

# An Evaluation of the Documents Provided to School Library Media Specialists by State Library and Education Agencies

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*One of the services state libraries and departments of education provide is information to assist the building-level school library media specialist do his or her job better. This study examines state documents for all fifty states and the District of Columbia in order to determine the types and relevancy of the information rendered. Relationships between the presence of a director of school media services at the state level and the impact on the resulting information are also investigated.*

*It was found that the typical state has a director of school library media services who spends fifty percent of his or her time on this aspect of the job in the state department of education. Having a full-time director at the state level has a significant impact not only on the quantity but the quality of those publications. The states with a full-time director provide a mean of 4.2 documents for school library media specialists compared to 2.5 for states having a part-time director and 1.4 for states with no director. The mean number of pages of all documents is 160 for full-time, 108 for part-time, and 79 for no director. This is significant at the .05 level for full-time versus no director. Separating out the number of pages of specific to school library media services in the documents reveals that full-time directors furnish 140 pages that are relevant, part-time directors provide 60 pages, and no director, 47 pages. This is also significant at the .05 level for full-time versus no director. This research project was funded by the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies 1998 Research Grant.*

Directors of school library media services at the state level can be a vital link between the practicing school library media specialist and their state department of education. They can provide a variety of services including: developing and overseeing standards, coordinating statewide initiatives, securing funding, offering professional development opportunities, collecting data, furnishing consulting services, evaluating programs, enforcing staffing requirements, and generally keeping school libraries forefront in the minds of legislators and others by serving as advocates.

One traditional service of directors has been generating and distributing state documents for school library media specialists. Good state documents can serve as guides to orient and assist novices to do their jobs better. They can communicate unique state concerns and initiatives. Even

seasoned professionals can benefit from the support state documents provide since the majority perform their jobs in isolation at the building level.

In order to evaluate the current status of information provided by state library agencies to building level school library media specialists, a study was undertaken which analyzed one hundred thirty-six documents from fifty states and the District of Columbia and surveyed state directors of school media services to determine:

- What types of documents do state library agencies provide to school library media specialists in their state?
- What school library media services are addressed in the documents?
- How do these documents communicate the directives put forth in national guidelines for state agencies?
- Does having a state director of school library media services affect these publications?
- What is the average number, age, and length of the documents provided?

## Review of Literature

Several studies, along with national guidelines and reports, have examined the functions of state libraries and departments of education in relationship to school library media programs.

### Role of the State Agencies

Hoffman (1978) conducted a comprehensive historical study on the role of state agencies in improving school library media programs. School library supervision, from its inception in Wisconsin in 1891, has been assigned sometimes to the state department of education and sometimes to the state library agency. State supervision of school library media programs grew slowly in the 1920s and early 1930s, and in 1939 the State School library supervisors started an informal organization that met annually at the ALA conference (state school 1968). By 1959 there were thirty-four professionals serving as state supervisors.

Maher's (1960) report delineated state department of education responsibilities for school libraries. Thirty-two specific tasks were identified in the areas of certification, standards, supervision, cooperation, statistics and research, and information. Under the responsibilities for "Information on School Libraries" there are seven functions:

1. Providing information on professional qualifications of school librarians.
2. Interpreting functions and significance of school libraries.
3. Interpreting school library standards: national, regional, and state.
4. Providing information on professional meetings, trends, and developments.
5. Providing information on professional publications.
6. Providing information on printed and audiovisual materials for school libraries: mandatory state lists, periodic lists, and special lists.
7. Reporting statistics and research on school libraries to: state governors and legislatures, state boards, and general users of school library statistics and research (41).

## Appointment of Supervisors

The advent of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) with its Title II designed specifically to support school libraries provided administrative funds to state agencies in November 1965. School library supervisors were appointed for the first time in some states and staffs increased in others. As the federal funding began to erode in the early 1970s some states cut back or dismissed people they employed. Many programs faded and others disappeared in the fall of 1973 (Hoffman 1978).

The status of school library supervision within state agencies can be further traced in the *Bowker Annual* (1994) and *School Library Media Annual* (1995). Lists of state supervisors of school library media services were available until 1994 in the *Bowker Annual* and 1995 in *School Library Media Annual*. The alphabetical lists by state included the name of the person in charge of school library media services, title, address, telephone, and fax number. In addition *School Library Media Annual* (1995) contained a chapter on “School Library State Agency Activities” which reviewed state agency actions from the previous year. Reported activities often included descriptions of new standards, curriculum guides, and school library assessment documents. Unfortunately *School Library Media Annual* ceased publication in 1995. Another descriptive publication, *School Library Supervisors Directory* (Garnett 1968), halted publication even earlier—1968.

An examination of the titles of positions listed under “State Supervisors of School Library Media Services” in the *Bowker Annual* from 1974 to 1995 indicates that during these years there were between twenty-eight and thirty-seven supervisors that had either “school library” or “school media” in the title of their position. Myriad titles have been used over the years including: Library Media Program Specialist, Director of Media Programs, Consultant to School Libraries, Curriculum Supervisor Library Media Services, School Library Media Coordinator, and more. Titles are not consistent from state to state or within the same state over time. In the past ten years titles have gotten broader—such as Educational Program Consultant, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Instructional Services, and Office of Instruction. This appears to indicate that the people in these positions are taking on a variety of roles and being merged with other departments.

## Recommendations for State Agencies in National Guidelines

References to the assorted roles state agencies should play can be located in national guidelines for school library media programs (Certain 1920, 1925; Committees on Post-War Planning of the ALA 1945; American Association of School Librarians (AASL) 1960; AASL and the Department of Audiovisual Instruction of the National Education Association 1969; AASL and Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) 1975; AASL and AECT 1988). Recommendations for providing information have had various degrees of emphasis. The most intense directives appear in *Information Power* (AASL and AECT 1988) where twenty-six functions of state agencies are recommended in the areas of leadership, consultation, communication, coordination, and administration. Responsibilities under “Communication” are to: collect data and disseminate information on library media programs in the state; promote library media programs through public relations activities; receive and disseminate information from state and federal reports related to school library media programs; and generate publications to assist district- and building-level personnel in providing improved services (111).

Remarkably, the current *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* does not mention state agencies at all.

