

# Good Ideas!

**Compelling Ideas for Administrators, Teachers, the PTA, and the School Board**

All students deserve exemplary programs like these.

CSLA is proud to present "Good Ideas" for creating information literate students.

## HITTING THE HEADLINES:

### Successful Libraries Contribute to Higher Test Scores

Some data and research receive a lot of attention. For example, the data concerning how our students and schools performed on the STAR test makes us all perk up our ears and take notice. But some data never seems to hit the spotlight. For example, did you know this?

- Students at schools with better-funded library media centers tend to achieve higher average reading scores (18 percent higher for fourth grade and 10–15 percent higher for seventh grade) whether their schools and communities are rich or poor and whether adults in their community are well or poorly educated (Lance, Welborn, and Hamilton-Pennell, *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement*, 1993).
- Students whose library media specialists played an instructional role tended to achieve higher average test scores (Lance, Welborn, and Hamilton-Pennell, *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement*, 1993).
- High school test scores tend to increase with the total number of library staff hours per typical week (Lance, Rodney, and Hamilton-Pennell, *How School Librarians Help Kids Achieve Standards*, 2000).
- School library media staff can and do exert a positive and significant effect on student achievement (Keith Curry Lance, *Proof of the Power*, presentation, 1999).
- The state test scores of nearly 850 surveyed schools improved by 10 to 15 points in schools with strong library programs and enough qualified staff members (Manzo, *Study shows rise in test scores tied to school library resources*, *Education Week on the Web*, 2000).

The basic conclusion of this data is that *professional school library media teachers have a positive impact on student learning*. I encourage you to ask your nearest library media teacher to locate the "hard data" on the research listed above so you can see it for yourself. The articles in the following pages of this publication demonstrate the flesh and blood evidence that this research is true and accurate. Despite this research, seven out of eight of our California schools do not have professional library media teachers (California Department of Education, 1996).

As decision makers, you are encouraged to take notice of this research and to spend as much time discussing this crisis as you have spent this past year discussing how to raise test scores.

**Editor's Note:** The articles in this issue of *Good Ideas!* illustrate the strong school library programs described on this page. The schools and individuals featured in

this newsletter represent California's finest. It is my hope that you will use the work of these fine educators as a model for your library programs.

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Joe Coto — 2001 CSLA Administrative Leadership Award

## It can be done! A superintendent builds strong school libraries

Prior to Superintendent Joe Coto's tenure at the East Side Union High School District in San Jose, libraries in the district relied on budgets that were at the discretion of the school sites' principals. Support staff varied from campus to campus and could be pulled from the library to meet supposed needs elsewhere on campus. There was little money for capital improvements and no assurance that library media teachers would not be placed back in classrooms when budgetary constraints arose. Sound familiar?



Superintendent Joe Coto believes that "the library is everyone's classroom."

That all changed when Joe Coto became superintendent. Each of the district's 10 schools, including the continuation high school, now has a full-time library media teacher. Ten library technicians



Superintendent Coto made libraries a top priority, and now the students are benefiting.

lend support to the libraries, and a full-time cataloguer and a purchasing assistant provide support from the district office. In addition, a library subject area coordinator serves part-time in a management position as a conduit of information from the school libraries to the district office. A team of 23 library support staff works diligently to meet the information needs of the students and staffs on the various campuses. Furthermore, school library budgets increased.

Superintendent Coto mandated that library media teachers be included on each of the school's site-

based decision-making bodies. The involvement of library media teachers as department heads at each site enables them to be at the forefront of academic changes. In this role, they have ample opportunity to provide input about the direction the school takes in implementing its philosophy and curricular programs.

The superintendent leads the way by encouraging newly hired teachers to make use of the library support system on campus. Using the library plan as a guide, he has asked reading teachers to specifically work with library media teachers in incorporating literacy and reading programs for reluctant readers. Joe Coto believes that "the library is everybody's classroom."

In addition, Superintendent Coto has explored options of supporting a public library on campus that would work as a joint venture with the school library media teachers. In each opportunity to help libraries, he has tried to "think outside the box" to come up with new and innovative ways to make library media teachers a strong presence in the district.

