

# **Guidelines for Michigan School Library Media Programs**

Prepared by  
Information Media Program Advisory Committee (IMPAC), 2003

Revised by  
Guidelines Revision Committee, 2006

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## Introduction

In 2003, a team of researchers conducted an extensive study of Michigan school library media programs' relationship to student achievement. This study, entitled *The Impact of Michigan School Librarians on Academic Achievement: Kids Who Have Libraries Succeed* (Rodney, Lance & Hamilton-Pennell, 2003) reported that even when community and family variables are taken into account, children with strong school libraries at all levels consistently demonstrate strong achievement in reading. This study creates a clear mandate for the support and continuing development of Michigan school libraries and the professionals who staff them.

This is the revision of sixth set of indicators issued by The Michigan Association for Media in Education (MAME). This document provides educators, and administrators, school boards and community members with a framework for successful school library media programs in Michigan. Based on *Information Power* (American Association of School Librarians [AASL] & Association for Educational Communications and Technology [AECT], 1998) the current guidelines for school library media programs, this document establishes standards for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Rapidly changing information and technology demand that students be independent learners; these guidelines stress the need for students to actively participate in authentic learning experiences in well-equipped, resourced, and staffed school libraries. To that end, all school library media programs should strive for exemplary-level program activities in three areas:

- **Part 1. Teaching and Learning**, the aspects of the program that support classroom endeavors, the teaching of essential skills, and student learning
- **Part 2. Information Access and Delivery**, the aspects of the program that ensure that high quality, appropriate, relevant, and diverse learning and teaching resources are available to the school community
- **Part 3. Program Administration**, the aspects of the program that, when coordinated and led by a certified professional, provide for a well-run, adequately staffed, strategically managed, and innovatively planned media center essential to learning activities within the school community.

Each of these areas includes minimal, proficient, and exemplary attributes for listed school library media program elements.

The aim of these guidelines is to spark dialogue between all members of the educational community that will not only determine the current state and purpose of the school library media program but also will provide directions and indicators of school library media program improvement.

Supporting student achievement is a shared endeavor that encompasses all aspects of the school environment. School library media programs are a key part of helping students to learn deeply and to develop lifelong information skills. By examining our school library programs and setting the bar high for their content and services, all members of the educational community can maximize their resources, efforts, and successes.

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*Note: This document is based on School Library Media Program Assessment Rubric prepared by the American Association of School Librarians' Teaching and Learning Task Force, 1999 and Guidelines for Library Media Center Resources in Michigan Schools by the Michigan Department of Education October 1995.*

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## 2006 Guidelines Revision Committee

Marcia Mardis, Wayne State University  
Cynthia Kleinheksel, Grand Valley State University  
Ruth Lumpkins, Education Consultant, **MAME Past President**

## 2003 IMPAC Committee

Roger Ashley, MAME Office  
Lisa Brakel, Monroe  
Dennis Briar, Dearborn  
Evelyn Freeman, REMC 17  
Dee Gwaltney, South Redford  
Clark Heath, Detroit  
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Gail Shulman, Grand Blanc  
Judy Sima, Warren Fitzgerald

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## **A. Teaching and Learning**

### **Overview**

Student learning and achievement is the goal of an exemplary school library media program. The results of the 2003 Michigan school library impact study showed the positive relationship between a certified School Library Media Specialist and student reading achievement.

As a teacher, the library media specialist works with students and other members of the learning community to analyze learning and information needs, to locate and use resources that will meet those needs, and to understand and communicate the information the resource provides. The library media specialist is knowledgeable about current research on teaching and learning and skilled in applying its findings to a variety of situations - particularly those that call upon students to access, evaluate, and use information from multiple sources in order to learn, to think, and to create and to apply knowledge. In short, the library media specialist teaches students to use information for critical thinking and problem solving using the Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning set forth in Information Power, the national standards for school library media programs (AASL & AECT, 1998).

As an instructional partner, the library media specialist joins with teachers and others to identify links with curricular content, learning outcomes, student information needs, and information resources. Working with the entire school community, the library media specialist takes a leadership role in developing policies, practices, and curricula that guide students to develop the full range of information literacy skills. The library media specialist works closely with individual teachers in the critical area of designing authentic learning tasks and assessments and integrating the information and communication abilities required to meet subject matter standards (AASL & AECT, 1998).

