

# School Librarian Memo

TO: The Board of Education & Trustees

FROM: Samantha Roslund, School Library Media Specialist

this memo

presents research about the necessity of providing our students with the best possible learning environment



## Students measurably benefit from their librarians.

### Reading & Learning Skills

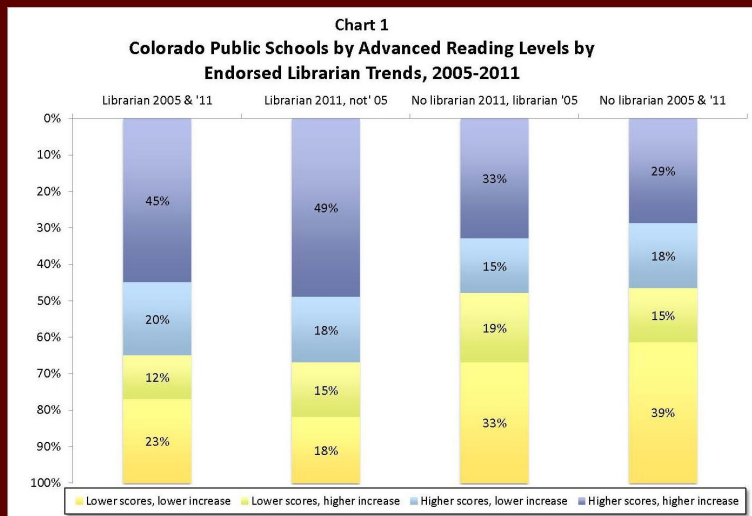
Students benefit greatly when their school librarians assist in their reading comprehension development:

- 45 percent of students who went to schools that staffed librarians tended to increase their test scores over the duration of a school year (Lance & Hofschire, 2012).
- In a 2010 Colorado study, researchers found that struggling students (those who suffered the most from the achievement gape) also profited the most in school districts who provided them with librarian services and resources (Francis, Lance, & Lietzau).
- In a 2003 Michigan study, fourth graders' reading scores were higher in those schools that reported higher numbers of weekly hours of library staff, more group visits to the library for librarian information literacy instruction, and more time spent on library operations in general (Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell).

### Technology & Information Literacy Skills

Students' technology and information literacy skills sky rocket when a school librarian is involved:

- In schools where Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) were highly prized by...



"Notably, schools with the largest percentage of higher advanced reading scores in 2011 and higher increases in advanced reading scores between 2005 and 2011 (49%) were those that gained an endorsed librarian during that interval. If an endorsed librarian is doing her or his job well, this is what one would expect" (Lance & Hofschire, 2012).

### A Necessary Team Member

Multiple studies have been done in over 20 states in America in order to find out if students across the country benefit from attending a school with a supported School Librarian and library program. The results were conclusive; School Librarians assist students to achieve better general assessment scores, higher reading and writing performance levels, better information literacy skills, larger positive trend swings in low-achieving students, and maximum results in overall education (Achterman, 2008 [CA]; Baughman, 2000 [MA]; Baumbach, 2003 [FL]; Baxter & Walker Smalley, 2004 [MN]; Burgin & Brown Bracy, 2003 [NC]; Farmer, 2006 [CA]; Lance, 2000 [AK]; Lance, Francis, & Lietzau, 2010 [CO]; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2000 [CO]; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2000 [PA]; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001 [OR]; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002 [NM]; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2005 [IL]; Lance, Rodney, & Russell, 2007 [IN]; Lance, Rodney, & Scharz, 2010 [ID]; Lance, Wellborn, & Hamilton Pennell, 1992 [CO]; Quantitative Resources, LLC, et al., 2003 [MO]; Rodney, 2002 [IA]; Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2003 [MI]; Small, Shanahan, & Stasak, 2011 [NY]; Smith, 2001 [TX]; Smith, 2006 [WI]; Todd, 2005 [DE]; Todd, Gordon, & Lu, 2010 [NJ]; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2003 [OH]).

If possible, please take some time to peruse the results of these important scientific studies—the difference School Librarians make in their students' educations is measurably remarkable.



## PD— Helping teachers help students

In 2007, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) began a yearly survey of school library programs across the country. The following are some of the findings from the surveys regarding professional development:

- “Six in ten (61%) say school library staff provide professional development for teachers in the use of digital content.”
- “Nearly as many (57%) report that technology staff would also provide professional development for teachers.”
- “The majority of library staff already spend time training teachers on the use of digital resources.”
- “Seven in ten school library staff (71%) spend between one and six hours or more a week training teachers on digital resources, with more than half (54%) spending between 1 and 2 hours (AASL).

## What you really need to know about school libraries.

### Technology & Information Literacy Skills (cont.)

- ...administrators as important, students at all studied grade levels were consistently more likely to earn advanced scores on reading and language arts standardized tests (Lance, Curry, Rodney, Schwarz, 2009).
- In Wisconsin, students acquired essential information literacy and technology skills from their librarian that were not being taught in the classroom and that are fundamental and crucial to the 21st century learner (Smith, 2006).
- Students highly valued their instruction experience in Delaware when their school librarian provided them with skills for independent information seeking, Internet search and site evaluation, and interpreting and transferring Internet information into developing their own ideas (Todd, 2006).
- “When learners of all ages have the opportunity to read stories and explore information that matters to them, various forms of literacy and numeracy can emerge. Research has shown that school libraries have the tools to inspire literacy in learners of all ages” (Scholastic Library Publishing, 2008).
- talk about their practice, share their knowledge of craft, observe one another engaging in practice, and build confidence by cheering one another on throughout the process (Moreillon, 2007).
- Lance’s Colorado study provides evidence that student achievement is 20% higher in schools where teacher/librarian collaboration is encouraged and practiced compared to schools where there is little or no collaboration (Lance 2000).
- In a 2003 study on collaboration, research showed that student achievement and performance was directly impacted to the degree by which the school librarian and classroom teacher worked together. The numbers showed that this was true, even more so, for those librarians who were certified teacher-librarians (Lance; Marcoux, 2007).

### Collaboration

When teachers and librarians work together, students profit:

- When classroom teachers and teacher-librarians work with one another, their collaborative relationship allows more opportunity for educators to

## A Simple Solution...

**Q: Why do our students need a library or librarian in our school when computers can do everything these days?**

**“No longer is the connection between school library media centers and student achievement an opinion or belief. The connection has been confirmed as a statistically significant, true relationship based on hard data” (Missouri, 2004).**

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