## State Agency Surveys and Other Studies

Research was undertaken to determine the extent to which state education agencies were involved in mandating or recommending school library media personnel evaluation procedures and forms to local education agencies (Turner, Coleman, and Gordon 1986). Involvement in evaluation was found in terms of quality control versus creation of evaluation procedures. The content validity of the evaluation instruments was weak and there was little sense of a cohesive role. Recommendations included a call for the national associations to determine and disseminate a professional role to aid state education agencies who might be creating or revising evaluation instruments.

Statistics collection was the focus of a national survey of state education agencies and elementary and middle school library media specialists (Garland 1993). The researcher determined almost half of the state agencies did not collect any library media program-related statistics on a regular basis. Of those state agencies that did collect statistics the most common were budget, holdings, and personnel. There was no uniformity in how data were collected among states.

The state library agencies survey began in 1994. It collects annual data on services and resources. State library agencies are defined as “the official unit of state government charged with statewide library development and the administration of federal funds under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)” (U.S. Department of Education 1999, iv). This survey on state library agencies is a cooperative effort between the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), The Chief Officers of state library agencies (COSLA), and the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS). Data released in June 1998 (U.S. Department of Education 1999) noted in “Services to School Library Media Centers” that two-thirds of all state library agencies provide continuing education and interlibrary loan services and reference referral services to school library media centers. Services provided by at least half of state agencies include administration of LSCA Title III grants, consulting services, and union list development. Less common services to library media centers are administration of state aid, cooperative purchasing of library materials, and retrospective conversion.

School libraries are addressed briefly in the recent report, *The Functions and Roles of State Library Agencies* (Himmel and Wilson 1998). The assistance reportedly offered to schools was in providing continuing education, disseminating information about obtaining funds, developing and maintaining standards, and dealing with requests for information.

Carl Carter, who served as the school library media consultant in Ohio for nine years, reports on the creation and evolution of this position (1999). School librarians in that state began lobbying for the position of “supervisor of school library programs” as early as 1947 and continued to do so until it was finally established in 1970. There have been eight people holding the position since 1970, with length of service running from eight months to nine years. Carter (1999) reports that there were periods of a few months, and in some cases a few years, when the position remained vacant and the Ohio Association of School Librarians and the Ohio Educational Library Media Association had to lobby for the position during the open periods. Carter’s

historical piece was intended as a farewell as he retired and he noted, “It is my hope that OELMA will not have to conduct extensive lobbying this time” (9).

Various aspects of the functions of state library agencies in relation to school library media services have been investigated and reported. In each instance, the provision of documents as one of these functions has not been specifically addressed. This current study adds to the body of work on state library agencies from another perspective.

## Method

### Physical Characteristics of State Documents

In the fall of 1996 a letter was sent to state supervisors of school library media services listed in the 1995 *Bowker Annual* with the request, “Please send any documents you make available to school library media specialists in your state.” Since the list was a bit dated, but the most recent available, recipients were also asked to make any corrections to the name and/or title of the person fulfilling that role in the state. Out of fifty states and the District of Columbia, all but two responses were received, giving the study a 96 percent response rate.

Each document was examined and the following general characteristics noted: number of documents per state, age (calculated by subtracting the copyright date from the year the document was received), total document length, and number of pages of information specific to school library media programs. Each page was also examined, and it was determined whether any information corresponded to directives in the 1988 edition of *Information Power* (AASL and AECT 1988), the guidelines in effect at the time. These directives are: collect data and disseminate information on library media programs in the state; promote library media programs through public relations activities; receive and disseminate information from state and federal reports related to school library media programs; and generate publications to assist district- and building-level personnel in providing improved services (111). If the publication included information on assisting district- and building-level personnel in providing improved services, the nature of the services was noted. Data was entered into an Excel spreadsheet for each document and state.

### State Directors and Their Impact on Publications

Once the documents were received, a survey was conducted through the use of fax. A fax was sent to the contact person at the state level who mailed the documents. They were asked:

- Is there a person at the state level in charge of school library media services (either full or part-time)?
- The person in charge of school library media services devotes approximately what percentage of their time to school library media responsibilities?
- Does the director of school library media services report to the state library or department of education?
- If there is not currently a person in charge of school library media services and there was one in the past, what year was the position eliminated?

- A 100 percent response rate was obtained. This information was added to the data set in Excel and t-tests run in order to answer the research questions.

## Characteristics of Documents

Overall, thirty-six out of fifty-one state agencies have documents and fifteen have none. The total number of publications for all states is 136. The median number of documents per state is one; the mean is 2.7 with a range from zero to twenty-two (Pennsylvania).

Calculating the number of individual documents does not tell the whole story. Since a one-page pamphlet could count as much as a two hundred-page manual in the number of documents produced per state, the total number of pages of the documents was studied. The more representative median shows the typical document to be fifty-one pages. The highest number of pages by any state is 559 (North Carolina). About two-thirds of the states publish less than one hundred pages of documents. The total number of pages for all documents produced is 15,232.

The representative document is five years old. A few directors noted that new documents were being worked on at the time of the study. However, five years is fairly old considering the changes occurring in the profession. Documents ranged from one to ten years in age. Three documents were not dated. A summary of the document set is presented in table 1 and a more detailed list by state is presented in the appendix.

**Table 1. Characteristics of State Documents Provided to School Library Media Specialists, 1996**

Number of States with Documents	36
Number of States without Documents	15
Total Number of Documents	136
Mean Number of Documents per State	2.7
Median Number of Documents per State	1
Most Documents per State	22
Total Number of Pages of Documents	15,232
Mean Number of Pages of Documents per State	202
Median Number of Pages of Documents per State	51
Most Pages of Documents per State	559
Median Age of Documents in Years	5

## Specific versus Nonspecific

Numerous states sent documents that were produced by the department of education but were not specific to school library media services. Curriculum guides and standards, state-wide technology plans, film and video catalogs, and school accreditation requirements are some

examples of types of materials that can be of interest to school library media specialists but not produced specifically for them. When these superfluous documents are isolated from the specific documents, the numbers dwindle dramatically. The total number of specific documents drops from 136 to 109. The number of pages declines from 15,232 to only 4854—a mere 32 percent, or less than one-third, of the original document set. What this shows is that the number of nonspecific documents are much longer than the documents produced for school library media specialists. This is reasonable, as was mentioned that many of these documents tend to be state curriculum guides that are quite thick.