The following guidelines contain key components that bring together the teaching skills, information literacy skills, technology literacy skills, and reading skills necessary for the implementation of a successful program.

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## A. Teaching and Learning Guidelines

Program Components	Minimal	Proficient	Exemplary
1. Information Literacy Standards, and information processing skills, blended with NETS•S and METS are integrated into content learning	Students learn to use library materials in the context of classroom content. Library skills are locating skills or how to find information. Minimum technology literacy skills needed.	The library media program provides essential support to the curriculum. Students learn information literacy skills, information processing skills, and technology literacy skills, which extend beyond location to analysis, evaluation, and use of information through the collaborative efforts of teachers and the library media specialist.	The library media program is a catalyst for intellectual inquiry. Students learn to incorporate information literacy and processing skills into their work by using a wide-range of presentation and software applications to become proactive users of information and resources.
2. Collaborative planning is modeled and promoted.	Discussions take place between the library media specialist and teacher regarding lessons and the curriculum.	Some teachers and the library media specialist collaboratively plan and teach curriculum units.	The school schedule ensures time for the teachers and the library media specialist to regularly meet at common planning times, to plan instructional units, learning strategies, and activities. The library media specialist helps build a coordinated instructional program.
3. Curriculum development is modeled and promoted.	The library media program reflects the curriculum and curriculum guides and/or information are provided to teachers and library media specialist.	School policies enable the library media specialist to participate in building and district-wide curriculum meetings and share knowledge and resources.	The district encourages the library media specialist to work collaboratively with administrators and teachers in planning, developing, and writing curriculum.
4. Effective teaching is modeled and promoted.	The library media specialist participates in directing activities and assessment of student work.	Teaching is generally facilitative. The teacher and/or library media specialist may prescribe the strategies, research questions or assessment products to be used.	Teaching is facilitative, collaborative, and creative. Reflection and authentic assessment are built into all instructional units.

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Program Components	Minimal	Proficient	Exemplary
5. Students are engaged in reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and listening for enjoyment, enrichment, and understanding.	The library media program regularly promotes reading, viewing, and listening.	The library media program offers special literacy related events that motivate students to view, listen, write, or speak on their own or as part of classroom activities and work with the Reading/Literacy Skills program in their district to enhance skills.	The school-wide culture encourages viewing, reading, writing, speaking, and listening for the intrinsic rewards of learning, enrichment, and personal pleasure and work collaboratively with the Reading/Literacy Skills program in their district to plan and facilitate a comprehensive program.
6. Students with diverse learning abilities, styles, and needs are given support.	The library media program reflects diverse learning abilities and collaborative methods to accommodate them.	The library media specialist helps students to recognize and use their own learning styles.	School-wide programs enable and encourage students to use their own learning styles, abilities, and needs to solve complex information problems and present their solutions in various formats.
7. Inquiry is fostered.	Library media specialists and/or teachers present topic choices and resources for research and may determine research groups or partners. The library media specialist or teacher defines the resources to be used.	Students are given an opportunity to select topics within a theme, the resources to be used, and may select their research partner(s). Students may select their research partner.	Inquiry can take place by an individual or in a group. Students determine their own research needs and develop their own research strategies based on information processing skills.
8. Student achievement is assessed.	The teacher assesses a product produced to fulfill an assignment.	The teacher and school library media specialist, using a collaboratively developed assessment instrument, assess demonstrations of student learning. Students may also be assessed during presentations to peers.	Student learning is assessed by the teacher with input from the library media specialist. Student presentations to peers and adults are evaluated using collaboratively developed assessment instruments designed by students, teachers, and media specialists. Students may also present to professionals in the field of study.

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## B. Information Access and Delivery

### Overview

The school library media specialist is an essential link in a new educational learning community that includes students, teachers, administrators, and parents as well as widespread communities. The new learning community is not limited by time, location, age, occupation, or disciplinary borders but instead is linked by interests, needs, and a growing array of technologies that enable students to be producers, consumers, and communicators of information.

