Students in better-staffed programs scored as much as 22 percent higher on standardized English tests and as much as 17 percent higher on standardized reading tests compared to students in schools where library programs had less staff and fewer hours.1

Research conducted in over 20 states has documented that leveraging the school library program can increase student standardized test scores and help to close the achievement gap. The most universal finding among the studies is that the presence of a certified/licensed school librarian is a strong predictor of student achievement regardless of socioeconomic or education levels of the community. Studies also correlate higher test scores with:

- Collaboratively planned instruction integrated with classroom curriculum and library resources that is taught and assessed by the librarians and teachers
- More hours and increased usage of the library by students
- Larger budgets and up-to-date collections of print and digital resources
- Leadership activities of the librarian (serving on decision-making committees, providing professional development to teachers, and meeting regularly with the principal)2

Based on national guidelines, this brochure outlines goals and key questions for you and your school librarian to think about when setting goals and maximizing the potential of a valuable asset—the school library program. By setting high expectations and establishing a school culture that values reading, research, and inquiry, you can boost student achievement and empower teachers with a resource proven to increase student learning. Schools that support their library programs give their students a better chance to succeed, enabling students to become “critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information” ready for 21st century life and careers.3

“Students in better-staffed programs scored as much as 22 percent higher on standardized English tests and as much as 17 percent higher on standardized reading tests compared to students in schools where library programs had less staff and fewer hours.”


“Better-funded school library programs help to close the achievement gap for poor and minority students, and for poor and crowded schools.”


“School libraries can be a very effective tool in closing the achievement gap. Although all students can benefit from effective libraries, students who suffer most because of the achievement gap benefit the most from the resources and services offered by libraries and librarians.”


“Where administrators value strong library programs and can see them doing their part for student success, students are more likely to thrive academically.”


The school library program promotes critical thinking and problem solving.

**GOAL:**

- The school library program promotes critical thinking and problem solving.

**KEY QUESTIONS:**

- Are learning activities facilitated with library resources, equipment, thought-provoking, and inquiry-based?
- Do learning activities in the library program build on students’ prior knowledge and provide authentic learning experiences?

**The school library program promotes student and teacher access to information.**

**GOAL:**

- The school library program promotes student and teacher access to information.

**KEY QUESTIONS:**

- Are written policies for selecting print and electronic resources, and handling challenged materials reviewed annually?
- Is the school library program represented on the school planning team?

The school library program provides instruction on information literacy and technological literacy.

**GOAL:**

- The school library program provides instruction on information literacy and technological literacy.

**KEY QUESTIONS:**

- Are students taught to use: information and technology tools for learning and teaching? 
- Are students taught to use: information and technology to create and share print and electronic sources?
- Are students taught to use: information and technology to access the collection remotely 24-7?
- Does the school librarian have an integration and technological literacy.