Separating out the specific from the nonspecific documents also drops the number of states having school library media information from thirty-six to thirty-one and increases the states with no information from fifteen to twenty. Five states provided documents that contained absolutely no school library media information whatsoever. It is alarming to think that almost 40 percent of all states do not provide any printed information directed to their school library media specialists.

## Information Power

To what extent do the documents address the communication directives put forth for state agencies in the 1988 edition of *Information Power*, the national guidelines for school library media programs in effect at the time of this 1996 study? These directives and the median percentage of content devoted to them are:

- to collect data and disseminate information on library media programs in the state (5 percent);
- to promote library media programs through public relations activities (0 percent);
- to receive and disseminate information from state and federal reports related to school library media programs (0 percent); and
- to generate publications to assist district and building level personnel in providing improved services (33 percent).

Clearly the largest percentages of content are devoted to assisting district- and building-level personnel in providing improved school library media services in their schools. The documents address such typical services and functions as: information skills curricula, annotated bibliographies, sample lesson plans, staffing guidelines, policies (collection development, acceptable use), weeding guidelines, technology management, evaluation tools (surveys, checklists), professional development resources, and budget guidelines. A listing of documents by state can be found in the appendix, which include titles, dates of publications, number of pages, and a brief description of document content. Since the median age of the documents was five years old, much of the information provided in this list was dated and of questionable use in many instances.

It is unknown why two of the *Information Power* directives were left unaddressed: promoting library media programs through public relations activities and receiving and disseminating information from state and federal reports related to school library media programs. Collecting data and disseminating information on library media programs in the state comprised only 5 percent of document content. This took the form of describing several model school library media programs in a few states. Further investigation is needed to determine why the

*Information Power* guidelines for state agency communication was not invoked in the documents. Only thirteen states have full-time directors—as shown in table 2.

**Table 2. States with a Full-Time Director of School Media Services, 1998**

Alaska  
 California  
 Connecticut  
 District of Columbia  
 Florida  
 Indiana  
 Maine  
 Maryland  
 New York  
 Oklahoma  
 Pennsylvania  
 Texas  
 Utah

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### **State Directors and Their Affect**

Forty states report they have state directors of school library media services in some capacity. Their time devoted to school media services ranges from hardly any, 3 percent, to 100 percent. The median time spent is 50 percent, indicating that the directors have multiple duties. Only thirteen states have full-time directors. Six states relate that the position of director of school library media services once existed but was eliminated. All six occurred between 1991 and 1996—relatively recently. Tables 3, 4, and 5 present this data. Notes on the returned surveys, and follow-up phone calls, revealed that numerous states in recent times merged this position with other offices and divisions. These include: curriculum, educational technology, communications, learning resources, education innovation and support, instructional programs and services, and public instruction, to name a few. The majority of states (twenty-seven) have a person filling several roles. These states and the time devoted to school media responsibilities by the designated person are shown in table 4. The demise and evolution of state positions is an interesting topic for further research. It may also account for the agedness of the documents. Updating of documents for school library media services may take a low priority for someone having myriad duties and perhaps not having a comprehensive background in the field.



**Table 3. States without a Director of School Media Services and Year Position Eliminated (if applicable)**

<b>State</b>	<b>Year Position Eliminated</b>
Illinois	1992
Michigan	N/A
Minnesota	1993
Mississippi	N/A
Montana	1995
Nebraska	N/A
South Dakota	1995
Tennessee	1992
Wyoming	1995

**Table 4. States with a Part-Time Director and Time Devoted to School Library Media Responsibilities, 1998**

<b>State</b>	<b>% Time Devoted</b>
Arizona	3
Idaho	5
North Dakota	5
Rhode Island	5
New Hampshire	10
North Carolina	15
Arkansas	20
Ohio	20
Washington	20
West Virginia	20
Iowa	25
Kentucky	25
New Mexico	25
Kansas	30
Georgia	40
Alabama	45
Delaware	50
Louisiana	50

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Missouri	50
Vermont	50
Wisconsin	50
Nevada	67
Hawaii	70
Colorado	75
New Jersey	85
South Carolina	85
Virginia	90

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**Table 5. Characteristics of State Documents Provided to School Library Media Specialists Based upon the Location of the State Director, 1996**

	<b>State Library n=4</b>	<b>Dept. of Education n=36</b>
Mean Number of Documents	6	2.72
Mean Number of Pages of Documents	297	106
Mean Age of Documents	3.18	3.83
Median Number of Documents	5.5	1
Median Number of Pages of Documents	368	53.5
Median Age of Documents	3.38	3.15

Note: No statistical significance at .05 level

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Out of the forty directors, only four report directly to the state library. The other thirty-six report to the department of education. This large disparity made traditional statistical analysis difficult in testing whether or not the location of the state director of school library media services (state library or department of education) has any relationship to the number, length, or age of the documents. Although no statistical relationship was found for any of the variables, the actual numbers are interesting and presented in table 5. It may appear as if having the director located in the state library is a distinct advantage since both the number and number of pages of documents appears quite a bit larger. But the statistical analysis does not bear this out.

Does the mere existence of a state director affect the documents made available to school library media specialists? Again the unusual division of the groups (nine without a director, forty with a director) affected the statistical testing. There was no statistical significance between the

existence of a state director of school library media services and the number, length, or age of the documents. The data on this question is presented in table 6. States with a director and number of documents approached significance ( $p=.07$ ). Those with a director had more than double the number of documents (3.1) than those without a director (1.44). However, the median number of documents for both groups is one. Median and mean age of documents is somewhat close for both groups—around the three to four year mark.

**Table 6. Characteristics of State Documents Provided to School Library Media Specialists Based upon the Existence of a State Director, 1996**

	<b>Director</b> <b>n=40</b>	<b>No Director</b> <b>n=9</b>
Mean Number of Documents	3.1	1.44
Mean Number of Pages of Documents	125	79
Mean Age of Documents	3.73	4.16
Median Number of Documents	1	1
Median Number of Pages of Documents	62	32
Median Age of Documents	3.15	3.3

Note: No statistical significance at .05 level

Directors spend from 3 percent to 100 percent of their time devoted to school library media services. Because of this wide range, tests were run on how the document number, length, and age might be affected by the amount of time spent in direct service to school library media in addition to the previous division of groups of director and no director. This data can be viewed in table 7. Three groups were used for comparison: states whose directors spend 100 percent of their time in school media services, those with no director, and the remaining group who spend part of their time in school media services.

