**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.

Preface:
School Libraries Work!

The School Library Is Critical to Every Student's Learning Experience and Academic Achievement.

Long regarded as the cornerstone of the school community, school libraries are no longer just for books. Instead, they have become sophisticated 21st-century learning environments offering a full range of print and electronic resources that provide equal learning opportunities to all students, regardless of the socio-economic or education levels of the community—but only when they are staffed by qualified professionals trained to collaborate with teachers and engage students meaningfully with information that matters to them both in the classroom and in the real world.

This research foundation paper, updated from the first edition of *School Libraries Work!*, brings together position statements from a variety of organizations and findings from nearly a decade of empirical studies that cite the measurable impact school libraries and library media specialists have on student achievement. It includes highlights from "Why Care About School Libraries?," published in March 2005 by the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, the results of new state studies from Illinois and Indiana, as well as new data, statistics, resources, and strategies to help school principals, school board members, and library media specialists support and improve their library media centers.

As mounting evidence affirms, school libraries staffed by qualified library media specialists *do* make a measurable difference on student 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.

Why Care About School Libraries?

SUMMARY:

A multitude 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.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES ARE CRITICAL FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

U.S. NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN THE LIVES OF AMERICA'S CHILDREN

BE IT RESOLVED That the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science urges that our society—officials and educators at all levels, community leaders, parents and other adult caregivers, confidantes, and role models—utilize the vast potential of libraries and support the current and potential abilities and efforts of librarians in assisting adults, youth, and children to seek positive outcomes through wise use of information, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That, in seeking solutions through better parenting and learning experiences for young children and redirection for troubled older children and adolescents, libraries can be a major delivery point.

Resolved by the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science at its meetings on June 26, 1998, in Washington, DC. http://www.nclis.gov/info/childres.html

School Libraries are Much More Than Books!

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

SUMMARY:

School libraries are much more than books. They are a learning hub with a full range of print and electronic resources that support student achievement. The school library is a gathering place for people of all ages and interests to explore and debate ideas. The library media specialist, working collaboratively with all teachers, helps students develop a love of reading, become skilled users of ideas and information, and explore the world through print and electronic media resources.

The Program

SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAMS INFLUENCE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT WHEN:

- 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 ARE CRUCIAL TO THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS:

- 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*.

"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*.

The Place

SCHOOL LIBRARIES ARE PLACES OF OPPORTUNITY:

- Where all students can strive for and achieve success

- Where quality collections are provided, in print and online, that support the curriculum and address a variety of learning needs

- Where students develop a love of reading and literature

- Where library media specialists help students explore the world around them through print and electronic media

- Where 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*

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.

Greater degree…

Impact on student achievement

Lesser degree…

- Provide leadership in the school for achieving school Mission, Objectives, and Strategies

- Provide intellectual and physical access to information in print and media resources

- Provide intellectual and physical access to information technologies, either local or Web-based

- Collaborate with teachers to meet the information needs of students

- Collaborate with teachers to provide resources and activities for course, unit, and lesson integration

- Assist teachers and students to search out their information needs, critically evaluate the materials they locate, and use technological means to synthesize their findings into new knowledge

- Teach information skills

- Organize and maintain a collection of valuable resources

- Manage information

- Promote reading advocacy by matching students and books

- Provide resources and activities to promote student achievement

- Provide resources and activities for students that are meaningful now and in the future

- Maintain a supportive and nurturing environment, in the library and network environment, to increase student satisfaction and achievement

Woolls, Blanche. (2004). The School Library Media Manager, 3rd Edition. *Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.*

School Libraries Are Important.

A school library and a classroom collection of reading materials are both necessary components of an elementary school program. Each supports the reading and literacy initiatives of the school. One cannot substitute for the other. One—the school library—is a collection of resources that are organized according to a known and accepted system with materials cataloged and classified for universal accessibility. The other—the classroom collection of reading materials—may be organized in a particular manner to service individual classrooms. School libraries staffed by library media specialists ensure that students are effective users of the ideas and information contained in these resources.

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.

"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. (2004). The School Library Media Manager, 3rd Edition. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

~~14~~ *16* States 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).

DELAWARE (IN PROGRESS)

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.

NEW!

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, eleventh 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.
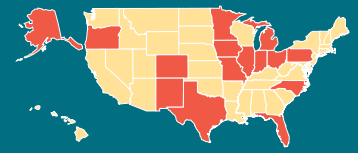
NEW!

