

In *A Nation at Risk*, the National Commission on Excellence in Education recommends higher educational standards and expectations, increased time for learning, and increased attention to English, mathematics, science, social studies, computer science, and foreign languages. To achieve these requirements, school libraries must be stronger. Librarians, who are less bound by curriculum sequences than classroom teachers, can improve performance of students in every grade, in every subject, and at every level of ability.

To ensure that every child has access to the quality of school library service needed in a learning society, public officials should:

- **Require that library research and information skills be taught as a new basic—providing instruction within the library program and in all subject areas at each level of elementary and secondary school.**
- **Establish more specific state standards for school libraries.**
- **Require school superintendents, boards, parents, teachers, and other interested people in every community to prepare a plan for developing school library resources, for using these resources effectively, and for coordinating services with public libraries in the community.**
- **Supply sufficient funds for school library programs so there are staff to coordinate the teaching of research and study skills in cooperation with teachers of English, social studies, science, mathematics, and other subjects.**
- **Provide funds for sufficient library books, audiovisual materials, magazines, computer software, and other materials to support teaching and learning and to permit participation by school libraries in library networks for sharing of resources.**
- **Earmark state educational funds for school library resources and program development.**
- **Ensure that each state education department has skilled school library media supervisory staff to provide needed statewide professional leadership.**
- **Require colleges and universities to provide future teachers with training in using libraries and library materials.**
- **Require that education programs for school administrators and other education specialists include training in the administration and supervision of school libraries.**
- **Target federal education funds to specific school library resource development programs, including those that use the new technologies and those that demonstrate exemplary services.**



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**Prepared by the American Library Association
Task Force on Excellence in Education.**

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The American Library Association is the oldest and largest library association in the world. Its nearly 40,000 members represent all types of libraries—state, public, school and academic, and special libraries serving persons in government, commerce, armed services, hospitals, prisons, and other institutions. The association is the chief advocate for the people of the United States to achieve and maintain high quality library and information services—by protecting the right to read, educating librarians, improving library services, and making information accessible to everyone.

In August, 1983, Brooke E. Sheldon, president of the American Library Association, appointed a task force to examine *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* in relation to ALA's goals and objectives and to develop creative strategies for the involvement of ALA and America's libraries in the reform of education.

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