



Pennsylvania School Librarians Association

The Instructional Role of the School Librarian

According to school library research studies in 22 states conducted by Keith Curry Lance and other researchers, a certified school librarian who engages in the following instructional activities is a critical factor in raising the standardized reading and language arts test scores of students. For example, test scores have been shown to increase as much as 10-15% (PA Study 2000), 7-13% in reading performance and 17-18% in writing performance (Illinois Study 2005), 8% in high schools and 35% in elementary schools (Michigan Study 2003), and 19–21% (California Study 2009) in school with appropriate library staffing.

What a school librarian teaches:

Aligned with the PA Academic Standard of Reading, Writing, Listening, & Speaking (RWLS):

- Research process of formulating appropriate research questions, organizing a search, interpreting the information, and communicating the results so that students become independent learners
- Information literacy skills (finding, analyzing, and selecting information to create and communicate meaning and new knowledge) in planned instruction designed to teach curricular topics
- Critical thinking skills through the use of learning activities that involve application, analysis, evaluation, and creativity
- Strategies for organization of ideas, time-management, and problem-solving
- Self-assessment strategies to evaluate their work and that of peers, identifying information gaps and strategies to find needed information
- Use of multimedia technologies and global digital resources that connect what students are learning with the outside world
- Appropriate Web 2.0 organization and communication tools for teachers and students
- Identification of accurate, reliable sources of information from print and digital text, images, graphs, and media, including Internet sources
- Reading strategies in formal and informal instruction, monitoring the reading comprehension of students
- Habit of reading by motivating learners to read fiction and nonfiction through reading aloud, booktalking, exposure to authors, and other literary promotional events

Aligned with the PA Academic Standard of Science and Technology and Engineering Education:

- Legal, ethical, and social responsibilities in accessing, using, and creating information, including cyber safety
- Copyright and fair use of ideas, information, and images to students and teachers