For the past four years, Coto has provided district libraries with approximately \$600,000 of supplemental funding, this in addition to the funding received from California School Library entitlements. He believes that the state money, while appreciated, doesn't go far enough to bring libraries up to the standards he requires for his schools. These supplemental funds have been used for the purchase of additional books, to replace dated equipment, and to pay for increased hours for library technicians at each site. Finally, this year he arranged for district libraries to receive the lion's share of a state grant for the purchase of new shelving and furniture. Each site received close to \$40,000, with more money to follow.

Joe Coto's nomination for this award was a unanimous expression of respect and gratitude from his district's library staff. The California School Library Association salutes Superintendent Coto's work and vision and his unique and sustained commitment toward furthering the role of library media programs and their development in elementary and secondary education.

▼  
East Side Union High School District  
(grades 9–12)  
830 North Capital Avenue, San Jose 95133  
Joe Coto, Superintendent  
Chris Evans, District-level Librarian

Her library is first and foremost a place of learning, the most active and popular classroom on the campus.” This statement by library media teachers Annette Chiara and Anthony Doyle illustrates the accomplishments of this year’s CSLA President’s Award winner, Linda Douglas.

Linda Douglas — 2001 CSLA President’s Award

### **A model of an exemplary library media teacher and program**

Linda was one of the first staff members hired at Golden Valley High School, in the Merced Union High School District. She was at that time instrumental in designing a library media program that is technologically state of the art and



Assistant Principal Helen Nixon explains, “Linda is one of the best teachers, perhaps the best, on our campus and in our district.”

accessible to staff and students from throughout the campus via a highly sophisticated campuswide electronic learning network she designed. Since the opening of the school in 1995, Linda has remained committed to the development and expansion of the whole library program. Indeed, Principal Ralf Swenson attributes his school’s model learning environment to Linda’s ability to pull together the human, fiscal, and technical resources to make it happen.



President’s Award winner Linda Douglas was key in designing and implementing the schoolwide technology network.

The Golden Valley High School teachers view Linda as an indispensable instructional partner. She has collaborated with them to enhance existing assignments, develop instructional goals, establish a reading program, select classroom book collections, and teach information literacy skills. She instructs teachers in teaching methodologies and technology use, and she serves on campus curricular and administrative committees. Linda’s efforts cause her to be lauded by her assistant principal, Helen Nixon, as “one of the best teachers, perhaps the best, on our campus and in our district.”

▼  
**“Linda is a teaching partner. She assists in lesson development, she designed activities that support learning for as many as 350 students per day in the library, and she provides our teachers with professional support as they seek new curriculum sources and instructional media.”**

— **Ralf Swenson, Principal,  
Golden Valley High School**

Not surprisingly, Linda’s influence does not stop at the door of Golden Valley High School, for she shares her expertise, vision, and resources. She created her district’s interlibrary loan system and mentors her district’s other library media teachers. She trains current and future library media teachers through hosting workshops and serving as a master teacher in collaboration with Fresno Pacific University. Linda’s dedication to her colleagues has earned her the uncompensated position of de facto district librarian for the Merced Union High School District.

Linda truly epitomizes how a library media teacher can serve as an information specialist, program administrator, instructional partner, and teacher. Her contributions are making a positive difference in student learning at Golden Valley High School. CSLA is proud to honor her as this year’s recipient of the President’s Award. Congratulations, Linda!

▼  
Golden Valley High School (grades 9–12; 2,250 students)  
2121 East Childs Avenue, P.O. Box 2188, Merced 95344  
Ralf Swenson, Principal  
Linda Douglas, Library Media Teacher  
Merced Union High School District

Cora Johnson — Good Ideas! School  
**Research enhances and enlivens  
content curriculum**



Collaboration is the key! Teacher Lara Ervin works with student groups while LMT Cora Johnson guides students in the computer lab.

World history students at Cypress High School were assigned to work in teams representing countries involved in World War I. Each team was challenged to gather evidence that would prove their country's innocence in beginning the war while also confirming the guilt of others. Information gathered was used to create their arguments and develop physical props to use in their defense. Attorneys and witnesses for the trial portion of the project also developed their presentations.

This activity was the product of the collaborative work of library media teacher Cora Johnson and world history teacher Lara Ervin. They developed the outline, resources, and paths the students would take to prepare their trial roles. Both teachers worked with the students for a week in the library on research and strategies. However, a busy library schedule prevented Cora from viewing and evaluating the actual trials in the classroom.

To complete their work, the students utilized the wide variety of resources in the library and on the internet. With the additional funds of the state library entitlement, Cypress High's library collection now includes up-to-date,

clean-looking books that students enjoy using.

