



Kentucky Department of **E D U C A T I O N**

Beyond Proficiency - 2025

The American Association of School Librarians' position statement on the role of the school library posits that "grounded in standards and best practice, school libraries are an integral component of the educational landscape. The school library provides access to a wide array of resources and an environment in which teaching and learning are the primary emphases. The school library provides a space and place for personalized learner success; learners are encouraged to explore questions of personal and academic relevance. Under the direction of a qualified school librarian, school libraries are instrumental in fostering literacy and teaching inquiry skills to support lifelong learning." (AASL, 2019)

Kentucky Guidelines for Highly Effective School Library Media Programs

The school library media program is an integral part of the school's total education program. It is imperative that administrators, SBDM councils, teachers, parents, and students as well as school media librarians demand high-quality library media programs within their schools. Beyond Proficiency provides guidelines for highly effective library media programs in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and should be used to guide school media librarians and school leaders in improving the library programs they administer. This document is also intended to help inform administrators and school-based decision-making (SBDM) councils about high-quality Library Media Programs. The standards by which the school media librarian is evaluated indicate the need for a versatile educational leader who is an instructional partner, an informational specialist, a teacher, and the administrator of the school library media program. Success in life and work for our students will require collaboration skills, engaged citizenship, critical thinking, communicating effectively, creativity, and empowered learning. Adequate library media facilities, with appropriate resources and staffed by certified school librarians will support the development of these competencies.

School Media Librarians Impact Student Achievement

Kentucky's certified school librarians support student achievement and teachers in implementing Kentucky Academic Standards. The school library fosters inquisitiveness in students; encouraging them to display curiosity, seek answers, ask questions, and gain knowledge. The librarian can help children select resources and uncover new ideas on topics of interest to them. Through the library, students can share their knowledge, engage with peers, demonstrate their creativity, and become active participants in society on a face-to-face and virtual basis.

What Does Research Tell Us?

Twenty-five national research studies have shown a measurable impact of school libraries and school librarians on student achievement. [School Libraries Work!](#) (Scholastic, 2016) summarizes these studies:

"The major themes supported by the research highlighted in this report confirm that a credentialed school librarian, collaboration and co-teaching, technology access, and collection size all elevate student learning."

"Quality school library programs have maximum impact when they:

- Encourage classroom teachers to integrate literature and information skills into the curriculum
- Offer opportunities for teachers and school librarians to collaborate on projects that help students use a variety of resources, conduct research, and present their findings
- Are supported fiscally and programmatically by the educational community to achieve the mission of the school."

Connections to our 2024-2030 Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) Master Plan

The [2024-2030 Kentucky Education Technology System \(KETS\) Master Plan](#) emphasizes the effective integration of technology across Kentucky's K-12 education landscape, focusing on enhancing learning experiences, ensuring digital equity, and promoting innovative teaching methods. The connection and support for school libraries and librarians are implicitly supported through several key components of this plan.

1. Technology Integration and Digital Literacy: The KETS plan's focus on expanding opportunities for students to engage in coding, technology, and computer science courses aligns with the role of school librarians as facilitators of digital literacy and technology integration.

Certified school media librarians can support these goals by teaching digital citizenship skills, curating digital resources, and integrating technology into the library's programs and services.

2. Digital Citizenship Skills: The emphasis on implementing digital citizenship skills complements the educational role of school librarians. School librarians are at the forefront of assisting students in navigating the digital world responsibly, critically evaluating information, and understanding the ethics of digital content creation and consumption.

3. Professional Learning and Collaborative Leadership: The KETS plan's focus on personalized professional learning and collaborative leadership provides an avenue for teacher librarians to engage in continuous learning opportunities and to provide leadership roles within their schools in the implementation of library media standards, technology standards, digital literacy, and data privacy practices.

4. Access to Quality Resources: The KETS plan's description of high-quality, equitable access to technology and resources mirrors the mission of school libraries to provide inclusive access to a variety of materials and information technologies. Certified school media librarians support the infrastructure for digital learning and ensure that students and teachers have access to quality digital resources.

