

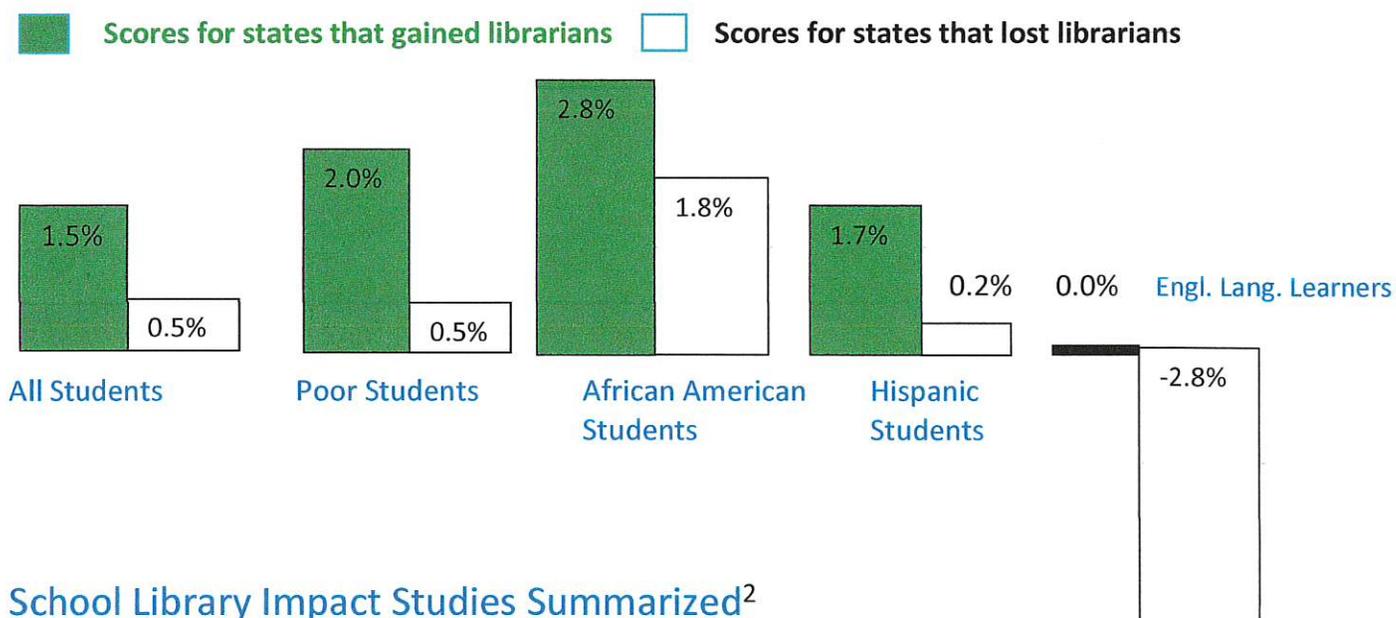
The Research

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

n 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 states by 2018] states and one Canadian province confirms these basic findings. While most studies examined student standardized

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

tests scores, other studies utilized different qualitative approaches or a combination of methods. 25 studies surveyed school librarians and also correlated standardized test scores with school library. 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.

“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.”