



How Teacher Librarians Support PK-3 Literacy

A Position Statement from
California School Library Association

Approved on 08/06/2022

POSITION:

Teacher librarians are necessary to California’s current PK-3 literacy goals and to all children’s literacy achievements. Strong school library programs are composed of vetted resources and services that support well-rounded literacy. When managed by professionally trained and certificated teacher librarians, school library programs provide physical and intellectual access to resources that equitably support students and teachers to become effective learners, thinkers, and readers.

This document explains how qualified teacher librarians support PK-3 literacy within their school communities and beyond. (CSI draft linked via <http://tinyurl.com/CSPk3Literacy>)

Background

On March 17, 2021, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the final [California Comprehensive State Literacy Plan \(2021\)](#) (DOCX) which includes model library standards and the involvement of teacher librarians. For example:

*“Teachers should be keenly aware of their students’ varied cultures and reflect these cultures in their instruction, materials, and classroom structures. Collaboration with **teacher librarians** helps to ensure all students see themselves represented in the texts in libraries and that libraries promote respect for all types of diversity. (p. 39)”*

*“**Teacher librarians** have a key responsibility for building library collections that support instruction in all content areas and build students’ technological and critical competencies across the content areas. (p. 92)”*

*“At the local level, LEAs are encouraged to examine the progress of literacy improvement actions, outputs, and strategy-aligned milestones. LEAs may establish local literacy teams responsible for implementation and monitoring that meet regularly to discuss progress and report to leadership teams for support. Important members of the literacy team may include district and site administrators, teachers, specialists, **teacher librarians**, and other appropriate staff. (p. 98)”*

How the role and functions of student-centered teacher librarians support PK-3 Literacy California PK-3 students deserve...

- A high-quality education that includes strategic library programs with resources and services that are managed by teacher librarians. Because PK-3 students reflect a broad range of experiences and situations, school library programs are intended to provide an equitable learning environment, including resources that might not be accessible in any other venue.
- High-quality, developmentally-appropriate, relevant, and attractive collections of books and other educational resources that target students' unique literary needs, interests, as well as the school's curriculum. Teacher Librarians are trained to select, curate and organize vetted resources to optimize their retrieval and use.
- Their curiosity to be sparked and nurtured with open-ended inquiry and hands-on activities. Teacher Librarians leverage their professional expertise to support guided and self-directed exploration and learning in a safe, supportive environment in collaboration with the school community.
- Multiple opportunities to build critical thinking skills. Teacher librarians are trained to challenge and broaden thinking
- Opportunities to safely explore their personal biases and build critical thinking skills. Teacher librarians provide a stimulating and nurturing environment that honors differences, is conducive to empathy and learning, and provides developmentally-appropriate, relevant sources with multiple perspectives.
- Early and positive interactions with books and literacy, especially as they become independent readers by age nine and build their foundation for academic success. Teacher librarians model how to integrate and embed library standards and literacy within all subject areas. They promote and support the habit of reading for learning and leisure through:
 - Library collections that enable students to freely choose reading materials and engage with them meaningfully
 - Individualized readers' advisory that builds students' self selection strategies
 - Literacy learning activities and reading promotions that inspire a love of literacy
 - Collaboration with the school community to support PK-3 reading
- To be informed citizens who are able to identify and civilly address misinformation. Teacher librarians support and teach lateral reading skills that guide students in safe, responsible, lasting digital agency and citizenship.
- To understand data literacy (e.g., charts, graphs, measurements, estimation, etc.). As part of their professional training, teacher librarians are taught data literacy management skills. They are uniquely qualified to train both teachers and students in effective data management and research methods.
- Strong family engagement and support. Teacher librarians provide outreach programs that invite community members to participate as active partners and stakeholders within the school library and beyond.

In sum, school library programs include resources and services that play a vital role in California's comprehensive literacy plan for PK-3 and older students. Effective school library programs are managed and led by credentialed teacher librarians.

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ORGANIZATIONS

Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC) - A Division of the American Library Association. Early and Family Literacy Committee.
<https://www.ala.org/alsc/aboutalsc/coms/pg1childadv/als-eafl/>

Every Child Read to Read @ Your Library (ECRR). <http://everychildreadytoread.org/>

International Association of School Librarianship (IASL). Children's and Young Adult Literature SIG. https://iasl-online.org/about/leadership/cyal_sig.html/

International Children's Digital Library (ICDL) - University of Maryland.
<http://www.childrenslibrary.org/>

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). Literacy and Reading Section. <https://www.ifla.org/units/literacy-and-reading/>

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). School Libraries Section. <https://www.ifla.org/units/school-libraries/>

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