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# Standards and Guidelines for Strong School Libraries

California School Library Association  
STANDARDS TASK FORCE

*Edited by* DEBBIE ABILOCK



*Learning through  
Books, Media and Technology*

SACRAMENTO · 2004

*Dedicated to library champion and friend, Dr. Gary Hartzell, who encourages “invisible librarians” to become visible and viable, who creates awareness in school administrators, and who spreads the word to the nation about the importance of maintaining strong school library programs.*

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Dear Library Media Teacher:

Scholastic Library Publishing is pleased to join with the California School Library Association in sponsoring this important publication. For over 100 years, we have supported librarians through our Grolier reference products, well-regarded Children's Press, Franklin Watts imprints, and Scholastic trade books. We are proud of this longstanding history, and relationship with you.

Scholastic Library Publishing believes deeply in the critical role libraries play as the hub of school learning. Now more than ever, as schools face increased accountability and budget constraints, school libraries and library media teachers offer a valuable resource for classroom teachers and their students.

We look forward to working with you and continue our pledge of providing high quality print and online reference materials that will help all children grow and learn.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Worrell", is written over the typed name and title.

Greg Worrell  
President  
Scholastic Library Publishing

California library media teachers have long been acknowledged leaders in information literacy and educational curriculum reform. In the early 1990s, as access to information and communication technologies burgeoned, drafts of a California Media and Library Educators Association (CMLEA) document titled *Information Literacy: Research as a Thinking Process in California's Curriculum* were circulating during professional workshops and meetings. By the late 1990s that document had been revised and published by the newly renamed California School Library Association (CSLA) as *From Library Skills to*

*Information Literacy: A Handbook for the 21st Century*. Now in its second edition (CSLA, 1997), that nationally known California publication positions the library media teacher as a codesigner of instruction with classroom and specialist teachers. It recognizes that the need to know is the most significant motivation for doing research and advocates partnering with students, as well as faculty, in the library research process. Drawing from the seminal work of leading thinkers such as Stripling and Pitts, and Eisenberg and presaging the latest research of Kuhlthau, CSLA's conceptual framework for information literacy interlaces the searcher's

thinking, the information seeking process, and the instructional strategies of the library media teacher.

California school library media center programs received a noteworthy boost when legislators passed the California Public School Library Act of 1998, allocating state funds for the purchase of school library materials. Library collections, many of which still contained materials purchased with federal funding from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, were given new life. To receive state funding, districts designed comprehensive and reflective district library plans for library services. Administrators, classroom teachers, and community leaders worked together to scrutinize their school library programs, the quality and quantity of library materials, the type and quality of staffing, and resulting student access to library media specialists and the resources in the library media center.

During this renaissance, CSLA began forming (2001–02) a geographically diverse task force to assess the feasibility of developing state school library media standards. A broad group of volunteers participated, including library media professionals and paraprofessionals, other teachers, and school administrators. Various subcommittees conducted extensive investigations into school library issues in order to formulate their sections.

In assembling the document and seeking community feedback, each committee chair assumed responsibility for a specific section. The chairs gathered library media professionals, other teachers, and administrators in their immediate area to conduct local action research and assemble information to assist in the production of a particular section of the standards and guidelines. Focus groups were held at the state conference and regional workshops, soliciting input from CSLA members. Drafts on the CSLA Web site received comments and suggestions from a larger Web audience. To produce a vision of excellence, this task force drew upon the collective wisdom of people in California and across the nation.

The entire spectrum of the school library program, both qualitative and quantitative, was examined in both practical implementations and in the professional literature. Groups scrutinized ideas and data about information literacy and fluency, information and communication technology (ICT), reading, teaching and learning, staffing, professional qualifications and tasks, facilities, key assessment frameworks (CDE, 1998; AASL, 1999), professional certification (NCATE, 1997–2004; NBPTS, 2001, 2002), and state and national standards documents.