This project resulted in more student independence in locating information and a greater ability to synthesize the volume of information gathered. Not only did the students gain more knowledge of a

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*Advice from a Good Ideas! school administrator: "Have a full-time library media teacher. Since our LMT has been full time, our circulation has quadrupled and our class usage has tripled. In essence, support your LMT with resources and creative financing."*  
— Norm Fried, Principal,  
Cypress High School

historical period, but some discovered their talents for public speaking and are pursuing that further.

What impact did this have on student learning? It was clear the following year as students cited this project for their knowledge and understanding of the war in other classes. They also developed an appreciation of the variety of materials and opinions available for locating information and the skills necessary to determine reliable sources.

Cora Johnson — Highsmith Innovation Award  
**Collaborating to meet the needs of  
special communities**

Preschoolers develop a love of reading early at Cypress High School. Library media teacher Cora Johnson, Cypress ROP preschool director Marlene O'Connor, and Dianne McGinnis, counselor, have collaborated to create a preschool children's section in the high school library. This innovative program links teenagers, preschoolers, parents, staff, and community in the pursuit of a lifelong love of reading.

The project began with a request for donations of children's books in the daily bulletin, the principal's newsletter, and fall registration materials. As over 500 donations poured in, Cora evaluated, selected, and processed the most appropriate books for the collection. The collection is housed in mobile bookcases built as an Eagle Scout project by a Cypress High School sophomore, Ben Lewis.

The high school's ROP students assist 48 preschoolers as they browse and select books for checkout, use their own library cards, and develop a love of the library. The high school students read to the preschoolers in a reading center decorated by the Cypress Education Academy, a class for future teachers. A program of presentations, interactive games,

and plays was created using the collection by the Education Academy for Read Across America Day.

Materials in the preschool section also are used for various projects in other curriculum areas. The drama teacher instructed students on how to "read aloud with panache," English teachers use the books as examples for creative writing, and marriage and family classes have used the collection to help students learn to read aloud and to emphasize the importance of reading to youngsters.

This innovative project wonderfully illustrates the influence a library media teacher can have in an educational community. Cora Johnson and her colleagues collaborated to successfully create a solution to meet the needs of a special learning community and in so doing enriched the educational program at Cypress High School. This outstanding program is truly deserving of this year's Highsmith Innovation Award. Congratulations, Cora and Cypress High School.

▼  
Cypress High School (grades 9–12; 1,960 students)  
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Anaheim Union High School District

Helen Cox — Good Ideas! School  
**Beyond the standards  
through extracurricular library activities**

The reading room at Lindbergh School features a mural and stained glass paintings depicting book illustrations while offering comfortable couches and chairs. Students in Helen Cox's library media center come to school with little educational influence in their backgrounds, but when they choose to participate in the Distinguished Scholars (DS) project, new doors open for them in an exciting learning opportunity.

Totally voluntary, DS is designed to get students into the library on their own time, to read there, and to complete a written project. Last year sixth graders focused on the problem/solution domain of writing while seventh and eighth graders tackled cause/effect. Completing the process of reading, rough draft, and final draft earns the scholar a field trip.

DS came about through collaboration of many teachers on the Lindbergh staff. English and reading teachers have assisted with the instructions and rubric, and math teachers have recommended a math require-



Lindbergh Middle School Distinguished Scholars practice researching outside the library while touring the *Queen Mary* and a Toyota facility.



At Lindbergh Middle School, students complete research papers and projects beyond their classroom assignments to earn the title Distinguished Scholar. Here they pose at CSU Long Beach.

ment be added this year. Previous scholars participate as coaches.

Books from the library and appropriate internet resources are used to gather information. The Lindbergh collection has been greatly enhanced by the state library funds, and because of the aged condition of the old collection, most of the money has

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*Advice from a Good Ideas! school administrator: "Keep the library a special place; don't use it as a catchall for school business. The library is not a place for overflow students, meetings, and other school business. It is a place for the students: to learn, to read, to enjoy."*  
— Dr. Avery Hall, Principal,  
Lindbergh Middle School

purchased new books. This project extends students beyond the limits of the work they do normally, and some find the intense editing and evaluation of their work a rewarding challenge. English language development (ELD) and special education students also participate in the DS program.

