UTAH SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA
PROGRAM BENCHMARKS

2019

Utah School Library Media Programs Benchmarks, 2019

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Principle

> ❝Clearly, the studies confirm that quality school library programs with full-time, certified librarians and library support staff are indicative of and critical to student achievement. In fact, quality school library programs may play an even greater role in providing academic support to those students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. In closing the achievement gap and assuring that all students are prepared with the 21st century skills they need to succeed, school leaders and librarians need to embrace this body of research and foster school library programs that can make a difference in student learning. Schools that support their library programs give their students a better chance to succeed.❞
>
> *(Kachel, "School Library Research Summarized: A Graduate Class Project", 2013)*

Introduction

This document is a collaborative effort between state organizations associated with public school library media programs. It outlines a set of goals and standards for all public school library media programs in Utah. These standards comply with national standards established by the American Library Association (ALA) and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL).

The standards outlined in this document work in partnership with the Utah Library Media Core Curricula to connect the library media program with all areas of the school curriculum. Areas addressed include curriculum, policies, facilities and access, resources, personnel, job descriptions, and budgets.

At the center of these school library media standards is a professional teacher librarian. Teacher librarians act as coaches, connectors, catalysts, and caregivers by providing support and cooperative learning experiences for students, teachers, and staff. Research consistently concludes that a school library media program with a full-time certified teacher librarian, support staff, and strong computer network leads to higher student achievement, regardless of social and economic factors in a community (Lance and Schwarz, "How Pennsylvania Libraries Pay Off: Investments in Student Achievement and Academic Standards", 2012).

Philosophy

> The school library program is critical to the learning process. The necessary skills for college and career ready students include being literate in a wide range of digital, visual, textual, and technological formats. Students need to be able to access, evaluate, and process information strategically and methodically in order to make informed decisions and create products involving critical thinking skills.

Curriculum

Standards

Highly qualified teacher librarians, working in collaboration with content area teachers, provide research and inquiry-based instruction in order to develop the students' ability to find and use information to support their academic learning and personal development. The Utah Standards for Library Media were created by certified teacher librarians to demonstrate the integration of information literacy skills across all curricular areas.

The standards are organized into three clusters:

1. Media Literacy and Engagement
2. Reading Engagement
3. Research and Information

These standards, which incorporate inquiry-based learning as well as other research model strategies, will be taught in collaboration with the content area teachers, not in isolation by the teacher librarian. This collaboration will deepen student learning, foster independent reading, develop reading stamina, build task resiliency, strengthen text dependent writing, and increase the students' information literacy knowledge. Informative handouts, tutorials, and implementation tools are available through the Utah State Board of Education website and the Utah Education Network.

Links for the Elementary and Secondary Library Media Standards are available at
https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/librarymedia

Philosophy

> Effective school libraries are dynamic learning environments that bridge the gap between access and opportunity for all K-12 learners. Under the leadership of the teacher librarian, the school library provides students access to resources and technology, connecting classroom learning to real-world events. By providing access to an array of well-managed resources, school libraries enable academic knowledge to be linked to deeper, personalized learning. The expanded learning environment of the school library ensures the unique interests and needs of individual students are met. In this way, effective school library programs prepare students for college, career, and community   The school library program is at the forefront of the complex and sensitive issues that surround information and its uses in today's society. *(American Association of School Librarians, 2016)*

Policies

Standards

District

Each school district shall have a formal philosophy and policy statement to guide and assess the library media programs and personnel of its schools.

School

Each school shall have a written policy to be used to continually evaluate the quality, depth, and breadth of the library media program. The written policy, incorporated in a "Policies and Procedures" manual shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- Mission statement
- Statement of support for intellectual freedom and objectives
- Challenged materials statement and procedure
- Guide for collection development
  - Responsibility for selection
  - Selection criteria
  - Selection and acquisitions procedure
  - Special collections development
  - Selection of controversial materials
  - Gift and donation management
  - Collection maintenance
  - Weeding procedures
- Acceptable use policy (AUP)
  - Supporting district documents
  - Statement on library use of technology (reiterating the District AUP) that "… governs behavior on the Internet and encourages ethical use of information."(American Library Association, 2017)
- Other policies
  - Job descriptions and evaluation tools
  - General information for daily library operations
  - Procedures regarding circulation, fines, replacement of lost or damaged materials, etc.