5. Innovative Educational Practices: The KETS plan's emphasis on innovative and vibrant learning experiences can be supported by the unique programming and curricular support that certified school librarians provide. School librarians are leaders in introducing new technologies, platforms, and instructional methodologies within the school environment, making the library a hub for innovative learning.

6. Partnerships and Community Engagement: The KETS Master Plan encourages partnerships and engagement with communities, which resonates with the collaborative nature of school libraries. School librarians frequently partner with teachers, parents, and the wider community to support educational initiatives and connect students with the broader world of learning.

Resources To Support The Work Of Kentucky School Media Librarians

Six common beliefs, developed by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL, 2018), and shared by the Kentucky Department of Education include:

1. The school library is a unique and essential part of a learning community. As a destination for on-site and virtual personalized learning, the school library is a vital connection between school and home. As the leader of this space and its functions, the school librarian ensures that the school

library environment provides all members of the school community access to information and technology, connecting learning to real-world events. By providing access to an array of well-managed resources, school librarians enable academic knowledge to be linked to deep understanding.

2. Qualified school librarians lead effective school libraries. As they guide organizational and personal change, effective school librarians model, promote, and foster inquiry learning in adequately-staffed and resourced school libraries. Qualified school librarians have been educated and certified to perform interlinked, interdisciplinary, and cross-cutting roles as instructional leaders, program administrators, educators, collaborative partners, and information specialists.

3. Learners should be prepared for college, career, and life. Committed to inclusion and equity, effective school librarians use evidence to determine what works, for whom and under what conditions for each learner; complemented by community engagement and innovative leadership, school librarians improve all learners' opportunities for success. This success empowers learners to persist in inquiry, advanced study, enriching professional work, and community participation through continuous improvement within and beyond the school building and school day.

4. Reading is the core of personal and academic competency. In the school library, learners engage with relevant information resources and digital learning opportunities in a culture of reading. School librarians initiate and elevate motivational reading initiatives by using story and personal narrative to engage learners. School librarians curate current digital and print materials and technology to provide access to high-quality reading materials that encourage learners, educators, and families to become lifelong learners and readers.

5. Intellectual freedom is every learner's right. Learners have the freedom to speak and hear what others have to say, rather than allowing others to control their access to ideas and information; the school librarian's responsibility is to develop these dispositions in learners, educators, and all other members of the learning community.

6. Information technologies must be appropriately integrated and equitably available. Although technology is woven into almost every aspect of learning and life (both in-person and digital), not every learner and educator has equitable access to up-to-date, appropriate technology, digital tools, digital resources and digital connectivity. An effective school library bridges digital and socioeconomic divides to affect technology access and skill.

High-quality Characteristics

The following characteristics and examples of evidence help to form the definition of a “high-quality” school library program. This rubric is not intended for use as an evaluation instrument for the school media librarian, but rather as a tool to evaluate the existing school library media program as a whole.

Demonstrator: Teaching For Learning

High-quality Characteristics	Examples of Evidence
<p>I. Collaborative Partnerships The school library media program promotes collaboration among members of the learning community to encourage learners to be skilled, lifelong users and creators of ideas and information.</p>	<p>The school library media program supports collaborative partnerships through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● inquiry lessons and units ● communication with and support from administration/leadership ● input and assistance from parents, community members, and organizations to enhance inquiry lessons and units ● student voice and choice in the learning process and development of the library program ● sharing the school library media program plan with school administrators and the school council
<p>II. Importance of Reading The school library media program promotes reading for enjoyment, personal growth, and learning by establishing and maintaining a collection of reading and information materials in formats that support the diverse developmental, cultural, social, and linguistic needs of learners and their communities.</p>	<p>The school library media program promotes reading through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reinforcement of reading strategies ● collaboration with teachers and other specialists ● acquisition and promotion of current, high-quality, inclusive, and high-interest collections of books and other reading resources in multiple formats ● initiatives that encourage and engage learners in reading for understanding and enjoyment ● maintenance of an environment where reading is valued, promoted, and encouraged ● read-alouds, book talks, displays, student-created book products, exposure to authors, reading promotions/celebrations ● parent, family member, and caregiver involvement
<p>III. Multiple Literacies The school library media program provides instruction</p>	<p>The school library media program addresses multiple literacies through:</p>

