

**Talking Points
Create a School Librarians Grant Pool
HF 2698**

School Library Media Programs Are Critical for Student Achievement

Information literacy skills and the ability to read critically have never been more necessary. Even with this fundamental need, resources for school library media programs staffed with certified professional school librarians have dwindled in Minnesota and elsewhere.

School librarians are fundamental to supporting student learning and achievement. School librarians teach critical thinking skills that help students become responsible digital citizens. School librarians help students develop the skills they need to be successful in the 21st century. Furthermore, they help develop and nurture a love of reading. Reading is at the core of personal and academic competency. These are all skills incorporated in Minnesota's World's Best Workforce.

School librarians also make a measurable difference on student achievement. There is a direct correlation between standardized test scores and school librarians. Students in schools where there is a full time, licensed school librarian perform better on state tests. Three of the most important roles school librarians play in creating lifelong learners with critical thinking skills are.

Teacher

- The school librarian plays a key role in advocating and supporting both reading skills and the way their students feel about literature and nonfiction to develop lifelong readers. They work within the school curriculum and develop collections that reflect the needs and backgrounds of their students.
- School librarians teach students how to become researchers: how to identify their research question, find reliable resources, apply those resources to the question, and how to present their results. Evaluation and assessment of both the process and the product prepare students for advanced educational opportunities.
- The research process includes teaching students to become ethical users of information.

Instructional Partner

- When school librarians partner with teachers, classroom teaching and student learning are enriched. This collaboration helps develop key critical thinking skills, technology and literacy skills, and core social skills.
- School librarians are unique within a school as they work with ALL students and ALL staff to ensure that both groups have access to resources within the school day and beyond the school wall. Because they are highly trained instructional leaders, school librarians know how to find just the right resource for each student/teacher.

Information Specialist

- Information and technology are crucial elements of the school librarian's job. Librarians support the school's information needs, create engaging learning tasks, and connect the school community with helpful resources & information. School librarians introduce and model new technologies and strategies for finding, assessing, and using information.
- Qualified school librarians lead effective school libraries. They model, promote and foster inquiry learning. They build collections (print and electronic) to address the needs of their staff and students and they ensure access to taxpayer provided resources like Electronic Library Minnesota.