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.

♦ When a certified library media specialist serves the school on a full-time basis, the school library media center is more likely to have electronic connections to other school collections and the public library, secure more federal funding, provide more frequent instruction in the use of electronic resources, and maintain a website linking to current and relevant professional resources.

IOWA (LANCE, 2002)

♦ Comparing Iowa elementary schools with the highest and lowest ITBS reading scores, the highest scoring students use more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ 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.

MASSACHUSETTS (BAUGHMAN, 2002)

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

"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.

- 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.

NORTH CAROLINA (BURGIN AND BRACY, 2003)

◆ 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.
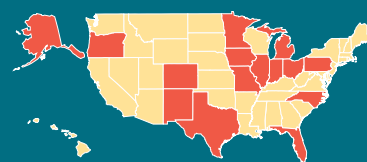
OHIO (TODD, KUHLTHAU, AND OELMA, 2004)

◆ *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)

◆ 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)

◆ 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.

"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. Acquisition, organization, and dissemination of resources to support the reading program through the library media center is cost-effective for the entire school district."

—*"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.*

(continued)

In 1998–99, three out of five Pennsylvania elementary schools with adequate school library staffing (61%) reported average or above-average reading scores, while the same proportion of such schools with inadequate library staffing reported below-average scores.

♦ Pennsylvania middle schools with the best PSSA reading scores spend twice as much on their school libraries as the lowest scoring schools.

♦ The mere presence of a large collection of books, magazines, and newspapers in the school library is not enough to generate high levels of academic achievement by students. Such collections only make a positive difference when they are part of school-wide initiatives to integrate information literacy into the school's approach to standards and curricula.

TEXAS (SMITH, 2001)

♦ Over 10% more students in schools with librarians than in schools without librarians met minimum Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) expectations in reading.

♦ This study indicates that library staffing levels, collection sizes, librarian interaction with teachers and students, and library technology levels have a positive association with TAAS performance at the elementary, middle/junior high, and high school levels.

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 Illinois Study:

Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners
Selected Research from the Most Recent Study

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

SUMMARY:

In Fall 2003, 657 Illinois schools representing all grade levels, enrollment ranges, and regions participated in a voluntary survey of their school libraries. The survey gathered data on hours of operation, staff and their activities, the library's collection and educational technology, total library expenditures, and several types of library usage. The evidence produced by this survey indicates that Illinois school libraries contribute measurably to the academic achievement of students, as reflected by their test scores at all grade levels. Furthermore, evidence indicates that such links between high-quality school library programs cannot be explained away by community socio-economic factors or 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 those other variables.

The charts on the following pages 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 access to school libraries is flexibly scheduled**

- ◆ **where school libraries are staffed more fully**

- ◆ **where larger collections are available**

- ◆ **where educational technology is more widely available to augment the local collection and extend access to online resources into the classroom**

- ◆ **where school libraries are better funded**

- ◆ **where students use school libraries, both individually and as groups, to learn and practice the information literacy skills they will need to excel on tests and as lifelong learners.**

