

TEACHER LIBRARIANS AND SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, In 2021, there are 220 qualified teacher librarians to direct school library programs of services in Utah's 987 public K-12 schools; and a direct correlation between increased academic achievement and the quality of library media staff, collections, and programs is shown in over 60 impact studies; and, to ensure equitable access to, and instruction in the use of, ideas and information, and help students from all races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds succeed academically, it is essential that all Utah schools have quality staff (directed by a certificated, fully-endorsed teacher librarian), collections, and programs;^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} and

WHEREAS, The Utah State Board of Education decisively adopted library media core curriculum standards, which, through the instruction of information and media literacy skills, call for students to become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and continually evolving learners; effective and safe consumers and creators of information in all formats; and to value reading;^{8,9} and

WHEREAS, Students, as citizens of a varied and global society, navigate vast amounts of varied, sometimes conflicting, information, so they must learn to locate, access, evaluate, and apply information from numerous resources in multiple formats (print, nonprint, and digital) and to present data and information in compelling and useful ways;^{10,11,12,13} and

WHEREAS, In a "complex and diverse social environment online" (Jenkins, 2006), it is imperative that students learn ethical, legal, and social rules and responsibilities, as derived from the Utah Core State Standards for Library Media;^{14,15,16,17} and

WHEREAS, Students with access to fully-qualified teacher librarians, with their knowledge of the diverse selection of reading materials in various formats and reading levels, and to new, inviting books, are more likely to practice and refine their reading skills, and to value reading, a foundational skill, for the development of new understandings, personal growth, and enjoyment;^{18,19,20,21,22,23,24} and

WHEREAS, Student achievement increases when highly-qualified teacher librarians collaborate with other teachers in the school, e.g., co-designing curriculum and team teaching, supporting classroom instruction, facilitating use of technology, providing tech support and professional development;^{25,26,27,28} now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Utah PTA and its constituent associations encourage local school boards to find new methods to hire, at all levels, teacher librarians, who have earned teaching certificates and library media endorsements for professional tasks, accompanied by library assistants for clerical tasks, to provide equitable opportunities in all schools and give all Utah students, irrespective of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, the opportunity to succeed academically; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA and its constituent associations support funding for a qualified school library specialist at the Utah State Board of Education to support school libraries, librarians, and leadership with guidance, troubleshooting, and professional learning; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA and its constituent associations support increased funding to provide sufficient ongoing funds for the purchase of print and digital resources and, thereby, renew and update diverse collections of current, high quality, and high interest materials that meet the needs of a broad range of learners; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA and its constituent associations support the use of information technologies as part of school library media services to enhance instruction throughout the school and increase access to a variety of resources for students and teachers; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA and its constituent associations encourage local school boards to meet Utah State Board of Education standards for high quality library media center staffing, programs, resources, and facilities.

(Updates and replaces EDU 2010-1 Teacher Librarians and Library Media Programs)

Documentation:

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