Helping students to become independent learners in our knowledge-based community is the central concern of student-centered school library media programs. The goal is to assist all students in becoming active and creative locators, evaluators, and users and exchangers of information to solve problems, think critically, and to satisfy their own curiosity through research and reading experiences. As the keystone of a student-centered library media program, the library media specialist works collaboratively with teachers, administrators, and others to facilitate students' entry into their futures.

As an information specialist, the school library media specialist provides expertise in acquiring and evaluating information resources in all formats; in bringing an awareness of information issues to teachers, administrators, students, and others; and modeling for students and others strategies for locating, access, and evaluating information within and beyond the library media center. Working in an environment that has been profoundly affected by technology, the library media specialist both masters sophisticated electronic resources and maintains a constant focus on the nature, quality, and ethical uses of information available in these and in more traditional tools (AASL & AECT, 1998).

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## B. Information Access and Delivery Guidelines

Program Component	Minimal	Proficient	Exemplary
1. Physical access to information and resources provided.			
a. Facility	The facility is large enough to accommodate a class with additional space for small groups for book selection or independent research (seating for 10 % of the student body). There is sufficient shelving for the collection, appropriate furniture, professional workspace, storage, and wiring. Elementary libraries have an area for storytelling.	The facility is large enough to accommodate areas for large and small groups and individuals working simultaneously. There is ample shelving for the collection, appropriate furniture, professional workspace, storage, and wiring. Elementary libraries have an area for storytelling. The atmosphere is visually appealing and comfortable for teachers and students.	Multiple classes and small groups can be accommodated. Production space, presentation space, and flexibility in design are provided in the library media center. Expansion and rearrangement plans are in place.  The atmosphere is visually appealing and comfortable for teachers and students.  The facility is structured to be used by community members, administrators for non-library functions.
b. Shelving and storage specifics	42"- 45" free standing shelves. Wall shelves up to 72" (high school). Capacity adequate for print collection. Multimedia resources are stored in an accessible manner.	42"- 45" free standing shelves. Wall shelves up to 72" (high school). Capacity adequate for collection. Multimedia resources are stored in an accessible manner in storage and display units.	42"- 45" free standing shelves. Wall shelves up to 72" (high school). Capacity adequate for collection with room for collection expansion. Multimedia resources are stored in an accessible manner in storage and display units.

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Program Component	Minimal	Proficient	Exemplary
c. Furniture and lighting	Tables and chairs appropriate for the size of the child/adult; circulation desk designed for computer circulation.	Tables and chairs appropriate for the size of the child/adult; circulation desk designed for computer circulation.  Incandescent lighting is adequate allows for illumination without eyestrain	Tables and chairs appropriate for the size of the child/adult; instructional chairs and tables plus comfortable furniture for relaxed reading; circulation desk designed for computer circulation. Many different configurations and options are available.  The facility makes use of natural light. Incandescent lighting is plentiful, flexible, and allows for illumination without eyestrain
d. Wiring and networking	Electrical outlets adequate for computers, televisions, video display and production; network and video connections; telephone and fax.	Electrical outlets are adequate for computers, televisions, video display and production. Outlets are place in floors as well as walls. Network and video connections are adequate and allow for upgrading such as wireless installation. Telephone and fax connections are available.	Electrical outlets are adequate for computers, televisions, video display and production. Outlets are place in floors as well as walls. Network and video connections are plentiful and allow for upgrading such as wireless installation. Telephone and fax connections are available in multiple sites.
e. Special areas	Story area for elementary media centers; office area for media specialist.	Story area for elementary media centers; instructional classroom and computer lab; office area for media specialist.	Story area for elementary media centers; instructional classroom and computer lab; production facilities, office area for media specialist.
f. Special needs	All facilities meet the needs of handicapped & special education students as required by federal law.	All facilities meet the needs of handicapped & special education students as required by federal law.	All facilities meet the needs of handicapped & special education students as required by federal law.

