“School libraries help teachers teach and children learn. Children and teachers need library resources – especially books – and the expertise of a librarian to succeed. Books, information technology, and school librarians who are a part of the school’s professional team are basic ingredients for student achievement.”

First Lady Laura Bush - White House Conference on School Libraries, July 4, 2002
School Library Systems Association

FACTS AT A GLANCE... Student Achievement and School Library Media Programs

This report summarizes the research studies, literature reviews and related documents on the positive impact of the library media program on public school students' achievement.

"Voluntary reading is the best predictor of reading comprehension, vocabulary growth, spelling ability, grammatical usage and writing style. Access to school library media centers results in voluntary reading by students."
(Source: Stephen Krashen, The Power of Reading, 1993)

### Historical Timeline

- **1876**
  - School libraries established, providing reading materials for children
- **1928**
  - NYS Regulation requires secondary school library, collection and librarian
- **1960's**
  - Federal Study: First major evidence children with libraries/librarians read more books than those in schools with no library staff
- **1970's - 80's**
  - Title IVB Block Grants - are created, eliminates separate library funding
  - School Library Systems - 1984 per NYS Education Law and Commissioner's Regulations
  - Colorado Study 1982 - identifies link between School Libraries and Academic Achievement
- **1990's**
  - The Literacy Crisis - by McQuillan confirms print access has powerful effect on reading achievement.
  - The challenge is access to reading materials.
  - Information Power 2 - published by ALA
  - Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning

### Studies Connecting Successful Learners to School Libraries: Key Elements

- Alaska 1999: collaboration, partnerships, provides teacher training
- California 2002: equitable access, information literacy instruction
- Colorado 2000: leadership, collaboration
- Florida 2002: improved performance, expanded access to SLMP
- Illinois 2005: flexible access, staffing, collaboration, library use
- Iowa 2002: collaboration, access/use of SLMC, books
- Massachusetts 2002: access, staffing; collections
- Michigan 2003: SLMC motivated reading, library visits, flexible access
- Minnesota 2003: SLMC instructional role, access, collection size
- Missouri 2003: library usage + access = increase in achievement, summer reading
- New Mexico 2002: engages in staff activities, access information resources and technology
- North Carolina 2003: electronic access to information, collection age
- Ohio 2004: SLMC as a "dynamic agent of learning" building understanding and knowledge, students surveyed
- Oregon 2001: SLMC as teacher, Interlibrary Loan
- Pennsylvania 2000: integration of networked technology
- Texas 2001: higher test scores with librarians

### Making Sense of Data

1. To achieve, learners need to: master use of information, find and extract meaning from text, select and apply selections from text, and understand text in content areas
2. Mastery of information problem solving, pre-reading instruction, and information literacy instruction by a certified SLMS improve the learner's ability to perform tasks crucial to success in school and later on, the job
3. Information literacy empowers learners to construct meaningful questions, use multiple information sources to solve a problem, evaluate their sources, and draw original conclusions
4. Boost of student performance because of school libraries is a constant in studies from the U.S., British Isles and Australia
5. School libraries are a stronger indicator of student success than class size, experience of teacher, number of computers, or location of school
6. Studies since 2000 confirm that the boost occurs even when learners are at risk because of poverty, family instability, school location or other factors

"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."
**KEY COMMON FINDINGS STUDIES 1998-2005**

- School Library Media Specialists (SLMS) exert positive and significant effect on academic achievement
- Administrative support for School Library Media Programs (SLMP) and teacher collaboration with SLMS are critical to teaching and learning
- SLMS is a pivotal player in a leadership role, support staff are essential, SLMS collaborates with school community
- SLMS has teaching role, as co-teacher of information literacy to students and in-service trainer of teachers
- Access to the School Library Media Center (SLMC) must be frequent, consistent, flexible
- SLMC programs are networked and provide access to licensed databases and the Internet
- SLMP funds must support instructional technology, collection development, and staffing
- SLMP collections need to be diverse, in multiple formats, and financially supported on an annual basis

**INFORMATION LITERACY STANDARDS FOR STUDENT LEARNING**

*We want students who know and are able to:*

- Access information efficiently and effectively
- Evaluate information critically and competently
- Use information effectively and creatively
- Pursue information related to personal interest
- Appreciate literature and other creative expressions of information
- Strive for excellence in information seeking and knowledge generation
- Recognize the importance of information to a democratic society
- Practice ethical behavior in regard to information and information technology
- Participate in groups to pursue and generate information

**Quality Library Media Programs Help Students Succeed!**

"Teaching students how to find information rather than memorize information was ranked highest importance in the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Survey." Teaching students how to find information has always been the goal of the school media specialist.


**SUMMARY**

Are students likely to earn higher reading scores if their:

- schools have certified library media specialists?
- school library media specialists are assisted by support staff?
- library media specialists play a vital instructional role, collaborating with classroom teachers?

**THE ANSWER TO ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS IS YES!**

Students in schools with well-staffed library media programs averaged reading scores five to ten points higher than those without such staffing.

**School Library Systems and School Library Media Centers** collaborate with the educational community to:

- Strengthen instructional practices
- Enable students and staff to access, evaluate, synthesize and interpret information
- Implement NYS Learning Standards and National Information Literacy Standards
- Foster literature appreciation
- Engage students in the learning process through use of varied resources
- Enhance access to quality print/electronic information resources through interlibrary loan and online databases
- Strengthen connections to the real world through teaching inquiry, research process, and problem solving skills

*For further information please contact your local School Library System.*
www.ls.org/documents/lastudies/COlectionsumm.pdf
www.sla.org/SLMR/adt_resrouces/lect_lance.html
New York State Education Department. School Library Media Program. www.emsc.nysed.gov/syslibrary.html
www.tsl.state.tx.us/tls/pubs/schlibrary/survey/

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