**Table 7. Characteristics of State Documents Provided to School Library Media Specialists Based upon the Time Devoted to School Library Media Services by the Director, 1996**

	<b>FT Director</b> <b>n=13</b>	<b>PT Director</b> <b>n=27</b>	<b>No Director</b> <b>n=9</b>
Mean Number of Documents	4.2*	2.5	1.44*
Mean Number of Pages of Documents	160	108	79
Mean Number of Relevant Pages	140**	60	47**
Mean Age of Documents in Years	4.49	3.33	4.16

\*Significant at .05 level for full-time vs. no Director

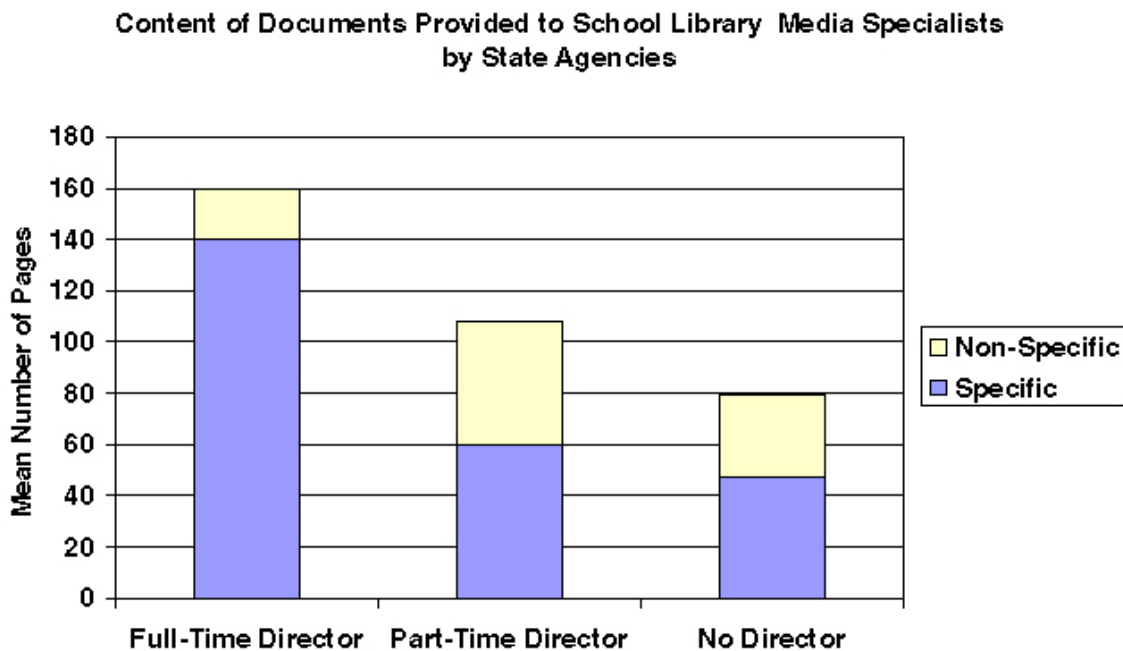
\*\*Significant at .05 level for full-time vs. no Director

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One statistically significant relationship was found. The mean number of documents provided by a full-time director (4.2) is significantly more ( $p=.045$ ) than those provided by a department having no director (1.44).

Interesting and statistically significant relationships also exist between document content specific to school library media services and state directors. A comparison of the specific number of pages of documents versus nonspecific number of pages of documents is presented in figure 1 and table 7. States with a full-time director have 140 out of 160 pages of specific information or 88 percent relevancy. The percentage drops to 56 percent relevancy (60 out of 108 pages) for part-time directors and is similar for no director—60 percent (47 out of 79 pages). Having a state director affects not only the quantity of information available to school library media specialists in the state but also the quality. Those states having no or part-time directors appear to send out more general educational materials and those with a full-time director send out more materials that are relevant. Although only statistically significant for full-time vs. no director ( $p=.045$ ) at 140 versus 47 relevant pages, the practical considerations of 140 pages for full-time versus only 60 for part-time is noteworthy. The statistical value ( $p=.058$ ) for full-time vs. part-time was very close to significance. However, the message is clear—as far as provision of documents for school library media specialists, it is much more advantageous to have a full-time director than either a part-time or no director.

**Figure 1. Specific and Non-specific Number of Pages of State Documents in Relationship to the Time Devoted to School Library Media Services by the Director 1996**



Note: Specific information is defined as “of unique interest and/or value to school library media specialists” and Non-specific information is defined as general education materials.

Not surprisingly, five out of the nine states with no director have no specific documents relevant to school library media services. Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming fall in this category. Of the remaining four states, three once had directors whose positions were eliminated in 1992 and 1993—Illinois, Minnesota, and Tennessee. Examining the age of the publications for these states leads to the conclusion that once the director’s position was eliminated so was the further publication of documents. The one exception is Michigan that has several relevant documents for school library media specialists, although no director.

### Information Provided at State Web Sites

In addition to printed documents, information can be provided by state directors in a variety of ways such as in workshops, via professional organizations in the state, and now via Web sites (Bertland 2000). Although not originally considered, the study was expanded slightly to examine the state Web sites affecting school media services. The sites were examined in order to determine:

- Does the state have a Web site for the department of education or state library?
- Does the Web site contain school library media information?
- Is the school library media information full-text or links only?

At the time of the study, thirty-eight states (75 percent) had a Web site for their department of education or state library. Thirteen states (25 percent) did not have a Web site. Twenty-four of the thirty-eight states with Web sites had sites that contained school library media information which is less than half of all states. Analysis of the information found at the sites revealed that eighteen of the states (35 percent) providing school library media information are a combination of links and full-text documents. The remaining six states (12 percent) provide links only to other Internet sources of school library information. This data is presented in table 8. Further examination is necessary to determine whether or not the Web site information and printed documents provided by a state overlap or are unique. Preliminary observations indicate a wide range of breadth and quality of sites. Those of Kentucky ([www.pld.fayette.k12.ky.us/lms/default.htm](http://www.pld.fayette.k12.ky.us/lms/default.htm)), Oregon ([www.oslis.k12.or.us](http://www.oslis.k12.or.us)), and Wisconsin ([www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/index.html](http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/index.html)) appear to be particularly useful.

