

# ALA American Library Association

## SCHOOL LIBRARY FACT SHEET

- There are 77,000 public school library media centers, representing 92 percent of all traditional public schools.
- There are 62,364 state certified library media specialists in public schools and 3,909 state certified library media specialists in private schools in the U.S.
- About 25 percent of America's school libraries do not have a state-certified librarian on staff.
- In 15 percent of public schools, the state certified library media specialists spends time in more than one school.
- On average, there is one school librarian for every 953 students.
- Currently, school library media centers are only spending an average of \$8.50 per child for books – about half the average cost of a hardcover book.
- Percent increase in average U.S. book prices since 1984: 224 percent
- In the United States, sales of video games and other entertainment software (\$6.0 billion in 2000) total more than nine times the amount spent on books, periodicals, audiovisual, and other materials for school library media centers (\$647.0 million in 2004).
- Since 1965, more than 60 education and library studies have produced clear evidence that school library media programs staffed by qualified library media specialists have a positive impact on student academic achievement.
  - Statewide studies – in 14 different states (AK, CO, FL, IA, MA, MI, MN, MO, NM, NC, OH, OR, PA, and TX) – show that a strong library media program helps students learn more and score higher on standardized achievement tests than their peers in library-impooverished schools.
  - The recent study, *Student Learning Through Ohio School Libraries*, reported nearly 100% of Ohio students stated that the school library helps them get better grades on projects and assignments.
- More than 90 percent of public school libraries and 61 percent of private school libraries provide Internet access. *Unfortunately, this fact is often used to justify decreased budgets for books and other materials.*
- The Improving Literacy Through School Libraries program, which is part of the No Child Left Behind Act and administered by the U.S. Department of Education, is the only federal program exclusively for school libraries. Based on analysis from its first year of funding, 95 percent of local education agencies have reported increases in their reading scores.