The icing on the cake for the scholars is the field trip that is intended to be a scholarly experience. Prior visits include CSU Long Beach, Pitzer College, and UC Irvine. The students must develop questions to be answered and also maintain a journal. After all this, these new scholars still find the library a great place to "hang out"!

▼  
Lindbergh Middle School (grades 6–8; 1,435 students)  
1022 East Market Street, Long Beach 90805  
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Helen Cox, Library Media Teacher  
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Long Beach Unified School District

Are the children on your school bus line chanting poems? Can a kindergartener recite a nursery rhyme on request? They can and do at urban, ethnically diverse Monroe School in Lakewood.

### Kathleen Hall — Good Ideas! School Successfully promoting poetry inside and outside of the library



Kathleen Hall of Monroe K-8 School collaborates with teachers to support their classroom programs and provides instruction in literacy as a part of her library lessons.

National Poetry Month shines during April at Monroe thanks to the efforts of library media teacher Kathy Hall. Inspired by the poem of the same name, Kathy puts

poems in the pockets of all Monroe students and makes this a schoolwide day celebrating the written word in verse.

Kathy had several goals when she developed this program and worked with teachers to assure participation by all Monroe students: to further students' appreciation of the genre, to encourage teachers to use poetry in both classroom and library, to offer public speaking opportunities for children, to have students learn how to locate poetry in the library, and, in some cases, to spark those with the confidence to compose their own poems to share.

In addition to guiding them in their search for and selection of poems in the library, Kathy helps students to share their poetry selections in several ways — choral readings, shared readings, in song, and as games. State library funds have helped to increase the Monroe poetry collection, and Kathy no longer has to borrow from the public library for this project.

When the big day arrives, every student is prepared to share a poem on request. All the adults on campus from the cafeteria to the office participate in

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*Advice from a Good Ideas! school administrator: "Use special funding if necessary to staff the library with a full-time credentialed librarian. Build in a structure for collaboration between classroom teachers and the LMT to support literacy throughout the school."*  
— Jean Reynolds, Principal,  
Monroe K-8 School

this opportunity for recitation and reward. After successfully sharing his/her poem, the student receives a STARBUCK (Stop Think Act Responsibly) that can be redeemed at the campus store or used as admission to special events. The result is a "rhythmin' good time" for everyone at Monroe!

▼  
Monroe School (grades pre-K-8; 800 students)  
4400 Ladoga Avenue, Lakewood 90713  
Jean Reynolds, Principal  
Kathleen M. Hall, Library Media Teacher  
Long Beach Unified School District

In addition to learning how to evaluate information in terms of helpfulness for their project, Arcata High School AP students had to learn when to stop gathering information and begin synthesizing information for their reports.

### Mary Ann Harlan — Good Ideas! School Collaboration between LMT and AP teacher encourages higher student achievement



Principal Bob Wallace says that LMT Mary Ann Harlan "fosters an environment that is both educational and inviting."

This challenge came when LMT Mary Ann Harlan collaborated with Arcata High's AP language arts and literature teacher. They revised a previous lesson, adding an etymology search and a research journal. Students worked in the classroom and library media center where they were introduced to the reference section and online database, InfoTrac.

Mini-lessons were provided on using the dictionary to discover etymology, along with an introduction to the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*. Use of the nearby Humboldt State library for the full edition of the *OED* was encouraged. In addition to using the reference section of the 14,000-volume library, students searched approved online etymology resources and were urged

to make contact with experts by phone or e-mail.

The final essays, research journals, and annotated bibliographies demonstrated well-researched AP-level

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*Advice from a Good Ideas! school administrator: "The development of a quality school library program begins with a qualified, credentialed library/media specialist."*  
— Bob Wallace, Principal,  
Arcata High School

work on a wide range of concepts from *karma* to *ecotourism*. Mary Ann and her colleague found the research journals helpful in improving the next version of this interesting and challenging learning experience.

▼  
Arcata High School (grades 9-12; 1,000 students)  
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Mary Ann Harlan, Library Media Teacher  
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Northern Humboldt Union School District

Ann McKechnie — Good Ideas! School  
**Meeting digital high school requirements in the library**

Focusing on standards from *Information Power* and digital high school instructional proficiency requirements, library media teacher Ann McKechnie collaborated with English teacher Kristy Brehm to design a project requiring teacher use of technology for teaching and student use to produce a final product.

