



CALIFORNIA SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

News Release

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*Learning through
Books, Media and Technology*

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION AND STATE LIBRARIAN RECEIVE REPORT ADDRESSING CRISIS IN CALIFORNIA SCHOOL LIBRARIES

SACRAMENTO -- California Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell and California State Librarian Susan Hildreth were presented copies of *Standards and Guidelines for Strong School Libraries* by representatives of the California School Library Association. [Photographs available at: <http://www.schoollibrary.org/astandards/cslastandards.html>]

In the spirit of recent educational reforms establishing standards for all curricular areas, the California School Library Association assumed responsibility for drafting standards and guidelines to assist California school districts in developing strong school library programs for all students, kindergarten through grade 12. The standards are based on current research that links student academic success to well-staffed and well-funded school libraries.

The publication comes at critical time for California which continues to rank last among all fifty states and the District of Columbia in support of school libraries. As California's funding for school libraries plummets to pennies per pupil, *Standards and Guidelines for Strong School Libraries* challenges policy makers and legislators to take action to improve student access to school library books, information technology and instruction.

Superintendent O'Connell said, "A virtual roll call of state research studies points to school libraries that can and do impact student performance. Recent studies from Alaska to Florida conclude that credentialed, professional library media teachers positively affect student achievement." He added, "Show me a school with a good school library and I'll show you a good school."

State Librarian Hildreth, concerned with the condition of school libraries and impressed with the significance of *Standards and Guidelines for Strong School Libraries*, said, "Because I think it is an invaluable work in defining excellence for school libraries, the California State Library will provide a copy for each public library system in the state so that public library staff and parents can have access to this resource." The California School Library Association has already provided copies to every district and county superintendent in the state.

Standards and Guidelines for Strong School Libraries provides, for the first time, both quantitative and qualitative standards for school libraries. Based on national standards and best practices, the document recommends a floor for minimum resources and instruction as well as successive levels of measurement for school libraries. The report points the way for California school libraries to contribute to student achievement and to prepare students for college, the workplace and the habits of lifelong learning.

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