"These links between high-quality school library programs and academic achievement cannot be explained away as mere artifacts of community socio-economic factors or key school conditions, such as per pupil spending and teacher-pupil ratio. Indeed, sometimes, taking these variables into account reveals a greater impact by school libraries and library media specialists than was previously masked by those other variables."
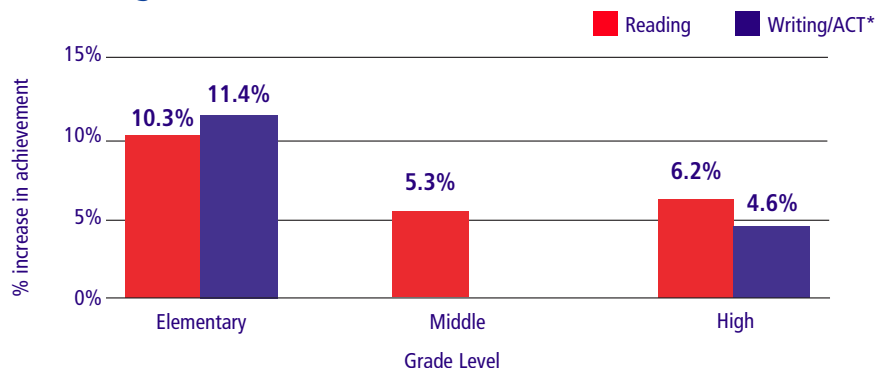
— Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney,
  and Christine Hamilton-Pennell.
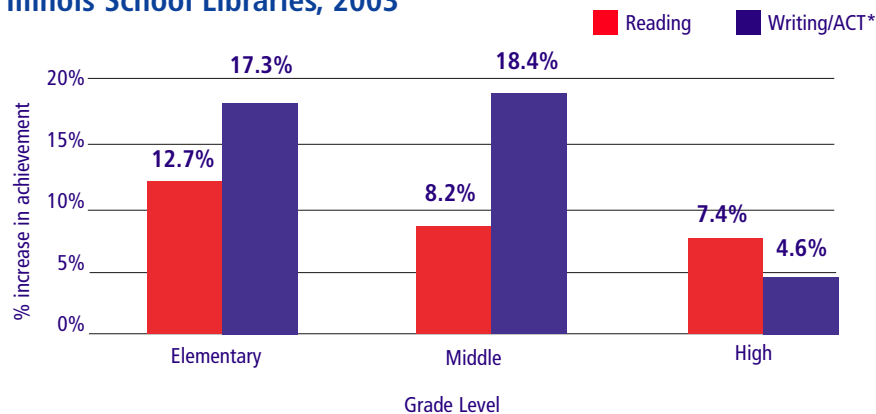 Powerful Libraries Make Powerful
  Learners: The Illinois Study. 2005.
  http://www.islma.org/pdf/ILStudy2.pdf

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

Reading ■ Writing/ACT* ■

% increase in achievement

Elementary: Reading **10.3%**, Writing/ACT* **11.4%**
Middle: Reading **5.3%**
High: Reading **6.2%**, Writing/ACT* **4.6%**

Grade Level

* % 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 percent better in reading** and **11 percent better in writing** on the ISAT tests of fifth-graders then schools with less flexibly scheduled libraries. Where high school libraries were more flexibly scheduled, more eleventh-graders met or exceeded PSAE reading standards than their counterparts with less flexibly scheduled libraries. High schools with more flexibly scheduled libraries also had **five percent higher ACT scores** than schools with less flexibly scheduled libraries.
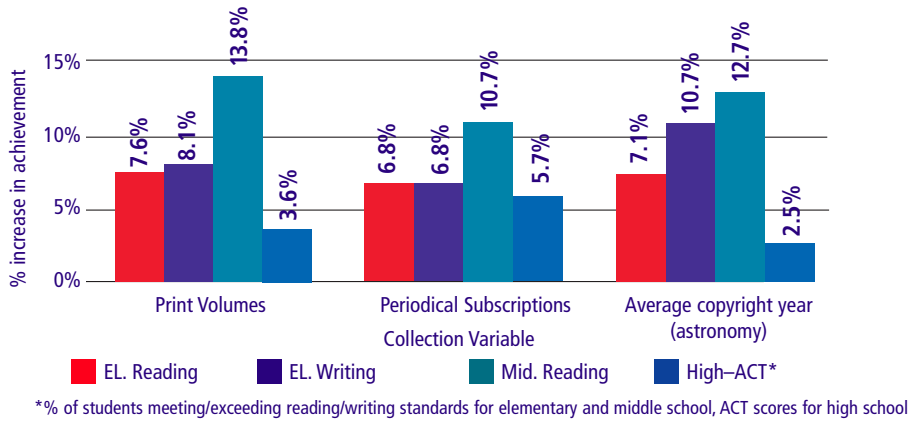
Higher Achievement Associated with Higher Staffing Levels in Illinois School Libraries, 2003

Reading ■ Writing/ACT* ■

% increase in achievement

Elementary: Reading **12.7%**, Writing/ACT* **17.3%**
Middle: Reading **8.2%**, Writing/ACT* **18.4%**
High: Reading **7.4%**, Writing/ACT* **4.6%**

Grade Level

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

The principal assets of a strong school library program are those who staff it—including **both library media specialists and other staff**. 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, **higher library staffing levels are 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.

> *"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 Larger & More Current Illinois School Library Collections, 2003

Bar chart showing % increase in achievement by Collection Variable. Legend: EL. Reading (red), EL. Writing (dark purple), Mid. Reading (teal), High–ACT* (blue).