Kristy wanted students to have background on Arthur Miller, the Salem witchcraft trials, and related historical and contemporary issues prior to reading *The Crucible*. Information explaining the project was provided in a Power Point presentation created by Ann and Kristy. Santa Monica High's library of 50,000 books also offers a wide range of online programs, and these were widely used as students undertook their research. Ann noted that students were impressed with the new, up-to-date materials provided by state library funds and enthusiastic about their currency.

Students wrote



Santa Monica High School students work together to synthesize their research.



Ann McKechnie of Santa Monica High School integrates technology into collaboratively designed and taught projects.

questions on their topics to help focus their research. Once information was gathered, they had to prepare an outline and develop that into a poster, an essay, or a Power Point presentation. Ann and Kristy gave further instruction to students selecting the latter method.

A major feature of the project was evaluating pre-selected websites for accuracy, currency, authority, and relevance. Ann stressed the importance of distinguishing between fact and opinion as the researchers explored both the websites and print information.

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*Advice from a Good Ideas! school administrator: "Studies show a strong relationship between quality library media programs and academic achievement. I would advise support of longer library hours and a library budget that allows for purchase of current fiction and up-to-date reference books."*

— *Kirsten Hibert, Coprincipal, Santa Monica High School*

Students were asked specific questions about which resources would be best for different kinds of information. Research journals also were required.

Critical thinking was necessary to develop topic questions, to use a variety of print and electronic resources, and to carefully evaluate their sources. Projects were presented orally in the library at the conclusion of the students' work. Ann considers the success of the project in terms of an "information literate" lesson for the students.

▼  
Santa Monica High School (grades 9–12; 3,000 students)  
601 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica 90405  
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Ann McKechnie, Library Media Teacher  
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Santa Monica–Malibu Unified School District

Vicki Storey has won the respect and admiration of the administration, faculty, staff, and students at Santa Ynez Valley Union High School by being a catalyst for technological advancement on campus. By taking time to give individual attention to students and teachers, sharing her expertise, and continually honing her skills, she deserves the honor of being this year's CSLA Technology Award winner.

Vicki Storey — 2001 CSLA Technology Award  
**Vision and leadership: Making technology work**

Vicki makes a difference in her educational community by taking time to give individual attention to those needing technology support and lessons. She believes in encouraging others to embrace the unlimited possibilities presented by technology. For example, with French teacher Marylou Kuenn, Vicki began a collaborative relationship that enabled Marylou to initiate and lead projects on her own and also spurred her on to attend technology seminars. Vicki attends web design and desktop publishing classes at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and encourages students and teachers to attend with her. Besides individually



Library media teacher Vicki Storey was a key player in making sure that the vision for the Digital HS grant integrated technology and information literacy into classroom learning.

coaching teachers on the creation of PowerPoint presentations and the use of other technology, Vicki also plans and leads the technology staff development program both within and outside of her school community. She has been “patiently bringing the staff on

board as the school transitioned to computerized attendance, internal communication, and record keeping.”

As a key player in her school's digital high school planning and grant-writing process, Vicki offers unique expertise as an information specialist and technology mentor, which have made her an integral part of forming the overall vision of the school technology plan and in the implementation stages. Principal Norm Clevenger says Vicki's vision helped to ensure that technology, core content curriculum, and information literacy are integrated throughout the educational program. Because of this vision, a visit to Santa Ynez Valley High School reveals “students and teachers presenting information with the assistance of technology; student projects created and enhanced by technology; internet research and learning; and teachers preparing lessons and communicating with technology — all for the improvement of teaching and learning on campus.”

Since she began her teaching career 11 years ago, Vicki Storey has not stopped bringing her technology enthusiasm, expertise, and helpfulness to those around her. She is an inspiration, a marvelous library media teacher, and wonderfully deserving of the 2001 CSLA Technology Award.



Santa Ynez Valley Union High School  
(grades 9–12; 1,099 students)  
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*Learning through  
Books, Media and Technology*

**Good Ideas!** *Compelling Ideas for Administrators, Teachers, the PTA, and the School Board*

is published by the Curriculum Committee of CSLA, an association of library media teachers, classroom teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and others whose mission is to provide leadership to ensure that California educators and students are effective users of ideas and information. The association promotes the effective use of learning resources, including print and nonprint media, and technology in the teaching/learning process.

DARLA MAGANA, *Editor*

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To nominate a school library and a library media teacher for *Good Ideas!* recognition, contact Darla Magana ([magana@home.com](mailto:magana@home.com)).

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