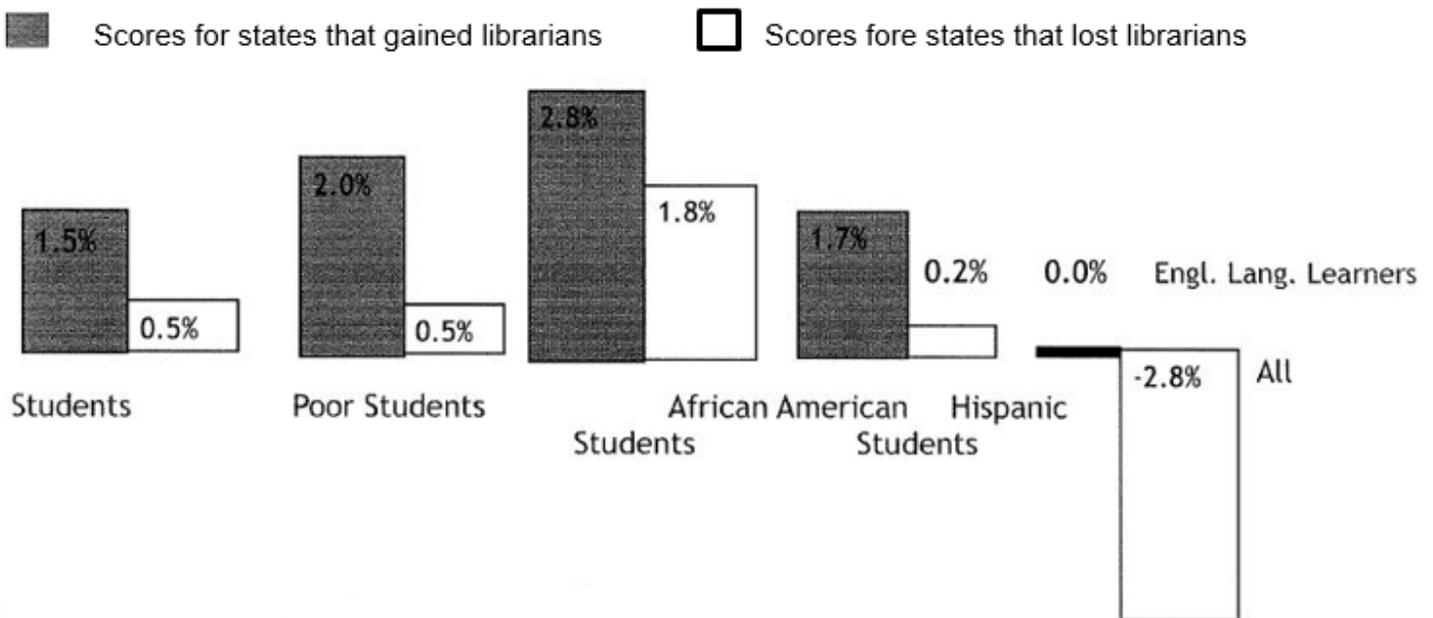


Something to Shout About: New Research Shows that More Librarians means Higher Reading Scores¹

The September 2011 cover story of the *School Library Journal* featured an examination of the relationship of Nation Center for Education Statistics (NCES) nationwide data for states on school librarian positions and National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading scores for grade 4. The analysis found that between 2005 and 2009, states that gained school librarian positions experienced larger increases and no decreases in reading scores, while states that lost librarians experienced smaller increases or decreases in reading scores. These findings held-and were often more dramatic-across subgroups including race/ethnicity, poverty, and English language learner status.

Schools in states that gained librarians between 2005 and 2009 had significantly higher increased in fourth-grade reading scores than schools in states that lost librarians.



School Library Impact Studies Summarized²

"Quality school library programs impact student achievement. Since the 1990's when standardized tests became a major indicator of student learning, numerous studies have been conducted to confirm the educational gains that school library programs provide in student learning. The most universal finding is the presence of full-time, certified school librarians and appropriate support staff who implement a quality school integrated program of library services.