- Print Volumes: 7.6%, 8.1%, 13.8%, 3.6%
- Periodical Subscriptions: 6.8%, 6.8%, 10.7%, 5.7%
- Average copyright year (astronomy): 7.1%, 10.7%, 12.7%, 2.5%

*% of students meeting/exceeding reading/writing standards for elementary and middle school, ACT scores for high school
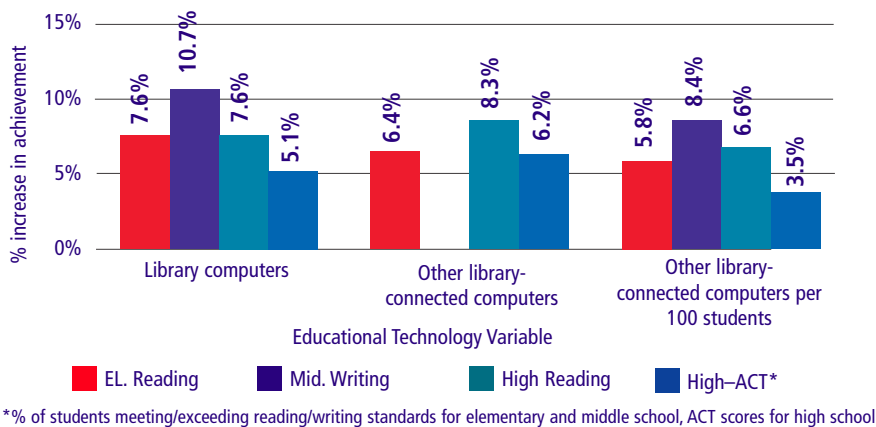
As important as it is for school libraries to have **larger print collections**, the currency of the materials in those collections is also important. As an indicator of currency, responding libraries reported the average copyright year for materials on astronomy. This copyright year averages 1990 for elementary schools, 1989 for middle schools, and 1983 for high schools. Schools with newer collections average:

— **almost 13 percent higher eighth-grade writing scores**

— **almost 11 percent higher fifth-grade writing scores**

— **more than seven percent higher fifth-grade reading scores**

— **almost three percent higher ACT scores**

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

Bar chart showing % increase in achievement by Educational Technology Variable. Legend: EL. Reading (red), Mid. Writing (dark purple), High Reading (teal), High–ACT* (blue).

- Library computers: 7.6%, 10.7%, 7.6%, 5.1%
- Other library-connected computers: 6.4%, 8.3%, 6.2%
- Other library-connected computers per 100 students: 5.8%, 8.4%, 6.6%, 3.5%

*% of students meeting/exceeding reading/writing standards for elementary and middle school, ACT scores for high school
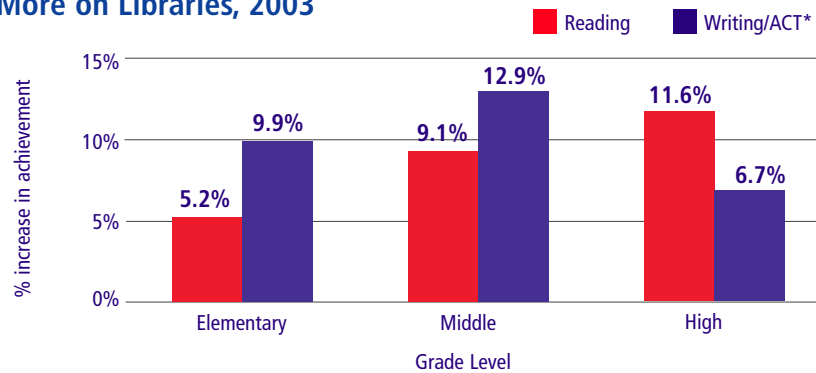
At every grade level, schools with more library and library-connected computers—particularly, in the latter case, **Internet computers** relative to the school's enrollment—average higher test scores. The presence of more library computers is associated with percentage increases of:

— **eight percent for fifth- and eighth-grade ISAT reading performance**

— **almost 11 percent for eighth-grade ISAT writing performance**

— **just over five percent for eleventh-grade ACT scores**

(continued)

"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

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

Reading ■ **Writing/ACT*** ■

Elementary: Reading 5.2%, Writing/ACT* 9.9%
Middle: Reading 9.1%, Writing/ACT* 12.9%
High: Reading 11.6%, Writing/ACT* 6.7%

(y-axis: % increase in achievement, 0% to 15%; x-axis: Grade Level)

*% 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."