LATEST FEDERAL STATISTICS ON LIBRARY MEDIA TEACHERS: *In 2004 the federal government reported that only 23.7% of California schools with a library media center have a paid, state-certified library media specialist, compared to an average of 75.2% for all the states. California is the only state in the nation in which less than 50% of its schools have paid, state-certified library media specialists.*  
— *The Status of Public and Private School Library Media Centers in the United States: 1999–2000* (NCES, 2004)

As expected, academic research studies figured heavily in the development of these standards; an impressive body of literature has emerged about the relationship between student achievement and school libraries. While chapter 7, Library Media Program Implementation and Student Achievement: The Research (page 54), provides an extensive list, we direct the reader's attention in particular to a series of large-scale studies in Colorado (2000), Pennsylvania (2000), and Alaska (2002), directed by Keith Curry Lance, which reveals correlations between library-related factors (library budgets,



technology presence, collection size, and staffing size) and higher student achievement, notably in test performance in reading. Also of special note, Stephen Krashen's rigorous scientific analysis reveals that student access to and extensive use of resources in print- and information-rich environments is correlated with reading achievement. Vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, and motivation show powerful improvements when students are allowed to choose their reading material.

California's poor academic performance is related to its print-poor environment and a perilous pattern of spending which ranks our school libraries at the bottom of the nation. A comparison of the ratio of library media teachers to students ranks California school libraries as last among the states. While some states mandate the presence of library media professionals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, California does not. While some states staff their high schools with a library director plus one library media teacher for each of the disciplines being taught at school, California does not.

Foremost in the minds of those contributing to this document were the children of California. When professional library staff collaborates with teachers, when students have access to quality and diversity of reading and information resources, and when voluntary reading of self-selected materials is encouraged, achievement is higher despite students' socioeconomic status. Where school libraries are strong, their students, staff, and community become proficient readers who can skillfully access, evaluate, and use information. California students deserve no less.

*"One sure measure of the heart and soul of any society is how it treats its children."*  
– *The American Experience* (Graham & Gray, 1995)

Information literacy and reading – like writing and computation – are basics. These standards outline the structure and resources needed to deliver programs which teach the skills and attitudes our future citizens need in the twenty-first century.

We urge state legislators, school administrators, parents, and citizens of California to take a close look at the school library programs being offered, and then join with us to renew their support of exemplary school libraries for California students.

The California School Library Association would like to thank Scholastic Library Publishing for their generous grant to this project. Their support and encouragement make this publication possible.

– JO ELLEN PRIEST MISAKIAN, Chair  
California School Library Association Standards Task Force

## QUANTITATIVE STANDARDS

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ADA	Exemplary	Making Progress	At Risk
600 OR FEWER ADA	1 library media teacher 1 technician 0 clerk	½ library media teacher 1 technician 0 clerk	0 library media teacher 1 technician 0 clerk
OVER 600 ADA	1 library media teacher 1 technician 1 clerk	1 library media teacher 1 technician 0 clerk	½ library media teacher 1 technician 0 clerk

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

ADA	Exemplary	Making Progress	At Risk
600 OR FEWER ADA	1 library media teacher 1 technician ½ clerk	1 library media teacher 1 technician 0 clerk	½ library media teacher 1 technician 0 clerk
OVER 600 ADA	1½ library media teachers 1 technician 1 clerk	1 library media teacher 1 technician ½ clerk	1 library media teacher 1 technician 0 clerk

### HIGH SCHOOL

ADA	Exemplary	Making Progress	At Risk
1,000 OR FEWER ADA	1 library media teacher 1 technician 1 clerk	1 library media teacher 1 technician ½ clerk	1 library media teacher ½ technician 0 clerk
1,001–2,500 ADA	2 library media teachers 1 technician 1 clerk	1½ library media teachers 1 technician ½ clerk	1 library media teacher 1 technician ½ clerk
OVER 2,500 ADA	2+ library media teachers 2 technicians 1 clerk	1½ library media teachers 1½ technicians 1 clerk	1 library media teacher 1 technician 1 clerk

## STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA TEACHERS

The library media professional has several excellent national documents to draw upon in developing a school-centered philosophy for exemplary school library media service that will best serve the local

learning community. This section reflects the guidelines and vision found in major professional sources, notably the documents listed below.

#### ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FROM TEXAS:

*“Library staffing levels, collection sizes, librarian interaction with teachers and students, and library technology levels have a positive association with TAAS [Texas Assessment of Academic Skills] performance at the elementary, middle/junior high, and high school levels.”*

– *Texas School Libraries: Standards, Resources, Services, and Students’ Performance* (Smith, 2001)

– National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has a component that clearly articulates program standards for library media teacher preparation. It provides the guidelines for preparing candidates for service and leadership in school library media centers.

– The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards’ (NBPTS) *Library Media Standards* (2001) offers advanced national certification for accomplished library media teachers based on rigorous standards that measure performance irrespective of school resources. Library media certification recognizes competence in collaborating with classroom teachers to teach information skills and integrating technology, in teaching strategic reading and love of literature, and in developing judicious management practices, and coherent collection development.

– *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (AASL & AECT, 1998) has become the single most important document driving school library media programs. The pivotal role of the school library media professional in learning and teaching, collaboration and leadership, information access and delivery, and program administration, are fully described and discussed.

– National Educational Technology Standards (ISTE & NETS) sets standards for students, teachers, and administrators on effective use of technology.

STANDARD 7: *The library media center has a digital infrastructure, appropriate shelving and furniture, a workroom, and storage areas.*

<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Making Progress</i>	<i>At Risk</i>
Has digitally secured entrances and exits where appropriate	Entrances and exits are monitored most of the time	Entrances and exits are unsecured
Has a centrally located main desk/counter with a fully automated, integrated, and networked library catalog and circulation system	Has a main desk/counter with an automated stand-alone circulation system	Has a desk for manual circulation
Has highest available bandwidth connectivity to a data, voice, and video network throughout the library media center and workroom	Has limited access to data, voice, and video within the library media center	Has little or no access to data, voice, and video within the library media center
Has a seamless connection to the school and district local area network (LAN) and wide area network (WAN)	Has a limited connection to the school and district network (LAN and WAN)	Has no connection to the school and district network (LAN and WAN)
Has ergonomic office and patron furniture and shelving appropriately sized for young patrons and adults; shelving design accommodates varied resources and anticipates future growth; facilities adheres to health and safety standards, including earthquake-secured shelving and furniture; workroom contains sink and storage.	Has sufficient office furniture, adjustable and earthquake-secured shelving, and a limited workroom	Has limited office furniture, no adjustable or earthquake-secured shelving, and no workroom
Has ample electric power, wiring, electrical outlets, telephones, fax machines, and data ports throughout the library media center	Has marginal electric power and/or wiring, electrical outlets, telephones, fax machines, and data ports	Has insufficient electric power and/or wiring, electrical outlets, telephones, fax machines, and data ports
Has ample work surfaces, storage, and production areas for all users	Has some work surfaces, storage, and production areas for library staff	Has few work surfaces, insufficient storage, and no production areas

STANDARD 8: *The library media center has the potential for growth.*

<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Making Progress</i>	<i>At Risk</i>
Allows for expansion and remodeling to accommodate increasing enrollment, changing curriculum, and emerging information and communication technologies	Allows for limited remodeling to accommodate increasing enrollment, changing curriculum and emerging information and communication technologies	Allows for little or no remodeling to accommodate an increasing enrollment, changing curriculum and emerging information and communication technologies



STANDARD 3: *The collection reflects the diverse needs, interests, and learning styles of all students.*

