



DATE: August 30, 2013

TO: Dr. Michael Kirst, President  
State Board of Education

FM: Jane Lofton, President  
California School Library Association

RE: Recommendations on Implementation of the LCFF

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the implementation of the recently passed Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). The California School Library Association (CSLA) strongly supports the intent of AB 97 to ensure that new LCFF funds are directed for the purposes outlined in Section 422238.07. This section states that the regulations shall require a school district "to increase or improve services for unduplicated pupils." CSLA recommends that the State Board adopt regulations that specifically require districts to prioritize the expansion of crucial academic programs that have been reduced or that need to be expanded in order to ensure the academic progress of English learners, students on free/reduced lunch and/or Foster Youth. Additionally, CSLA urges the SBE draft the required LCFF template to ensure that districts consider in their LCFF plans that students have access to high quality literacy, information content and digital literacy skills via a school library.

Why are the expansion of services and the need to address student literacy so important? Because they bring a wealth of resources, administration and curriculum to all students in a school, as well as providing needed professional development to faculty and administrators.

Lucia Diamond, the Librarian Association of the University of California (LAUC) President, 2009-2010 and Senior Reference and Collection Development Librarian for the University Berkeley School of Law, representing all University of California Librarians, delivered an official resolution on May 25, 2010, to the SBE in support of the adoption of the Model School Library Standards that opened with these words: "I write to convey to you and your Board a resolution adopted by the Librarians Association of the University of California (LAUC) expressing our affirmation of the great value we place in having strong school libraries and *teacher* librarians, who are instrumental in preparing California's elementary and secondary school students for success in higher education.

*"Doing research on the Web is like using a library assembled piecemeal by pack rats and vandalized nightly."*  
Roger Ebert

*"School libraries help teachers teach and children learn. Children and teachers need library resources--especially books--and the expertise of a librarian to succeed. Books, information technology and school librarians who are part of the schools' professional team are basic ingredients for student achievement."*  
First Lady Laura Bush.

*"Strong School Libraries build Strong Students"*  
CA Campaign for Strong School Libraries

*"...the benefits associated with larger [library] staffing and collections and increased access to technology, databases, and to the library itself are proportionally greater for students who are poor, black, Hispanic, and disabled."* Pennsylvania Study

LAUC is a statewide organization composed of all librarians employed at least half-time by the University of California; so, our members have the privilege of seeing many of the California high school graduates who go on to study at one of our ten campuses.

“Also, I will just let you know that, in 2009, the Berkeley Division of LAUC sponsored a conference on student library users attended by academic, school and young adult librarians. This was one of many occasions where we saw and expressed the need for professional *teacher* librarians from an early stage to make the K-12 through to college education a successful experience for California’s students.”

**Research Shows the Value of School Libraries** - There is a growing body of research that shows the correlation between a strong school library and student achievement. Yet in California, many school library doors have closed or have had services dramatically reduced. While not all districts have closed their libraries or drastically reduced their library programs, it is this disparity between districts and even schools within the same district that speaks directly to the need for funds to be appropriately targeted. We urge the State Board to firmly address the need for districts to ensure that programs that have been severely reduced during the recession to be expanded and restored.

This research supports the correlation between the presence of the library team (a credentialed teacher librarian and support staff) and higher student achievement. While these data have been confirmed through numerous state studies across the nation, school librarians and the libraries they administer are disappearing. California has consistently led the nation in this downward trend and has the lowest teacher librarian to student ratio in the country.

**Common Core Standards Require Technology** - With the introduction of the Common Core State Standards, students are required to read more critically, write more persuasively, and interact with information more knowledgeably utilizing the many applications we call “21<sup>st</sup> Century tools.” While we know that students show an incredible affinity for and apparent facility with these tools, librarians and teachers have discovered that students are not adept in using them within an academic environment and the growing number of concerns for student safety support the need for instruction and student support for learning how to behave well online.

Classroom teachers are expected to provide this instruction as a part of their content-specific curriculum and many are discovering that there is little time to prepare for this additional shift alone. Teacher librarian pedagogy specifically addresses these topics and can provide the direct instruction as well as the professional development and support that create a robust 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

**Students Have Less Access to School Libraries** – Policymakers need to be concerned that most students across California have no access to a strong school library. California, one of the richest states in the nation and home to the creative genius that thrives in Silicon Valley and other cities across the state, is dead last in school library services to students. The dismantling of school libraries has shut the door to many students of poverty. This problem of access creates a huge disparity between those who have money to purchase books and computers and those who cannot. The library fills that gap for those students. Below are specific areas of need that are filled by a high quality school library staffed with a credentialed teacher librarian.

#### **What do students need?**

- Guidance on how to behave online in social media environments
- Instruction on how to evaluate the information they encounter
- Practice with what they learn in the classroom and library
- Access to a wide variety of online, print, audio, and video resources

- Connections with interesting speakers who come to share their expertise and stories
- A place to study with friends, to meet with group partners, to read quietly
- A venue to create and share their own stories

### **What does the library team bring to students and staff?**

These activities, noted in the research from 20+ state research studies, include, but are not limited to:

- Direct instruction in the research process for students
- Up-to-date resources and instruction on their use
- Collaboration with teachers to develop the lessons that creatively support standards based instruction
- Professional development and support to classroom teachers in the use of 21st Century skills based instruction
- Participation in site and district technology, curriculum, and other decision-making bodies
- The administration and management of a large body or resources that circulate throughout the entire campus
- Professional resource development to provide resources that support school wide curricular goals
- Providing a wide variety of books for every interest and ability

### **Why a library?**

When the place we call a “library” is made available to all students on a campus:

- Shared resources allow many students to use the same item, bringing efficiency and cost savings to a school
- Students are able to explore, practice, and create outside of the classroom’s assigned curriculum
- Students have a place to study and complete classroom assignments with the assistance of the teacher in the library that can help them.

Again, thank you again for the opportunity to make our recommendations to you and the members of the State Board of Education. If you would like additional information on the points that I have outlined above or if you have any questions about our recommendations please contact our legislative advocate, Jeff Frost, at (916) 447-8420.

cc: State Board of Education members  
 Karen Stapf Walters, Governor’s Education Advisor  
 Nick Schweizer, Department of Finance  
 Chris Ferguson, Department of Finance  
 Rich Zeigler, Chief Deputy, Department of Education  
 Deb Sigman, Deputy Superintendent, CDE  
 Chris Swenson, Accountability Division, CDE