**Table 8. Web sites of State Departments of Education and State Libraries 1999**

	No. of States	% of States
Has a Web site	38	75
Web site Contains School Media Information	24	47
Information is Full-Text and Links	18	35
Information is Links Only	6	12

One aspect of this phenomenon was subsequently investigated. There are four states (California, Florida, Indiana, and Texas) that have full-time directors but provided no specific printed school library information. However, a check of their Web sites revealed that the Web sites of Indiana and Texas are very comprehensive in regards to school library media data. Florida's Web site has minimal information. In 1998 California's Web site also had little school media information. A full-time director was hired about that time after the state having no position. A check on the Web site in February of 2000 revealed a dramatic improvement.

## Conclusions and Implications

### Nationwide Shortage of School Library Media Specialists

In light of current staffing shortages and educational issues relative to school library media specialists the status of state documents is of concern. There is a nationwide shortage of school library media specialists (Everhart 1998). In some areas of the country the shortages are so severe that people are being thrust into the position of school library media specialist without certification or with training on an emergency basis. If they are currently working on a library degree while on the job, they may be alone in a distance-education program possibly located in another state. One method of support for building-level school library media specialists can be from documents provided by state level departments of school library media services. It is important that quality documents be available.

## Access to the Internet

Although more information is now available via the Internet, many school library media specialists may still have limited or no access. The Internet connection might be in another part of the building such as a computer lab, or be confined to only a few workstations. Slow-speed modems and antiquated printers make accessing and printing lengthy state documents difficult. Already besieged with innumerable tasks, accessing and printing state documents, however valuable, will take a low precedence. Until every school library media specialist has their own connection, printed documents will still be essential. Official printed documents could also convey more clout when dealing with school administrators. This has not been established and is an area for further research. If electronic versions of the documents are the only kind available, building-level school library media specialists need to be made aware of their state's Web site and the information furnished there.

School library media specialists can also benefit from accessing other states' Web sites for valuable information. Useful starting points are state pages relating to school library media services ([www.sldirectory.com/libsf/stlibs.html#usa](http://www.sldirectory.com/libsf/stlibs.html#usa)) for state agencies and organizations of interest to school librarians: state organizations for professional organizations ([www.libertynet.org/lion/organizations.html](http://www.libertynet.org/lion/organizations.html)).

## Loss of State Director of School Library Media Services Positions

The erosion of the position of state director of school library media services is also a problem. Interviews with various state department personnel disclosed that those states who held on to the directors they hired in the early seventies saw the position eliminated or merged as the directors retired. In some cases the positions were not filled as a cost-cutting measure, but in others it was because no qualified applicants could be found. The shortages existing at the building level (Everhart 1998) are being felt at the state level as well.

Providing good publications is only one contribution of a state director. As already mentioned they provide assistance in numerous areas. Since full-time directors can provide higher quality publications, it would be interesting to measure the quality of other services to school library media specialists in the states and the effect of the time devoted to school library media services by the director.

## Support for Standards Curricula

The standards movement is in place in forty-nine states and there is more pressure on schools to quantify student achievement via standardized test scores and mastery of skills. A nationwide poll (Henry 2000) reported that 58 percent of teachers said they don't receive much guidance about what to teach students from state standards. School library media programs need to support and facilitate standards curricula. Because each state's standards are unique, state documents can describe methods and models whereby school library media specialists can implement this facilitation.

## Relationship to National Guidelines

The release of new national guidelines for school library media programs appears to propel the states to react by producing their own documents. Numerous state documents were issued within a few years of the 1988 edition of *Information Power*. Varied titles included the term Information Power, such as *Enriching Education: Providing Information Power for Alabama Students* (Alabama State Department of Education 1992) and *Information Power for Washington* (Superintendent of Public Instruction 1991). In the south, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Louisiana report activity in publishing new materials (Gordon 2000) in response to *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (1998). Since the role of the school library media specialist is changing so rapidly, perhaps AASL and AECT need to react in a more timely manner and release guidelines every five years, instead of ten, thus providing the needed impetus at the state level for their publications.

## Provision of Information

When presenting this research (Everhart 1998) an audience member noted that most documents for practicing school library media specialists in her state are provided by [professional organizations](#), rather than state agencies. While commendable, fee-paying, professional organizations should not be adopting the role of public government agencies. The corollary is that government agencies should not be so willing to surrender the responsibilities for dissemination of information to these organizations. Given the innumerable duties noted by part-time directors, this is somewhat understandable. However, many of the outstanding documents examined were developed by teams of practitioners, members from professional associations, and library school faculty. This may be one solution for overworked directors. Another is to utilize exemplary documents from other states as models, adapting them to local needs.

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## Appendix: Documents Provided to School Library Media Specialists by State, 1996

### ALABAMA

*Enriching Education: Providing Information Power for Alabama Students*, 1992, 51 p.

This covers the roles of the media program and media personnel, scope and sequence of library skills for grades K-12, Alabama guidelines and standards, sample policies and procedures.

### ALASKA

*Handbook for Alaska K-12 School Libraries*, 1995, 296 p.

This comprehensive document covers a wide variety of topics including management of people and collections, networks, leadership, standards, issues, and legislation. Everything is here in one place for the new or experienced Alaska school library media specialist.

### ARKANSAS

*Library Media Center Guidelines for Arkansas Schools K-12*, n.d., 196 p.

These guidelines are broken down into the following categories: library media program philosophy and objectives, guidelines for research and information skills, personnel, budget, annual program planning with building level committee, collection, facilities, educational telecommunications, equipment/technology, and staff development. Current regional, state, and national, current research, best practices, and sample forms, letters, and memos support each category.

### COLORADO

*Information Literacy Guidelines*, 1994, 8 p.

This book provides five information literacy guidelines, and under each one a list of corresponding skills students should acquire.

*The Information Literate Student*, 1994, poster.

Poster describes characteristics of an information literate student.

### CONNECTICUT

*Learning Resources and Technology: A Guide to Program Development*, 1991, 86 p.

Connecticut's guidelines for planning, implementing, and evaluating learning resources and technology in the teaching and learning processes.