—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

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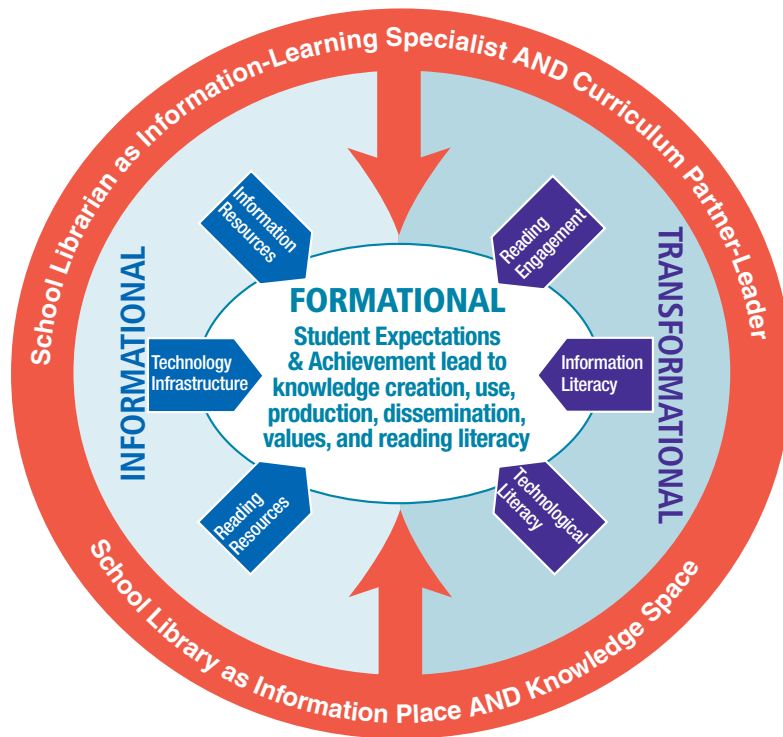
As a result of the Illinois research study, it is recommended that:

- 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.

The Ohio Study

13,000 Students Can't Be Wrong

(TODD, KUHLTHAU, AND OELMA, 2004)

MODEL OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY AS A DYNAMIC AGENT OF LEARNING

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

"The [Ohio] study shows that an effective school library, led by a credentialed library media specialist who has a clearly defined role in information-centered pedagogy, plays a critical role in facilitating student learning for building knowledge."

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

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.

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**

   — **Information resources:** Current, multi-perspective, multi-format resources with readability levels aligned with the local curriculum, that support state academic content standards

   — **Technology infrastructure:** State-of-the art technology to acquire, organize, create, and disseminate information and function as a gateway to information

   — **Reading resources:** Reading materials targeted beyond informational curriculum needs, personal pursuits, and pleasure reading, for the development of thinking and informed citizens of their country and world

2. **TRANSFORMATIONAL—Instructional interventions**

   — **Information literacy:** Development of information literacy for engagement with information in all its forms in the context of curriculum needs, content standards, and subject knowledge creation processes for effective engagement and utilization of information

   — **Technological literacies:** Development of media and technological skills, which include critical thinking and communication competencies, as well as the appropriate and ethical use of technology for information access, retrieval, production, and dissemination

   — **Reading engagement:** Development of approaches to promote and encourage reading for academic achievement and lifelong learning through participation in reading initiatives, promotion of literature, reinforcement of reading skills, and fostering a sustained love of reading

"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

3. FORMATIONAL—Student outcomes

— **Knowledge creation:** Students achieve through being able to define problems, frame questions, explore ideas, formulate focus, investigate, analyze, and synthesize ideas to create their own views, evaluate solutions, and reflect on understandings.

— **Knowledge use:** Students develop transferable skills for sustaining knowledge beyond the classroom.

— **Knowledge production:** Students can use technology and information tools to produce new knowledge and demonstrate achievement.

— **Knowledge dissemination:** Students can communicate ideas using oral, written, visual, and technological modes of expression.

— **Knowledge values:** Students are ethical, responsible users of information.

— **Reading literacy:** Students have high levels of reading literacy. They become independent, lifelong sustained readers.

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

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 sustained and action-oriented discussions in the context of continuous improvement of the necessary resources, technology, and staffing requirements needed to maximize the 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

"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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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.*

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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.*

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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.*

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Additional resources:

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

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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).

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

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.*

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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.*

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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).*

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

Research Foundation Paper

SCHOLASTIC