

Appropriate Staffing for School Libraries

POSITION:

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) supports the position that every learner in every school, including private schools and public charter schools, should have access to an updated school library with a full-time, certified school librarian. The success of a school library, no matter how well designed, ultimately depends on the quality and number of personnel responsible for managing the instructional program and the school library's physical and virtual resources. A full-time certified school librarian, supported by dedicated technical and clerical staff, is crucial to an effective school library for a school's learning environment. Every learner, classroom educator, and administrator in every school building at every grade level should have access to a fully staffed school library throughout the school day.

The following minimum school library staffing requirements define an effective school library structured to transform teaching and learning throughout the school community:

1. One or more certified school librarians working full-time in the school library to ensure access to resources and teaching and learning opportunities that engage all learners.
2. A specific number of additional school librarians as determined by the needs of the school's instructional programs, services, facilities, size, and number of learners and classroom educators.
3. In addition to qualified school library professionals, highly trained technical and clerical support staff are essential for all school libraries at every grade level. Each school employs at least one full-time technical assistant, clerk, or paraprofessional to enable the school librarian to perform professional duties in the area of teaching and learning.
4. A district-level school library supervisor with school library certification or experience provides leadership, vision, and support for the building-level school libraries and school librarians. The district school library supervisor is a member of the administrative team and is instrumental in determining criteria and policies for the district's curriculum and instructional programs. The district school library supervisor communicates the mission, strategic plan, goals, and needs of the school and district libraries to the superintendent, board of education, other district-level personnel, building level leaders, classroom educators and the community.

BACKGROUND:

A school librarian provides five essential interconnected school library roles: leader, instructional partner, information specialist, teacher, and program administrator. (AASL 2018)

REFERENCE:

American Association of School Librarians (AASL). 2018. *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*. Chicago: ALA.

RECOMMENDED READING LIST:

American Association of School Librarians (AASL). 2012. "Position Statement on the School Library Supervisor." <http://www.ala.org/aasl/advocacy/resources/statements>.

DISCLAIMER:

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) assumes no responsibility for the practices or recommendations of any member or other professional, or for the policies and procedures of any program. School librarians function within the limitations of licensure/certification, state board of education policies, and/or institution, district, or school policy.

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