"A body of research known as the 'school library impact studies' that includes 23 [25 state studies by 2018] states and one Canadian province confirms these basic findings. While most studies examined student standardized tests scores, other studies utilized different qualitative approaches or a combination of methods. 25 studies surveyed school librarians and also correlated

¹ Lance, K. and L. Hofschire. Something to shout about: New research shows that more librarians means higher reading scores. *School Library Journal*, 2011.

² Kachel, Debra E. *School library impact studies summarized*, rev. ed., 2013

showed that such socio-economic conditions could not explain away the impact of school library programs, especially school library staffing, funding, and quality collections levels.

"Clearly, the studies confirm that quality school library programs with full-time, certified librarians and library support staff are indicative of and critical to student achievement. In fact, quality school library programs may play an even greater role in providing academic support to those students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. In closing the achievement gap and assuring that all students are prepared with the 21st century skills they need to succeed, school leaders and librarians need to embrace this body of research and foster school library programs that can make a difference in student learning. Schools that support their library programs give their students a better chance to succeed."

Teacher Librarians Close the Gap: The Impact Study Proposal

The Role of Certified Teacher Librarians (CTLs) Is Changing: They are, foremost, **teachers, as well as instructional partners, information and research specialists, reading advocates, and school library program managers.** Key to their teaching 21st Century research skills is the **changing school library**, where daily students and teachers discover new ways to use technology to learn and teach. The library is the school's center of knowledge creation and consumption, with emphasis on self-directed and project-based learning. Co-teaching and integration of technologies are hallmarks, plus recognition of students' use of social media to access information and use the library.³ **These changes focus on equal support for all students' learning and improved instruction, providing foundational research skills for higher education and workplace entrepreneurship.**

Status of Certified School Library Staffing: Utah students are at a major disadvantage. Currently, **there are only 226 certified teacher librarians (ctl's) for 1,000+ Utah public schools.** Only 20% of Utah's students have access to these professionals. **Only 2 districts have full-time ctl's in all schools; only 3 districts professionally staff their elementary schools. In 13 districts there are no teacher librarians.** In the remaining 26 districts, staffing ranges from 1 in the district's high school, to 1 in each secondary school.

Critical Curriculum Concepts and Skills: Without these professionals, the great majority of our students lack instruction in the Utah K-12 Library Media Curriculum Standards of Reading Engagement, Information Literacy, and Media Literacy. These standards include how to 1) find, evaluate, synthesize, and apply information; 2) critically analyze media messages and use information ethically and judiciously; and 3) read in depth and value reading. **Without these essential skills, our students are unprepared for school, college, and the workplace.** Universities pay millions to remediate freshmen in these skills. **To extend the vision of Utah's strong entrepreneurial achievements, certified teacher librarians must develop in the next generation of students the necessary skill sets using today's technology.**

Research Findings:

The NAEP Study: Between 2005 and 2009, researchers analyzed the relationship between nationwide data for states on school librarian positions and NAEP 4th-grade reading scores. Findings showed that **"schools in states that gained librarians had significantly higher increases in fourth-grade reading scores than schools in states that lost librarians.** These findings held-and were often more dramatic- across subgroups including race/ethnicity, poverty, and English language learner status."⁴

The School Library Impact Studies: 23 [25 states by 2018] state studies confirm that **full-time, certified school librarians, who collaborate with classroom teachers, raise student achievement.** Although the effects of poverty still remain a primary force in determining student academic success, state after state showed that such socio-economic conditions could not explain away the impact of school library programs, especially school library staffing, funding, and quality collections levels.⁵ The 2012 Pennsylvania School Library Project Study underscores the larger impact full-time certified school librarians have on skills acquisition, such as writing, that prepare students for college and the workforce."⁶



³ *School libraries work/* Rev. ed., Scholastic, 2016.

⁴ Lance, K. and L. Hofschire. Something to shout about: New research shows that more librarians means higher reading scores. *School Library Journal*, 2011.

⁵ Kachel, Debra E. *School library impact studies summarized*, rev. ed., 2013.

⁶ Lance, K. C. and Bill Schwarz. How Pennsylvania School Libraries Pay Off: Investments in Student Achievement and Academic Standards. PA School Library Project. HSLC, Oct. 2012. Web. 1 June 2013. <http://paschoollibraryproject.org/home/research>