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Program Component	Minimal	Proficient	Exemplary
2. Resources	An online catalog and circulation system provides access to a collection supplemented by interlibrary loan.	A library network provides students with access to a variety of information resources within the library and from their homes. Interlibrary loan is within the region is possible.	The collection extends into classrooms for both print and electronics resources.  Library resources are accessible round-the-clock within the school, the district, and the community.  Interlibrary loan is conducted throughout the district, state, and beyond.
a. Size and support	Students have access to video, Web, print, and databases. Size, content, and age of core collection will reflect recommendations of state and national recommendations.  Expenditures per child will also be in in-line with state and national recommendations.	Students have access anytime to a wide variety of databases, and to print and video resources. Size, content, and age of core collection volumes will reflect recommendations of state and national recommendations.  Expenditures per child will also be in in-line with state and national recommendations.	Students have access anytime to a wide variety of databases, and to print and video resources. Production facilities are available for students. Size, content, and age of core collection volumes will reflect recommendations of state and national recommendations.  Expenditures per child are in line with state and national recommendations.
b. Finance and resources of the media center are jointly planned	Teachers and students are asked for input into the acquisitions for the media center.	An advisory group of teachers and students help to give the media specialist information about needs and new and ongoing programs, as well as emphasis on the present needs of the curriculum.	Then entire school community participates in planning and utilizing the resources of the media center for the most effective use of all funding.  The media specialist leads and coordinates this effort and reports expenditures annually.

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Program Component	Minimal	Proficient	Exemplary
c. Resources are explained to the users	Some instruction and informal presentation in the variety of resources is given each year to students and faculty members.	Students receive continual instruction in prescribed sequences to the materials and resources that are available through the media center. The explanations of resources are directly linked to the curriculum goals of the school as well as to state and national curriculum goals.	<p>All students have multiple opportunities and meet expectations for understanding various types of media, how to use them, and how to integrate them into their learning.</p> <p>Skills are presented in the context of classroom assignments and projects. The explanations of resources are directly linked to the benchmarks and goals of the school.</p> <p>Teachers receive assistance in linking resources to state and national curriculum standards and imperatives.</p>
3. A climate conducive to learning is provided.	The learning community feels welcome and drawn to the library media center.	Some students frequently use the library media center on their own because the center is warm and inviting and students are able to work productively.	<p>Students consistently use the library media center with classes and on their own during and beyond the school day.</p> <p>The environment is warm and inviting and stimulates and supports productive and focused learning</p>
4. Flexible and equitable access is ensured.	Some flexible access is provided.	Flexible access is approved during all hours that the school is in session.	<p>Access to the library media center and its resources is fully flexible and available both during and beyond the school day.</p> <p>Access to resources via Web is easy and always available from home or school.</p>

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Program Component	Minimal	Proficient	Exemplary
5. Collections support the curriculum and fulfill learning needs.	The collection has been weeded, is up to date and responsive to curricular and patron needs. There are some multi-media and electronic resources.	The collection is current and meets curricular and recreational needs. It is adequately balanced with resources in various formats to support diverse learning styles.	The collection accommodates several classes working on in-depth projects. It is well-balanced with resources in all formats.  Via the Web, the collection extends into the classrooms for all possible electronic resources.
6. A commitment to the right of intellectual freedom is the foundation of the program.	The library media program is fully committed to the concept of intellectual freedom.	The library media program and staff support the concept of intellectual freedom and implement it through policies and practice.	The entire school community supports intellectual freedom for all students and implements it through district policies and practices.
7. Legal guidelines and professional ethics in information policies, procedures, and practices are in place.	Written policies on information issues (selection, challenges, copyright, intellectual freedom, confidentiality, internet acceptable use) have been developed and approved by the school and district.	Written policies on information issues (selection, challenges, copyright, intellectual freedom, confidentiality, internet acceptable use) have been developed and approved by the school and district.  Policies are reviewed and updated occasionally.	Written policies on information issues (selection, challenges, copyright, intellectual freedom, confidentiality, internet acceptable use) have been developed and approved by the school and district.  Policies are reviewed and updated annually.

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## C. Program Administration

### Overview

The mission of the school library media program is to ensure that students, teachers, administrators, and staff are effective users of information and ideas. The mission is accomplished by:

- Providing intellectual and physical access to materials in all formats;
- Providing instruction to foster competence and stimulate interest in reading, viewing, and using information and ideas;
- Collaborating with other educators to plan, design, teach, and evaluate information literacy learning experiences to meet the needs of all students;
- Demonstrating effective leadership strategies in the administration of the program and in making connections to the broader learning community.

