



Keep School and Public Libraries Open for Children and Families

The Governor's budget slashes library services, eliminates library jobs, and forces libraries to close. The program and funding cuts in the proposed budget do more than ask libraries to cut excess fat, they **eliminate** essential library services in both school and public libraries. Change is desperately needed in the state budget to save school and public library programs, staff, and services. It is now up to the state legislature to restore library funding needed to keep school libraries open for children in our schools and public libraries for families.

Without a school library

- How can our students grow to love to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction books if they are limited to the relatively few materials a classroom can provide?
- How can our students meet the state's curriculum standards if they do not have fully funded libraries with print and electronic resources selected by information professionals?
- How can our students achieve their full potential as 21st century learners with no school librarian to teach students how to locate, access, evaluate, and use the information they need and become efficient, responsible, and independent learners, able to function in the world?

Compounding the loss of school libraries and highly qualified school librarians

- Students will lose access to shared online databases and services due to the elimination of state funding and forfeiture of \$4.5 million in federal funds to public libraries.
- Students looking to enter the workplace will no longer have access to electronic resources funded under the New Jersey Knowledge Initiative that provide information on thousands of small businesses in our state.
- Community members will lose access to E-mail, the Internet, and help desk services and interlibrary loan and delivery will cease.
- The talking Book and Braille Center (know as the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped) will close.

Act now to save school and public libraries for children and families.

Contact: your state Senator and Assembly representatives and ask them to restore funding in the state budget to school and public libraries. You can look up contact information at <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/members/legsearch.asp>

Inform: legislators about the importance of library programs and certified librarians to student success.

Invite: state legislators to visit a 21st century school library and see first-hand its impact on student learning.

Ask: "library champions" in your school community to also contact legislators.

Here are a few talking points to consider:

Well-funded school libraries lead to measurably higher student achievement

Based on studies in 16 states, schools that spend more on school library resources including technology and print materials have higher average test scores.

“At every grade level, schools with more library and library-connected computers – particularly, in the latter case, Internet computers relative to the school’s enrollment – average higher test scores.”

Lance, Keith Curry, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell. *Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners: The Illinois Study*. 2005. <http://www.islma.org/pdf/ILStudy2.pdf>

“Pennsylvania middle schools with the best PSSA reading scores spend twice as much on their school libraries as the lowest scoring schools.” Scholastic Library Publishing. *School Libraries Work!* Updated 2008 ed.

http://www2.scholastic.com/content/collateral_resources/pdf/s/slw3_2008.pdf

Why should the school library be staffed by a certified school library media specialist? The district could save money by using aides or volunteers.

School library media specialists (school librarians) hold a certification specific to schools and are teachers. As such, they have knowledge of effective teaching and learning methods and are able to collaborate with classroom teachers.

School librarians have knowledge of child development that is useful in teaching, and also in the selection of materials to support students’ educational and personal needs and interests at various stages in their lives.

School librarians are familiar with the school’s curriculum, as well as state and national educational standards, that enables them to work with subject/classroom teachers to ensure that students meet these standards. They are also best positioned to select and purchase materials that specifically support curricular goals and objectives.

Every school needs a school library

Concentrating books, periodicals, electronic resources and the tools needed to access them in the media center permits the whole school population to equitably, efficiently, and economically access these resources.

When materials are centrally located and shared, it is not necessary to duplicate these purchases as much as placing them in each classroom that may need them would require.

Centrally locating materials in the library media center makes it easier to accommodate the wide range of student reading abilities that exist within each class.

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