Philosophy

❝ The school library is a unique and essential part of a learning community. As a destination for on-site and virtual personalized learning, the school library is a vital connection between school and home. As the leader of this space and its functions, the school librarian ensures that the school library environment provides all members of the school community access to information and technology, connecting learning to real-world events. By providing access to an array of well-managed resources, school librarians enable academic knowledge to be linked to deep understanding. ❞

(American Association of School Librarians, 2018)

Facilities and Access

Standards

- Services of the library media center shall be handicap accessible and meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.
- Resources, materials, and services shall be available to students, teachers, and staff.
- Items of permanent value, whether print or non-print, shall be cataloged, labeled, and shelved using either the Dewey Decimal or Library of Congress classification systems.
- The library media center shall provide an inviting environment that is conducive to student learning and allows full access for all students, teachers, and staff.
- The arrangement of the library media center shall permit visual control of the entire center from the circulation and/or office area.
- Environmental concerns include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Seating for large groups, small groups, and individual study (e.g. tables, carrels, and leisure reading areas)
  - Appropriately sized and constructed shelving and seating
  - Proper lighting for designed areas and tasks
  - Sufficient electrical and networking outlets to accommodate technology
  - Functional circulation area close to the entrance and easily accessible
  - Public access points for book retrieval
  - Attractive, adequately sized, ADA compliant facilities
  - Sufficient signage
  - Aesthetically pleasing arrangement of furniture, stacks, study areas, etc.
  - Adequate resources to ensure regular inspection, repair and replacement of materials and equipment
  - Office space and adequate work areas for processing, maintenance, storage, etc.
  - Adequate space for makerspace and STEM-enhanced activities
  - An electronic cataloging and circulation program with sufficient access, speed, and capacity workstations to facilitate access to materials for students, teachers, and staff
  - Technical support

Philosophy

❝ Reading is the core of personal and academic competency. In the school library, learners engage with relevant information resources and digital learning opportunities in a culture of reading. School librarians initiate and elevate motivational reading initiatives by using story and personal narrative to engage learners. School librarians curate current digital and print materials and technology to provide access to high-quality reading materials that encourage learners, educators, and families to become lifelong learners and readers. ❞

(American Association of School Librarians, 2018)

Resources

Standards

Print Resources   (defined as any "hard copy" materials including, but not limited to, books, periodicals, and prints)

- The school library media collection shall have a minimum of fifteen (15) volumes per student or 3,000 volumes, whichever is greater. Collections need not exceed 15,000 to maintain a current, relevant, up-to-date collection, at least 5% of the collection shall be replaced or updated annually.
- As part of the process of keeping the collection relevant and up-to-date, the collection should be weeded regularly.
- Print periodicals shall be available for recreational reading and to increase literacy.

Digital Resources   (defined as non-print materials including, but not limited to, databases, videos, audiobooks, digital files and streaming titles)

- Digital resources shall comprise an integral part of the collection and shall be available for student use.
- Digital databases and other online resources available through statewide partnerships (e.g. Utah's Online Library) shall be available for student, faculty, and staff use within the school library media center.
- Non-print titles shall be available to all students, faculty, and staff.
- Non-print items shall be current, relevant, and supportive of school goals and curricula.
- Non-print items shall be in compliance with copyright laws and policies set forth in district, school, and legislative mandates.

Philosophy

"Information technologies must be appropriately integrated and equitably available. Although information technology is woven into almost every aspect of learning and life, not every learner and educator has equitable access to up-to-date, appropriate technology and connectivity. An effective school library bridges digital and socioeconomic divides to affect information technology access and skill."