(Adapted from *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*, AASL & AECT, 1998)

To effectively implement the mission, the school library media program is key to the total school (or educational) learning process. The school library media program is effectively managed, collaboratively developed and intentionally designed to provide quality services and resources that positively impact student learning. The school library media program enables students to learn through promoting reading and literature appreciation, developing information literacy skills, providing access to intellectual resources, and fostering critical thinking and independent learning.

The school library media program contributes to student success and the support of lifelong learning. These outcomes are achieved through the leadership of school library media specialists who have broad professional preparation in education, library science and instructional technology. The school library media specialist performs separate but overlapping roles to link national, state, and local school library media program goals to the information resources and services to the diverse learning needs and interests of the students and staff.

To meet these responsibilities, certified staff, sufficient budgets, adequate space, furnishings, quality collections, and administrative and community support are paramount.

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## C. Program Administration Guidelines

Program Component	Minimal	Proficient	Exemplary
1. The mission, goals, and functions of the school library media program are aligned with and support school and district goals.	Aware of the school's mission and goals and takes them into consideration when planning library program activities and services.	Library Media Specialist serves on district committees to help formulate school goals. Designs the library program to achieve Information Power standards, district, and school goals.	Library Media Specialist serves on decision-making committees and helps formulate district/school goals and long-term school improvement plans. The library media program is an integral part of curriculum, technology and professional development.
2. The library media center is staffed with full time certified library media professionals with additional support and technology staff.	Library media staff consists of at least one full-time certified LMS and one full-time paraprofessional.	Library media staff consists of at least one full-time LMS, one full-time paraprofessional and technology support staff for every 750 students.	In addition to being staffed at the proficient level, there is a district library media coordinator who advocates for staff, program ideas, budget, and supports and directs the implementation of total library programs.
3. The mission, goals and objectives of the library media program is communicated to the administration, staff and the broader community.	<p>Library media specialist meets occasionally with school administrators</p> <p>Administration offers verbal support to the community about the purpose and value of the library media program.</p>	<p>Library media specialist meets regularly with school administration and presents period reports of the status of program goals and objectives.</p> <p>The administration actively encourages teachers to integrate information literacy skills into the curriculum.</p> <p>When given the opportunity, the library media specialist advocates for the library media program to administrators and school board members.</p>	<p>Library media staff communicates the library media program's goals and objectives to the school and district administrators, and the community in general.</p> <p>Building administration, central office and district library administrator provide strong support and guides the process of integrating information literacy skills across the curriculum.</p> <p>The Library media specialist seeks opportunities to advocate for the program to administrators, parents, school board members, legislators and other decision making bodies.</p>

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Program Component	Minimal	Proficient	Exemplary
5. Comprehensive and collaborative program planning is in place.	Planning and goal setting are done to meet immediate needs.	Plans for program resources and goals are completed annually by a collaborative team of teachers, parents, administrators and the library media specialist.	A long-range strategic plan for the program, resources and facility is developed. Plan is assessed annually with the committee looking at ways to achieve and more fully integrate program goals into district and student learning goals.
6. Sufficient funding is provided for implementation of program mission, goals, and services.	Funding is minimal and allows for replacement and the addition of some new resources.	Funding allows for program goals implementation and expansion. Grant and fundraising opportunities are sought to supplement the budget.	Funding supports a large, diverse, in-depth, school-wide collection. Bond issues, grants, school fundraising, and business partnerships supplement the budget.
7. Library management standards, policies, practices, and procedures are effective.	Written policies regarding process, use of resources inventory, collection development, copyright, intellectual freedom, acceptable use and confidentiality exist, but may not be widely know.	Written policies have been written and gone through the approval process. Library media staff is communicating and implementing policies effectively to students, teachers, administrators, parents and the community.	Policies addressing legal and ethical issues have been developed in collaboration with district staff and community and have been approved as district policies.  Policies are included in the district's board policy documents and carefully followed.
8. Effectiveness of library media program is an on-going assessment process.	Assessment of the library media program is based on input criteria, such as the number of books added, the number of classes taught, circulation statistics, and the number of unit lessons designed.	Teachers, students, and the total school community participate in the assessment of the library media program both formally and informally with some attempt to assess the quality of learning that occurred.	On-going assessment of the library media program is based on established goals and objectives as identified in the strategic plan. The library media specialist develops an action plan to further strengthen the program.

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