

# Supporting Literacy and Achievement for ALL Students By Supporting School Libraries in Michigan

## Issue:

### Michigan's Reading Achievement and Support for School Libraries Rank Near the Bottom Nationally

Michigan's 4th grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading scores have dropped by 1.4 points between 2003 and 2013. Michigan is one of only six states that has suffered a loss in reading achievement.<sup>(1)</sup>

Michigan experienced the highest loss of certified school library media specialists (school librarians) in the nation. The number of school librarians dropped from 1429 to 531 (a 63% loss).<sup>(2)</sup> Michigan now ranks 46th in the country with 1 certified working school librarian for every 2494 students versus the national average of 1 school librarian for every 1085 students.<sup>(3)</sup>

## Proposed Action:

### Provide a Certified School Library Media Specialist at Each School

The instructional services of a teacher with library media (ND) endorsement shall be made available to students and staff in each school. Schools with fewer than 300 students shall employ a half-time certified library media specialist, schools with over 300 students shall employ at least one full-time certified library media specialist, and schools with more than 1000 students shall employ two certified library media specialists, and sufficient additional staff to implement an instructional program based on curriculum that supports literacy, information, research, and technology standards through collaboration with classroom teachers. If the certified library media specialist is not present in the library during the time the library is open, the principal shall designate staff member(s) to provide supervision, not instruction, to students in the library.

## Why School Libraries Staffed by Certified School Library Media Specialists?

### School Libraries are Critical in Supporting Student Achievement Especially Reading by Third Grade and Achievement of At-Risk Students

- Multiple studies in over 20 states including Michigan show that school libraries with a full-time certified teaching school librarian have a high impact on increasing student **reading achievement** regardless of socio-economic or educational levels of the community.<sup>(4)</sup>
- In fact, students who are economically disadvantaged, black, Hispanic, or have disabilities benefit proportionally more than general students from the presence of a full-time certified school librarian.<sup>(5)</sup>
- Children in poverty grow up with fewer books in the home and less access to bookstores and public libraries<sup>(6)</sup>; thus, making access to books through school libraries more important.

### School Library Media Specialists are Important to the Transition to Digital Learning and New Standards

- School library media specialists are most often the **technology leaders** in their schools.<sup>(7)</sup> They often provide professional development for teachers in technology integration, resource access and utilization, and digital citizenship. They support, collaborate and co-teach with classroom teachers in reading development, in integrating information and technology literacy skills into the curriculum, and in meeting the expectations for research set forth in the Michigan Academic Standards.<sup>(8)</sup>

### School Library Media Specialists Support College and Career Readiness

- School library media specialists teach key **college and career preparedness** skills including critical thinking, evaluating information from diverse sources, and communicating effectively to a variety of audiences through various media.<sup>(9)</sup>

(1) "Why Michigan Is so Far behind Others on Education." *Detroit Free Press*, 13 Apr. 2014. <http://www.freep.com/article/20140413/OPINION01/304130042/Editorial-Why-Michigan-far-behind-others-education>

(2) Michigan Center for Educational Performance and Information <https://www.mischooldata.org/Other/DataFiles/StaffingInformation/HistoricalStaffingSummary.aspx>

(3) National Center for Education Statistics [http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pub\\_snf\\_report.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pub_snf_report.asp)

(4) Library Research Service <http://www.lrs.org/data-tools/school-libraries/impact-studies>

(5) <http://www.slj.com/2013/03/research/librarian-required-a-new-study-shows-that-a-full-time-school-librarian-makes-a-critical-difference-in-boosting-student-achievement/>

(6) <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~sbneuman/pdf/AccessToPrint.pdf>

(7) [http://www.thedigitalshift.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/LibraryLeader-Infographic\\_12\\_5\\_13\\_F2aWeb.jpg](http://www.thedigitalshift.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/LibraryLeader-Infographic_12_5_13_F2aWeb.jpg)

(8) <http://www.achieve.org/publications/implementing-common-core-state-standards-role-school-librarian-action-brief>

(9) [http://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/guidelinesandstandards/learningstandards/AASL\\_LearningStandards.pdf](http://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/guidelinesandstandards/learningstandards/AASL_LearningStandards.pdf)