Improving Student Achievement

The Power of a Strong Library Media Program

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Research Proves

Schools with stronger school library programs average 10-20% higher test scores.

There is a direct link between academic achievement and library staffing levels, librarian activities, collection size, technology integration, and library usage.

The highest achieving students attend schools with good school libraries.
Research Studies

• State-wide studies conducted in multiple states
• Impact of school library media programs on the academic achievement of students
• Remarkably similar results have been yielded by each state study

Noted Researchers

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Research Findings

Academic achievement is improved when a school library program focuses on:

- School Library Development
- Leadership
- Collaboration
- Technology
School Library Development

Test scores rise with the size of the library staff

Essential staffing consists of:

- Professionally trained librarians
- Support staff who perform routine tasks and clerical duties
School Library Development

Test scores rise with the size of the library staff

Essential staffing allows the school librarian to:

• Provide one-on-one training
• Teach information literacy
• Be a school leader
• Collaborate with teachers
• Provide access to materials that support the curriculum
• Stay abreast of new education trends technology
School Library Development

Test scores rise with the size of the library staff

A study conducted in Florida found that:

In high schools where library media programs are staffed 80 hours per week or more, there is a 20% improvement in test scores over those staffed less.

High schools scoring in the top-third on the state standardized test had certified media specialists that provided an average of 20% more hours of professional staffing per week.
School Library Development

Test scores rise with the size of the collection

Quality library media collections include:

- Materials that support the curriculum
- More volumes per student
- Variety of formats – print and non-print
- More periodical subscriptions
- Access to electronic subscriptions
School Library Development

Test scores rise with the size of the budget

Adequate budgets provide:

• Extended hours of operation
• Larger per student expenditures for materials
• Professional and support staff
Leadership

Research shows that school librarians are leaders when they:

• Meet with the principal
• Attend school and staff meetings
• Serve on standards and curriculum committees

School librarians who lead...

Collaborate with teachers more, and...

Collaboration leads to academic achievement
Collaboration

Library media specialists who collaborate with teachers build quality learning experiences which contribute to academic achievement.

- Media specialists and teachers plan units together
- Identifying materials for teachers
- Teaching information literacy to students
- Providing in-service training for teachers
- Providing motivational reading activities
Technology

Student and teacher access to technology results in higher test scores.

Professionally trained school librarians -

• Provide guidance to students using technology to complete school assignments

• Provide all students with access to computers and other technologies

• Integrate technology skills into lesson plans
Principal Factor

Research shows that principal support is essential for a strong media program that contributes to student achievement.

• Advocates for sufficient funding of the media program
• Recognizes school librarian as a professional colleague in the teaching environment
• Promotes the use of technology
• Recognizes critical role the library plays in student learning
“What a school thinks about its library is a measure of what it thinks about education.”

--Harold Howe
former U.S. Commissioner of Education
References


• Lance, K. (2002). What research tells us about the importance of school libraries. *Teacher Librarian*, 30(1), 76-78.