- 3.1 Contains a broad range of resources with varying points of view
- 3.2 Contains resources that cover a wide range of interests
- 3.3 Contains resources with varying levels of difficulty
- 3.4 Contains resources in global languages with special emphasis on languages appropriate to the needs of the student population and the demands of the curriculum
- 3.5 Contains resources that enlarge understanding of ethnic and cultural differences
- 3.6 Contains resources that accurately depict different ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, and age groups

STANDARD 4: *The collection includes resources in a variety of formats.*

- 4.1 Contains a robust collection of current books and other print materials
- 4.2 Contains online periodical and reference subscription databases
- 4.3 Contains a rich and age-appropriate print periodical collection
- 4.4 Contains local and national print newspapers
- 4.5 Contains a collection of tangible objects for hands-on learning (e.g., art prints, museum objects, models, dimensional maps, historical and cultural artifacts)
- 4.6 Contains audio, video, DVD, photographic, digital, and online resources
- 4.7 Contains media for specific instructional situations
- 4.8 Integrates information and communication technologies with print and digital resources

STANDARD 5: *The collection is developed according to a selection policy that has been approved by the governing board.*

- 5.1 Provides a policy that is written, reviewed annually, and revised, when appropriate, by or under the guidance of a district library media supervisor or library media teacher
- 5.2 Facilitates effective acquisition, cataloging, processing, circulation, storage, maintenance, and retrieval of resources and equipment
- 5.3 Ensures a broad range of resources with different points of view, formats, levels of difficulty, interests, languages, and ethnic and cultural emphases that are developmentally appropriate
- 5.4 Guides the school library media teacher and others in selection and acquisition
- 5.5 Includes professional review journals and other selection tools used to identify materials for inclusion
- 5.6 Includes criteria and procedures for selection and acquisition of resources
- 5.7 Includes criteria and procedures for deselecting resources
- 5.8 Includes a process for handling challenges to materials and procedures
- 5.9 Reflects the rights and responsibilities of copyright law and fair use
- 5.10 Includes principles of free access and the right to read, as expressed in *The Library Bill of Rights* (ALA, 1980), *School Library Bill of Rights* (ASLA, 2002), *Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program* (ALA, 1980), and *Students' Right to Read* (NCTE, n.d.).

RESOURCES IN

AWARD-WINNING SCHOOLS:

*"[In schools that won the National Award for Model Professional Development] principals and school leadership teams ensure adequate funding and human resources are available to support teacher learning at these sites. These schools have professional libraries stocked with books and journals to expand teachers' understanding of pedagogy and content. Their resource rooms are filled with children's literature and math manipulatives to facilitate implementation of new instructional techniques in their classrooms. Extensive technology training, hardware, and software are readily available..."*

— *Islands of Hope in a Sea of Dreams; A Research Report on the Eight Schools that Received the National Award for Model Professional Development* (Killion, 1999)

processing and learning. Information literacy begins with an information need, a problem to solve, a question, or a sense of curiosity. The learner develops a plan to access and locate data, information, and ideas, and then uses strategic “reading” skills to understand various kinds of information in different media formats. Comprehension is followed by judgment – the evaluation of information against criteria (e.g., authority, credibility, relevance). Then, using ICT technology tools, information is extracted, manipulated, ordered, and analyzed so that the learner can synthesize, create, assess, and apply. The product of this information literacy process answers a question, solves a problem, or communicates information to an authentic audience, often beyond the teacher. To support such learning, the school’s digital infrastructure and technology services must be reliable, responsive, and flexible.

#### EXPLANATION OF STANDARDS LEVELS

<i>Exemplary</i>	Standards 1 to 4 are fully implemented, enabling students to digitally access, produce, and communicate information with ease.
<i>Making Progress</i>	Standards 1 to 4 are partly implemented, limiting the ability of students to digitally access, produce, and communicate information with ease.
<i>At Risk</i>	Standards 1 to 4 have not been implemented or very few of the specific recommendations have been implemented, making it difficult or impossible for students to digitally access, produce, and communicate information.

