores confirmed their belief in that relationship. All or most of them attributed test score gains to more principal support, more collaboration with classroom teachers, higher LM budgets, and spending more of their time teaching students, and providing in-service training to teachers.



Teacher Comment

The Power Libraries project has raised awareness of all staff members concerning the library's importance. All teams work collaboratively with the library media specialist now. Awesome support. Thanks!

Conclusion

These survey findings from a relatively small project are consistent with the results of research involving hundreds of schools and hundreds of thousands of students across the nation.

- Professionally-staffed, well-stocked, and well-funded library media programs are critical to the success of schools in helping every child to learn.
- Successful schools are those whose library media specialists exercise a strong leadership role, integrate library media resources into a standards-based curriculum, and, most importantly, collaborate with classroom teachers.
- The more time library media specialists are able to spend teaching teachers as well as students to make more effective use of information resources, the more successful the school will be.