

Appropriate Staffing for School Libraries

POSITION:

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) supports the position that every student in every school, including independent schools and public charter schools, should have access to an updated school library with a certified school librarian. The success of a school library program, no matter how well designed, ultimately depends on the quality and number of personnel responsible for managing the instructional program and the library's physical and virtual resources. A certified school librarian, supported by technical and clerical staff, is crucial to an effective school library program. Every student, teacher, and administrator in every school building at every grade level should have access to a fully staffed library throughout the school day.

The following minimum school library staffing requirements define an effective school library program structured to transform teaching and learning throughout the school community:

1. The library program is serviced by one or more certified school librarians working full-time in the school library.
2. The specific number of additional school librarians is determined by the school's instructional programs, services, facilities, size, and number of students and teachers.
3. In addition to library-degreed professionals, highly trained technical and clerical support staff are necessary for all library programs at every grade level. Each school should employ at least one full-time technical assistant or clerk for each school librarian. Some programs, facilities, and levels of service will require more than one support staff member for each professional.
4. The school district is served by a district library supervisor who provides leadership and support for the building-level school library programs by providing resources, professional development, and leadership in developing and implementing the district's school library program. The district library supervisor is a member of the administrative team and helps determine the criteria and policies for the district's curriculum and instructional programs. The district library supervisor communicates the mission, strategic plan, goals, and needs of the school and district library programs to the superintendent, board of education, other district-level personnel, and the community.

BACKGROUND:

The staffing of school libraries will be guided by the language for effective school library programs in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A certified school librarian is essential to an effective school library program, yet only two-thirds of school libraries are staffed with certified school librarians (Davis 2009).

DEFINITIONS:

- **Effective School Library Program:** [Definition of an Effective School Library Position Statement](#)

REFERENCES:

Davis, Denise M. 2009. "The Condition of U.S. Libraries: School Library Trends, 1999-2009." American Library Association.

http://www.ala.org/research/sites/ala.org.research/files/content/librarystats/librarymediacenter/Condition_of_Libraries_1999.20.pdf (accessed July 7, 2016).

RECOMMENDED READING LIST:

American Association of School Librarians. 2012. *2012 School Libraries Count! National Longitudinal Survey of School Library Programs*.

www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/researchandstatistics/slcsurvey/2012/AASL-SLC-2012-WEB.pdf (accessed May 20, 2016).

American Association of School Librarians. 2009. *Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Programs*. Chicago, IL. <http://www.ala.org/aasl/standards/guidelines> (accessed July 7, 2016).

Library Research Service. n.d. "School Libraries Impact Studies." <https://www.lrs.org/data-tools/school-libraries/impact-studies>

Scholastic Library Publishing. 2016. *School Libraries Work!: A Compendium of Research Supporting the Effectiveness of School Libraries*. www.scholastic.com/slw2016.

DISCLAIMER:

The position taken by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) represents the organization and cannot be applied to individual members or groups affiliated with the association without their direct confirmation.

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