

STRONG SCHOOL LIBRARIES HELP STUDENTS LEARN

A White Paper developed by Ohio's Leadership for School Libraries (L4SL)

L4SL is a school library coalition consisting of the Ohio Department of Education, OELMA, INFOhio, ILILE, and the State Library of Ohio

"Information and communication literacy is redefining what we mean by basic literacy beyond reading and math skills to include critical thinking, problem solving and creativity." Michael Dell, Chairman & CEO of Dell

We believe > 21st century students require 21st century school libraries

Today's school libraries are much more than warehouses of books – they are knowledge spaces. Ohio school libraries serve a critical role as dynamic agents of learning with a full range of quality print and Internet resources. School library media centers contribute to improved student achievement by providing instructional materials aligned to the curriculum; by librarians collaborating with teachers, administrators, and parents; and by extending the reach and hours of operation beyond the traditional school day.¹

"Integrating 21st century skills into K-12 education empowers students to learn and achieve at the level necessary to succeed in this century. Education will become more invigorating and relevant when it reflects the realities and challenges of contemporary life." John Wilson, Executive Director of the National Education Association

A variety of credible studies prove that schools with effective library programs have students who do better academically as measured by standardized test scores.² Improved library programs do equal improved test scores – and more!³

We need > Adequately funded school libraries, led by credentialed school librarians

Federal: continued funding is crucial for federal programs such as the Improving Literacy Through School Libraries (ILTSL) and the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) which support Ohio's school libraries as dynamic agents of learning.

State: dedicated funds for library resources are imperative. School library programs must provide instructional intervention, through a credentialed school librarian, centering on the development of information literacy skills for inquiry learning.⁴

Local: school libraries must provide a learning-centered space supported by a strong technology infrastructure with all stakeholders engaged in sustained and action-oriented discussions in the context of continued improvement of the necessary resources, technology, and staffing requirements needed to maximize the learning opportunities through school libraries.⁵

**"What would happen if all [school] libraries across Ohio had appropriate resources and technological infrastructures, and were staffed with professional school librarians who actively created their school libraries as dynamic agents of learning? Would we then begin to see the achievement gap close?"
Dr. Ross Todd, School of Communication, Information & Library Studies at Rutgers University**

Quotations obtained from *The Road To 21st Century Learning: A Policy Makers Guide To 21st Century Skills*: <http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/>

¹ Close Up: NCLB – Improving Literacy through School Libraries," NCLB *The Achiever*, September 15, 2004, Vol. 3, No. 13

² A compilation of state research studies can be found in *School Libraries Work!* (2006):

http://librarypublishing.scholastic.com/content/stores/LibraryStore/pages/images/slw_06.pdf

³ American Association of School Librarians (AASL) *Your School Library Media Program and No Child Left Behind*:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aaslbucket/aaslncibbrochure.htm>

⁴ Ross, J. Todd, Carol C. Kuhlthau and OELMA - *The Ohio Research Study* - <http://www.oelma.org/StudentLearning/default.asp>

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We are > Ohio's Leadership for School Libraries



Ohio Department of Education⁶ standards set the foundation and direction through the Instructional Management System (IMS), which includes academic content standards, interdisciplinary lesson plans, assessments, research, and resources. Ohio's academic content standards provide a set of clear, rigorous expectations for what all students should know and be able to do. The *Technology Academic Content Standards* address a broad range of technology experiences with applications in computer and multimedia literacy, information literacy, and technological literacy in order to provide the best possible foundation for technology achievement. The *Library Guidelines* express both programmatic guidelines, which identify the conditions necessary to establish quality library programs, and instructional guidelines, which define what students should know and be able to do as a result of an effective school library media program that is integrated into the school curriculum.



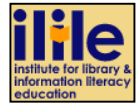
The Ohio Educational Library Media Association⁷ is a professional organization dedicated to educational, literary and technological excellence in library/media services in Ohio's schools. Awarded a LSTA grant from the IMLS through the State Library of Ohio, OELMA undertook the first statewide research project in the nation to examine how school libraries help students learn. 13,123 students in grades 3-12 and 879 faculty members from 39 schools participated in the Ohio Research Study. Summary:

- 99.4% indicated that school libraries and their services help with learning in and out of school.
- 92.4% indicated that school libraries and their services help with overall academics.
- 88.5% indicated that school libraries and their services help with getting higher grades on projects.



INFOhio⁸, the Information Network for Ohio Schools, is the state's virtual and information network for all PreK-12 public and nonpublic schools. INFOhio transforms teaching and learning by providing educational resources through the power of information technology. The network selects, organizes, and provides online resources, tutorials, documentation, and professional development modules that are age-appropriate, curriculum-related, relevant, and easy to use – effectively helping students learn and helping ensure that no students are left behind. Utilizing LSTA funds, INFOhio turns Ohio's school libraries into dynamic agents of learning by providing:

- A core collection of Internet resources for Ohio's entire learning community to help teachers teach and students learn. These resources are shared with public and academic libraries throughout the state. Statistics show that during the 2004-2005 school year, K-12 schools alone yielded nearly 13.5 million searches and queries.
- Library automation to over 2,340 public and private school libraries. LSTA grants totaling \$11.7 million, provided through the State Library of Ohio, have automated 1,462 school libraries since 1988. Additional funding will be/is required if all paper card catalogs in K-12 schools are to be eliminated.



The Institute for Library and Information Literacy Education (ILILE)⁹ project at Kent State University is funded through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the U.S. Department of Education and focuses on enhancing and developing collaboration between classroom teachers and school library media specialists. The project has four areas of focus: (1) education and training, (2) curriculum development, (3) promotion and outreach and, (4) research and evaluation. Through lesson plans, pathfinders, instructional modules, assessment tools and research generated by its projects and programs, ILILE is becoming both a resource and a model for information literacy and school library initiatives in Ohio and throughout the United States.



The State Library of Ohio¹⁰ provides support for all types of Ohio libraries and has three priorities: (1) to lead and partner in the development of library services throughout Ohio, (2) to promote and enable resource sharing among libraries and library networks, and (3) to provide access to information for Ohio's state government. All of these priorities lead to one end: to ensure that all Ohio residents, rich or poor, rural or urban, receive the best possible library service and are able to engage in lifelong learning which strengthens the economic health of Ohio.

For further information contact INFOhio Central at 614.752.2941 or central@infohio.org OR visit an L4SL agency

⁶ Ohio Department of Education: http://www.ode.state.oh.us/academic_content_standards

Ohio Department of Education Instructional Management System: <http://ims.ode.state.oh.us/ode/ims/Default.asp?bhcp=1>

⁷ OELMA: <http://www.oelma.org>

⁸ INFOhio: <http://www.infohio.org>

⁹ ILILE: <http://www.ilile.org>

¹⁰ State Library of Ohio: <http://winslo.state.oh.us/>