## DELAWARE

*English Language Arts Curriculum Framework*, 1995, 61 p.

*Mathematics Curriculum Framework*, 1995, 98 p.

*Science Curriculum Framework*, 1995, 84 p.

*Social Studies Curriculum Framework*, 1995, 81 p.

These curriculum guidelines are not specific to school library media but do contain some lesson plans for meeting standards in accessing, organizing, and evaluating information by listening, reading, and viewing. Unfortunately in these lesson plans, no mention is made of cooperation with the school library media specialist.

## GEORGIA

*Georgia Mediagraphy*, 1993, 20 p.

A guide to print and nonprint materials about Georgia and Georgians arranged by curriculum areas.

*Media Specialist Handbook*, 1991, 116 p.

Information most frequently needed by Georgia media professionals has been gathered together including: preparation and certification, roles and responsibilities, standards and policies, services and resources, media facilities, and professional organizations.

*Outstanding Media Components*, 1994, 23 p.

School library media programs across Georgia that are outstanding in each of 24 program components are described here. Examples of components are: collection development, flexible scheduling, production, and use of technology.

## HAWAII

*Essential Content*, 1992, 3 pages deal with information literacy and 3 pages with technological literacy (entire document not sent).

These particular sections of this state curriculum guide list goals for students in the areas of appreciation of resources, organization of information, acquisition of information, use of information, ethics of information use, and awareness, applications, integration, and ethics of technology.

*Guidelines for Hawaii's School Library Instructional Technology Centers*, 1994, 80 p.

Eleven areas of the school library media program are addressed for both resources and administration. Phase 1 guidelines are for minimum resources and services, phase 2 represents areas for growth, and Phase 3 represents a quality program.

*Library/Study Skills in Hawaii's Schools*, 1982 with updates.

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*Networking Hawaii's School Libraries*, 1993, 109 p.

This guide offers both a philosophical view of networking and specific information for the building level school library media specialist to use in preparing for automation, automating and cataloging management functions, participating in interlibrary loan activities and becoming involved in networking activities. Additionally, help with popular software programs for school library media centers to convert and upload records is provided.

*PATH: Program for Assessing Teaching in Hawaii*, 1993, 3 pages deal with Library Services (entire document not sent).

Fourteen objectives for the school library media specialist are listed with an explanation of which evaluation process should be used for each objective, whether it is observation, records, interviews, judgments, or combinations of these.

## **IDAHO**

*Idaho Humanities Content Guide and Framework*, 1994, 33 p.

*Idaho K-12 Comprehensive Health Education Content Guide and Framework*, 1994, 44 p.

*Idaho K-12 Mathematics Content Guide and Framework*, 1994, 122 p.

*Idaho K-12 Physical Education Content Guide and Framework*, 1994, 50 p.

*Idaho K-12 Science Content Guide and Framework*, 1994, 82 p.

*Secondary School Courses of Study state of Idaho 1992*, 1992, unpaginated.

These general curriculum guides do not contain any information regarding school library media programs but could be used by media specialists to familiarize themselves with Idaho curriculum.

## **ILLINOIS**

*Recommended Standards for Educational Library Media Programs*, 1986, 32 p.

Three phases of quantitative standards are listed for K-8 and 9-12 levels. Areas addressed are staff, expenditures, space, instruction, coordination of materials with the instructional program, collections, and equipment. Qualitative standards are also described.

## **INDIANA**

*Materials Directory*, 1995, unpaginated.

## **IOWA**

*School Rules of Iowa*, 1989, 20 p.

These are minimum requirement standards that must be met by Iowa public schools to be accredited. One section requires each “attendance center” to operate a media services program to support the total curriculum that is supervised by a certified library media specialist.

## KANSAS

*Kansas Curricular Standards for Social Studies*, 1995, 95 p.

*Kansas Curricular Standards for Communications*, 1994, 18 p.

*Kansas Curricular Standards for Science*, 1995, 41 p.

*Kansas Mathematics Curriculum Standards*, 1993, 97 p.

*Kansas Quality Performance Accreditation*, 1993, 29 p.

*Quality Performance Accreditation Glossary of Terms*, 1994, 17 p.

These general curriculum guides do not contain any information regarding school library media programs but could be used by media specialists to familiarize themselves with Kansas’s curriculum. The Communications guide has areas where school library media programs would be instrumental—as in analyzing information, applying problem-solving skills, finding information and processing, analyzing, synthesizing it, and applying it to new situations.

## KENTUCKY

*Online II: Essentials of a Model Library Media Program*, 1995, 67 p.

Includes a list of essential elements of library media programs, effect of these elements, and how to implement them, information literacy, collaboration between the library media specialist and teachers, descriptions of progressive levels of library media programs (beginning, emerging, and advanced), evaluation tool, and guidelines for staffing, resources, and facilities.

## MAINE

*Information Skills Guide for Maine Educators*, 1990, 50 p.

A scope and sequence for K-12 based on Bloom’s Taxonomy. The tone of the document is integration of information skills throughout the curriculum and contains discussions of philosophy, problems of student and staff attitudes and how to overcome them, Loertscher’s taxonomies for teachers and library media specialists, a description of the steps of the research process, and more.

*A Maine Sampler of Information Skills Activities, Part I*, 1992-1993, 28 p.

*A Maine Sampler of Information Skills Activities, Part II*, 1992-1993, 72 p.

*A Maine Sampler of Information Skills Activities, Part III*, 1993-1994, 75 p.

*A Maine Sampler of Information Skills Activities, Part IV*, 1994, 146 p.

These booklets provide sample lesson plans for Maine Student Book Award nominees. Activities relate directly to the *Information Skills Guide for Maine Educators*, implement resource-based teaching, and introduce students to higher level and critical thinking skills.

*Maine School Library Media Programs*, 1992, 27 p.

Specifies state quantitative guidelines for personnel, facilities and equipment, and the collection. states the role of the school media program in the curriculum and an information skills philosophy.

*Maine School Library Survey*, 1991, 20 p.

Summarizes findings of a statewide survey on public school libraries from data gathered in February of 1990.

*Notable Maine Children's Authors and Illustrators*, 1989, 22 p.

Lists notable Maine children's authors and illustrators, facts about their lives, and whether or not they will visit schools or libraries.