(American Association of School Librarians, 2018)

Resources continued...

Technology Resources

(defined as digital video and digital cameras, computers, projectors, software, hotspots, headphones, tablets, and other hardware)

- Technology resources should be in compliance with the school district's approved technology plan and school library media program guidelines.
- Technology resources shall be current and relevant to school goals and curricula.
- Technology resources shall be accessible to students, faculty, and staff.
- The school library media center shall be connected to local and wide-area networks and have Internet access.
- School library media center workstations shall be provided to meet student needs according to the following formula:
- At least 10 workstations for schools with less than 400 students
- At least 20 workstations for schools with 400-800 students
- At least 30 workstations for schools with over 801 students

Philosophy

> Qualified school librarians lead effective school libraries. As they guide organizational and personal change, effective school librarians' model, promote, and foster inquiry learning in adequately staffed and resourced school libraries. Qualified school librarians have been educated and certified to perform interlinked, interdisciplinary, and cross-cutting roles as instructional leaders, program administrators, educators, collaborative partners, and information specialists.

(American Association of School Librarians, 2018)

Personnel

Standards

- Each school district shall have a district library media supervisor with current library media certification. In school districts with less than 4,000 students, a certified school teacher librarian may be designated and assume the duties of a district supervisor.
- Each school, regardless of size or level, shall have a full-time certified teacher librarian.
- Teacher librarians shall be entitled to all benefits accorded to other contracted teachers.
- Schools shall have additional clerical or assistant staff determined by the school's need. This number is based upon the number of students and teachers, instructional programs, and services. The additional support staff shall be determined by district-formulated numbers. AASL guidelines are invaluable in determining the number of support staff needed for the school's population.
- Each school shall provide a technical support person(s) to provide service for technology programs, facility usage, and upkeep of library digital and technology resources.

Licensed Personnel

Professional teacher librarians shall have a current Utah Educator License and proper library media certification.

As licensed educators, teacher librarians are qualified to teach the Utah Standards for Library Media (https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/librarymedia), act as a curriculum specialist, integrate information skills into classroom curriculum, preview and purchase materials for the school library media center, and perform other professional duties that support and enhance school and district goals and curricula.

Classified Personnel

Unlicensed personnel working in school library media centers are limited in training and/or education and are thus limited in the types of duties and activities they can be required to perform as part of their employment.

Classified personnel work under the direction and/or supervision of a licensed teacher librarian. Duties may include clerical tasks, data entry, circulation of materials, and other non-teaching responsibilities.

Philosophy

“Creating an information literate society is an expensive task. … The school library media program requires a budget that supports the continuous collection of information in all formats and that provides the instructional infrastructure that will help students learn to use that information in creative, meaningful ways. ” *(American Association of School Librarians, 2018)*
Schools require adequate levels of fiscal support for personnel, materials, equipment, and facilities to support quality library media programs.

Budgets

Standards

- The school library program shall have an annual, ongoing budget that ensures the continuing development of a balanced, relevant, and current collection, including supplies and operational materials.
- Budgets shall be sufficient to guarantee that the collection (print, digital, and technology resources) annually acquires new and popular materials and replaces "physical items that are out of date, infrequently used, and excessively worn" (American Association of School Librarians, 2018), according to current school library collection standards as outlined by ALA and AASL.
- Equipment and software required to access and use current electronic resources might be funded as part of the library media budget if the budget is large enough to acquire and maintain both collection materials and technology. If not included in the library budgets, equipment and software should be funded as part of the school technology plan budget.
- Federal, state, or grant funds may supplement the school library media budget, but must not supplant ongoing budgeted district and/or local funding.
- Funds allocated for the library should be spent in ways that benefit and promote library materials and services. Spending decisions should be based upon patron needs. With changing school and patron needs, school librarians should be vigilant advocates of school budgets.

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