



Joint Committee on Student Success: Support A Licensed Librarian in EVERY School!

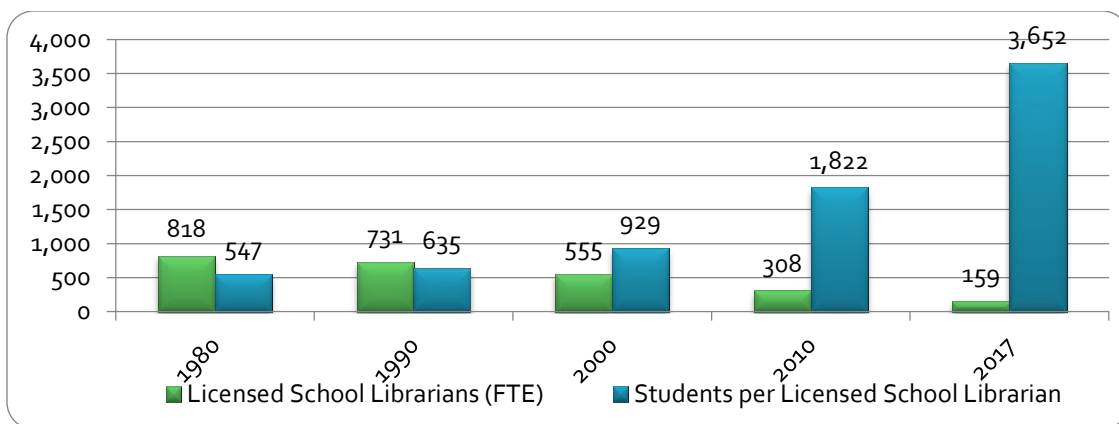
A licensed school librarian in EVERY K-12 school will result in many positive outcomes, including:

- Growth in **literacy and other academic skills**
- Up-to-date, culturally responsive, relevant **school library collections** that support instruction, inquiry, and self-directed reading
- Transformation of **library time to a standards-based instructional program**, maximizing available learning time
- Integrated and **collaborative instructional opportunities** school-wide
- Increased number of students **prepared for career and college-level work**
- Citizens who can effectively **find, navigate, and evaluate both print and online** information

PROBLEM: In today's Oregon K-12 schools, vast differences exist in the instructional staffing of school libraries statewide, some of which are overseen solely by volunteers or library assistants with no teaching credentials, no library coursework, and no training.

With the severe decline in the number of licensed librarians, Oregon students are missing out on instruction that provides consistent foundational literacy and information skills. The lack of those skills follows students into their post-secondary education and adulthood, to their detriment.

Between 1980 and 2017, the total number of licensed school librarians in Oregon has drastically decreased from 818 to 159:



SOLUTION: Require a licensed school librarian in EVERY K-12 school in Oregon.

HERE'S WHY FUNDING A LICENSED LIBRARIAN IN EVERY SCHOOL MATTERS:

- Research explicitly links a strong school library program with **increased student achievement and graduation rates**: In a 2015 Washington (state) study, high schools with licensed librarians saw **graduation rates of 85% compared to 76%** for high schools without licensed librarians. Per

a 2012 South Carolina study, elementary and middle grade students in schools with full-time librarians were **more likely to meet exemplary-level standards** for using literary text and conducting research.

- Research also shows that licensed school librarians have a **disproportionately positive impact on students of color, students with disabilities, and students living in poverty**. For example, a 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress report showed an **increase in reading scores for low-income, Black, and Latino students** in schools that were staffed with licensed librarians over a 5 year period; further, in states that lost librarians, ELL scores dropped by 3%. A 2012 Pennsylvania study found that, in schools with a full-time licensed librarian, Black students were **5.5% less likely to score below basic on reading and writing assessments**, Latinx students were 5.2% less likely, and students with disabilities were 4.6% less likely.
- The American Association of School Librarians asserts **a strong school library program is first and foremost staffed by a full-time on-site licensed school librarian** and a full-time library assistant, per their “Definition of an Effective School Library Program” position statement.
- Students will receive **consistent K-12 instruction aligned with the Oregon School Library Standards**, which were adopted by the Oregon State Board of Education in 2015.
- In late 2018, the Joint Committee on Student Success (JCOSS) released their education policy recommendations; many of those recommendations align with the work conducted in strong school libraries. These include **administering literacy programs, preparing students for college and career, maximizing learning time**, and **creating high quality classrooms**. A licensed librarian in EVERY school will accomplish these goals!

From JCOSS recommendations:

“....funding to support specialists in every elementary school (including) Teacher Librarian(s).”

For more information:

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