## **MICHIGAN**

*Guidelines for Library Media Programs in Michigan Schools*, 1994, 4 p.

Provides very generalized qualitative guidelines in the following areas: staffing, information networking, facilities, evaluation, and budget.

*Guidelines for Library Media Center Resources in Michigan Schools*, 1995, 17 p.

Describes various roles of the media program and includes a chart listing program components, and three levels of programs (minimum, average, exemplary). Also provided are detailed job descriptions for library media center staffing, standards for facilities, and a comprehensive annotated bibliography of publications that deal with guidelines for library media center resources.

*Information Processing Skills: Developing Lesson Plans and Sample Lessons A-G*, 1994, 9 p.

Six sample lesson plans that integrate the library media center with various curriculum activities are presented.

*Information Processing Skills: Scope and Sequence Planning and Integration Matrix*, 1994, 3 p.

A scope and sequence chart that includes grade levels K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 in eight information processing skills areas. The chart lists the skills to be learned and the level to be mastered at each of the grade levels.

*Inventory of Instructional Telecommunications Systems in Michigan*, 1992, 85 p.

Provides a description of the different technologies used in telecommunications systems in Michigan and examines six statewide networks serving education.

*Michigan's State Technology Plan*, 1992, 22 p.

Twenty-two recommendations are described for technology in Michigan's schools. Recommendation 15 is specific to library media centers and others would also involve the services of the school library media center and media specialist.

*Position Paper on Information Processing Skills*, 1992, 4 p.

Designed to help local districts develop an outcomes based library media program, sample goals and objectives for information processing skills are given as well as statements on the mission of the library media program and the role of the library media program in a restructured school.

## **MISSISSIPPI**

*Accreditation Requirements of the State Board of Education*, 1995, 76 p.

Standards for elementary and secondary schools in Mississippi are given, focusing on curricular reform of 1994 which strengthened and expanded performance-based accreditation. Standard 33 focuses on library media services.

## **MISSOURI**

*Standards for Missouri School Library Media Centers*, 1995, 28 p. (draft)

Quantitative and qualitative guidelines are provided for collections, funding, personnel, and facilities.

## **NEVADA**

*Information Power Nevada*, 1995, 71 p.

Qualitative and quantitative standards for programs and services, resources, and media center management.

## **NEW HAMPSHIRE**

*Information Skills*, 1992, 17 p.

Lists core objectives and information concepts and skills to be taught. Also provides guidance on how to determine levels to emphasize at the local district level, sample lesson plan, sample unit, and sample LMC use-planning guide.

*Maintaining Library Media Center Collections*, 1994, 5 p.



A guide to all phases of weeding: why weed, what to weed in each classification area, when to weed, withdrawal procedures, and what to do with weeded materials.

*The Public Library and the School Library Media Center in New Hampshire*, 1994, 6 p.

Prescribes roles, responsibilities, and relationships for school library media centers and public libraries in New Hampshire. Describes five combined school/public libraries in the state.

## **NEW YORK**

*Aspects of Library Media Programs which Support a New Compact for Learning the Six Principles*, n.d., 6 p.

Each of the six principles (all children can learn, focus on results, aim for mastery, provide the means, provide authority with accountability, and reward success and remedy failure) have specific examples within the library media program listed that apply to them.

*Electronic Doorway Libraries*, 1994, 2 p.

Pamphlet describing New York's Electronic Doorway Libraries (libraries using computer and telecommunications technologies to provide a wide range of services.)

*Guidelines for a Library Media Program*, n.d., 3 p.

Lists some general qualitative guidelines for library media programs, roles of the media specialist, and indicators of success.

*Library Media Student Outcomes, K-12*, (draft), n.d., 2 p.

Three general outcomes are described (locate, access, utilize, and evaluate information in a variety of formats to meet educational, recreational, and personal needs and goals; read for information, problem solving, and enjoyment; and empower students to become life-long learners) and objectives for students are listed under each of the outcomes.

*A New Compact for Learning: Improving Public Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Education Results in the 1990s*, 1991, 21 p.

Describes a comprehensive strategy for improving education based on collaboration between parents, educators, government, colleges, libraries, social service agencies, and community groups. Roles for each of these groups are discussed.

*Secondary Library Media and Information Skills Syllabus Grades 7-12 Part I: Scope and Sequence*, 1988., 46 p.

Provides library media specialists and classroom teachers specific goals, objectives, and skills for implementing a fully integrated library skills course of study.

*Secondary Library Media and Information Skills Syllabus Grades 7-12 Part II: Integrated Units of Study, Grades 7-8, 1989, 139 p.*

Fully developed integrated units in a wide variety of subject areas and library media skills are provided. They include art, music, science, social studies, and more, and are very detailed with objectives, activities, roles, time required, evaluation, and follow-up activities.

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

*Learning Connections: Guidelines for Media and Technology Programs, 1992, 275 p.*

The latest guidelines cover the areas of program, planning and assessment, resources, budget, facilities, personnel, and system-level services.

*North Carolina Instructional Technology Plan, 1995, 69 p.*

Puts forth the state's long range technology plan and gives direction for local school districts to develop their own plan. Also presents the findings of a statewide technology study.

*North Carolina Instructional Technology Plan-Guide: Technological Recommendations and Standards, 1995, 19 p.*

Companion volume to the overall instructional plan, this guide covers only hardware, software, and connectivity guidelines.

*Teacher Handbook: Information Skills—Computer Skills K-12 , 1992, 196 p.*

Emphasizing critical and thinking, problem solving, decision making, and collaborative learning, and integrating information skills into all curriculum areas, this document provides a competency-based curriculum in the areas of information and computer skills. Philosophy, program outcomes, competency goals, and objectives are detailed for a variety of lessons and levels.

## **NORTH DAKOTA**

*North Dakota Curriculum Frameworks: Volume 1 (language arts, library media, mathematics, science, social studies), 1993, 89 p. Library Media Section, 16 p.*

Lists eight student outcome statements and the benchmarks/performance standards that accompany them. The benchmarks are for the end of grades 4, 8, and 12.

## **OHIO**

*INFOhio 2000: Information Programs for the 21st Century, undated, 15 p.*

Identifies student outcomes in library media programs, presents a recommended skills curriculum, a student centered/project-based instructional model, and guidelines for school districts to design educational environments to achieve the outcomes identified.