#### THE STANDARDS

Standards for school library media center technology are listed below, followed by exemplary indicators and a rubric that compares the three levels of standards.

STANDARD 1: The school community uses library media center information and communication technologies as tools to access information.

STANDARD 2: The school community uses library media center information and communication technologies as tools to create and produce information.

STANDARD 3: The school community uses library media center information and communication technologies as tools to communicate and use information.

STANDARD 4: The school community is guided by relevant policies and is supported by a digital infrastructure and technology services that enable the effective and intelligent use of library media center information and communication technologies as tools for teaching and learning.

#### STANDARDS AND EXEMPLARY INDICATORS

STANDARD 1: *The school community uses library media center information and communication technologies as tools to access information.*

##### I.1 LIBRARY ONLINE SERVICES AND RESOURCES:

I.1.1 Fully automated and integrated library catalog and circulation system that is networked district-wide

I.1.2 Web-based online public access catalog (OPAC) available on site and remotely

I.1.3 All library catalog records in standard MARC (machine readable cataloging) format

I.1.4 Well-maintained library Web site with current, working links organized to support state curriculum frameworks, content standards, as well as school and district curriculum and community needs.

##### I.2 LIBRARY DIGITAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES:

I.2.1 Digital collection is current and continuously maintained

I.2.2 Online periodical and reference subscription services available on-site and remotely

I.2.3 Fax (machine or software) available for use of library media staff and students to access and send information beyond the library

- information literacy instruction integrated across the curriculum
- full-time, certificated library media teacher(s) available throughout the day, with paraprofessional support
- significant funding for resources and services

The following references serve as starting points in developing library-related standards and assessing justified elements.

#### REFERENCES ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT — BY LIBRARY PROGRAM ELEMENTS

<i>Library Program Factors</i>	<i>Factor Elements</i>	<i>Impact of Library Media Programs on Student Achievement</i>
Material Resources	Quantity	<i>Improves academic achievement:</i> Baumbach, 2003; Broughan, 2000; Lance, Welborn, & Hamilton-Pennell, 1993; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001, 2002; Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002; Smith, 2001  <i>Improves reading:</i> Krashen, 1993; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001; Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002; Smith, 2003
	Quality	<i>Improves academic achievement:</i> Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001
	Technology	<i>Improves academic achievement:</i> Burgin & Bracey, 2003; Gehlken, 1994; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001, 2002; Smith, 2001  <i>Improves reading:</i> Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001; Smith, 2003
	Access (note amount and quality of use)	<i>Improves academic achievement:</i> Gehlken, 1994; Loertscher, 1993; Smith, 2001
	Collaboration with the school community	<i>Use of library resources improves junior high science, information literacy:</i> Barrilleaux, 1965
Facilities	Atmosphere	<i>Improves reading:</i> Krashen, 1993  <i>Improves academic achievement:</i> Gehlken, 1994
	Access (note both class and individual access)	<i>Improves reading:</i> Baumbach, 2003; Broughan, 2000; Fordham, 2003; Gehlken, 1994; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001; Miller, Want, & Whitacre, 2003; Smith, 2001, 2003
	Scheduling (flexible)	<i>Improves student achievement:</i> Barlup, 1991; Bishop, 1992; Bishop & Blazek, 1994; Kreiser, 1991; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001; Tallman & Van Deusen, 1994, 1995; Van Deusen, 1991  <i>Improves reading:</i> Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002; Smith, 2003
Staffing	Quantity (note number and hours of staff)	<i>Improves reading comprehension:</i> Krashen, 2001; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001; McMillan, 1965; McQuillan, 1998  <i>Improves reading:</i> Baxter & Smalley, 2003; Martin, 1996; Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002; Smith, 2003  <i>Improves academic achievement:</i> Baumbach, 2003; Broughan, 2000; Burgin & Bracey, 2003; Farmer, 2002; Hale, 1970; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2001, 2002; Lance, Welborn, & Hamilton-Pennell, 1993; Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002; Smith, 2001

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