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*Quality Library Services K-12*, 1985, 108 p.

Provides standards and general operating information for school library media specialists. Information includes: rationale, dimensions of service, the school library media program components, designing a K-12 library program, trends, and innovations. Appendices have a bibliography, certification requirements, information for volunteers, and assessment instruments.

## **OKLAHOMA**

*The Media Program: Standard VII*, 1994, 9 p.

Actual copy of the state standards for accreditation of elementary, middle, secondary, and vocational and technical schools covering media programs. Standards address staffing, seating, collection, and expenditures.

## **SOUTH CAROLINA**

*Connections: Guidelines for South Carolina School Media Programs* (draft), n.d., 11 p.

Includes a mission statement, nine belief statements, eight goals for the library media program, and strategies for the library media program to achieve those goals.

## **UTAH**

*Utah School Library Media Programs: Empowering Students to Function Effectively in an Information World*, 1991, 49 p.

This document contains myriad information: Utah resolutions concerning library media, a core curriculum, information regarding certification and job descriptions, and quantitative standards.

## **VIRGINIA**

*Standards and Regulations for Public Schools in Virginia*, 1992, 34 p.

These general standards and regulations are for all parts of the educational program in Virginia schools and include such things as procedures for accreditation and graduation requirements. Section 6.4 applies to library media services, providing fourteen quantitative guidelines as specific as “the library media center should have an unabridged dictionary and abridged dictionaries.” School librarians are also mentioned in the section on staffing.

## **WASHINGTON**

*Information Power for Washington*, 1991, 75 p.

Qualitative and quantitative guidelines are here for programs, instruction, services, staff, resources, budget, and facilities. Additional information includes support for school library media programs, library media program evaluation, results of a 1990 survey of Washington school libraries, national professional organization documents, and a bibliography.

## WISCONSIN

*A Brief Report of Statistics: 1988 Survey of School Library Media Programs in Wisconsin, 1991*, 8 p. Statistical results of a 1988 Wisconsin survey on library media center staffing, services, operation, expenditures, and future goals. The information is broken down by level of schools.

*Bureau for Instructional Media and Technology*, n.d., 2 p.

This sheet provides the mission statement for this state bureau along with a staff directory of personnel in the bureau.

*The CCBC This Season*, 1995, 2 p.

Describes workshops, lectures, exhibits, and services of the Wisconsin Cooperative Children's Book Center.

*Cooperative Children's Book Center*, n.d., 2 p.

Lists and describes services and publications of the Cooperative Children's Book Center.

*Coping with Copyright*, 1986, 38 p.

Describes copyright law and how it affects libraries, media, and school libraries.

*Dealing with Selection and Censorship*, 1991, 34 p.

Provides sample school district policies and procedures, a selected bibliography, intellectual freedom statements, and sources of assistance for dealing with selection and censorship.

*District Level Leadership for School Library Media Programs*, 1993, 2 p.

Lists various functions of the district level media specialist in leadership roles.

*Essential Minimum Library Media Services*, 1993, 5 p.

Spells out professional staff responsibilities and functions essential to establishing or maintaining the basic minimum library media services to be provided in every school.

*Information Literacy: A Position Paper on Information Problem-Solving*, 1993, 4 p.

Identifies key elements of information literacy and presents a rationale for integrating information literacy into all aspects of the K-12 curriculum.

*Internet Policy Statement and Plan*, 1994, 5 p.

Describes the Department of Public Instruction's policy on the Internet, its goals for Wisconsin schools, objectives, and tasks to reach the goals.

*Library Media Facilities and New Technology*, 1990, 1 p.

Makes specific recommendations for classrooms and library media centers for space, equipment, and supplies to deal with new technologies.

*Library Media Services*, 1991, 5 p.

Lists state standards for library media services, requirements for meeting the standards, and examples of documentation that show evidence the standard has been met.

*Library Media Services K-12 Standards Review Worksheet*, 1987, 9 p.

Lists requirements of the state's long range plan with standards of noncompliance, minimal compliance, compliance, and exemplary compliance for library media services.

*Matrix for Curriculum Planning in Library Media and Information Skills Education*, 1989, 36 p.

Organizes over 900 competencies and skills described in five Wisconsin curriculum guides to help teachers and library media specialists develop integrated programs. They are grouped under five major concepts and further subdivided by types of skills in grade levels.

*Need Information?* 1991, 1 p.

Lists topics on which information is available from the Bureau of Instructional Media and Technology.

*1993-94 School Year Library Media Program Expenditures*, 1994, 1 p.

A summary of what Wisconsin's public school spent to purchase materials for their library media centers during the 1993-94 school year. It is broken down by total expenditure, per-pupil expenditure, type of material, and the sources of funding.

*The Personal Qualities of the Library Media Specialist*, n.d., 5 p.

Describes personality traits of exemplary school library media specialists taken from research studies and provides a bibliography of those studies.

*Publications 95 Catalog*, 1995, 8 p.

Lists and describes publications available from the Wisconsin Department of Education with information for ordering.

*Reactions to: Leadership for the 90s: Final Report of the state Superintendent's Task Force Report on School Library Media Issues*, 1991, 19 p.

Report of this committee identified eight issues affecting Wisconsin library media programs, followed by major reactions and list of recommendations. An appendix ranks all of the recommendations.

*Reading and the School Library*, 1992, 1 p.

A position paper on the role of the school library in reading.

*A Sample Outline for a Library Media Program Long-Range Plan*, 1988, 2 p.

Lists the parts of a sample library media program long-range plan and a description of them. Also includes the steps in developing a long-range plan.

*Wisconsin's Common School Fund*, 1994, 2 p.

Describes Wisconsin's Common School Fund and how it can be used to purchase for the library media center.

*Should teachers in the elementary grades accompany students when they go to the library media center as a class?* n.d. 1 p.

Provides rationale as to why elementary teachers should accompany their classes to the library media center.

**School Library Media Research** (ISSN: 1523-4320) is the successor to *School Library Media Quarterly Online* and the predecessor to *School Library Research*, an official journal of the American Association of School Librarians. The purpose of *School Library Media Research* is to promote and publish high quality original research concerning the management, implementation, and evaluation of school library programs. The journal also emphasizes research on instructional theory, teaching methods, and critical issues relevant to the school library profession. Visit the [website](#) for more information.



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