<p>that addresses multiple literacies (e.g. information, media, visual, and technology).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● collaboration with regular classroom and content teachers, school counselors, and administrators ● access to information in various formats that provide opportunities for inquiry and critical thinking ● instruction on searching for information in various formats ● emerging technologies and formats ● approved policies regarding legal, ethical, and social responsibilities in accessing, using, and creating information in various formats
<p>IV. Effective Practices for Inquiry The school library media program is based on an inquiry-based approach to learning.</p>	<p>The school library media program demonstrates effective practices for inquiry through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● adherence to the Kentucky Academic Standards for Library Media and other content areas ● planned activities that involve application, analysis, evaluation, creativity, and making ● a school-wide model for the information search process ● learning aids that help users collect and curate information and data ● Innovative and emerging technologies as a means for effective and creative learning
<p>V. Assessment In Teaching for Learning The school library media program is guided by the assessment of student learning data.</p>	<p>The school library media program uses formative and summative assessments of student learning data to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● build collaborative partnerships for inquiry learning ● promote reading for learning ● provide programming to address identified knowledge gaps ● inform the selection of library resources

Demonstrator: Building The Learning Environment

High-quality Characteristics	Examples of Evidence
<p>I. Planning And Evaluating The school library media program is guided by a strategic plan that reflects the mission, goals, and objectives of the library media center and the school.</p>	<p>The school library media program plan is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● strategic for continuous improvement ● regularly evaluated for program improvement and realignment of goals ● used to recognize the accomplishment of objectives ● used to advocate for the school library instructional program ● based on research findings

<p>II. Staffing Schools shall employ a certified school media librarian to organize, equip, and manage the operations of the school media library. The school media librarian shall hold the appropriate certificate of legal qualifications in accordance with KRS 161.020 and 161.030. (KRS 158.102).</p>	<p>The school library media program is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● staffed as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Under 200: 1 full-time school media librarian (SML) ○ 200-500: 1 full-time SML; .5 clerk ○ 501-800: 1 full-time SML; 1 clerk ○ 801-1200: 1 full-time SML; 1.5 clerks ○ 1201-1600: 1.5 SML; 1.5 clerks ○ 1601-2000: 2 full-time SML; 2 clerks ○ 2001 and Up: 2.5 SML; 2 clerks ● supported by a director or assigned advocate at the district level ● operated in an environment of mutual respect and collaboration in which all staff members work toward the common goal of student learning ● supported by job descriptions that outline the roles, responsibilities, competencies, and qualifications of library staff, including paraprofessionals, student aides, and community volunteers ● supports student aides and volunteers through training
<p>III. Learning Space The school library media program includes flexible and equitable access to physical and virtual collections of resources that support the school curriculum and meet the diverse needs of all learners.</p>	<p>The school library learning space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● is conducive to learning and collaboration ● maintains hours for optimum access ● accommodates responsive scheduling of the school library facility to allow for efficient and timely integration of resources into the curriculum ● is a safe, accessible, friendly, comfortable, well-lit, aesthetically pleasing, and ergonomic space that is centrally located ● encourages technology use, leisure reading and browsing, and use of materials in all formats ● provides access to and support for digital information ● includes appropriate shelving and storage for resources ● exhibits student work ● provides technology and telecommunications infrastructure to support teaching and learning
<p>IV. Budget The school library media program has sufficient funding to support the strategic Plan. (Appendix)</p>	<p>The school library media program's budget support reflects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● rationales and priorities using evidence from strategic planning ● an allocation of funding to make steady progress toward the attainment of goals and objectives (recommended

	<p>minimum of \$20 per student or 20% of student allocation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● local and national evidence that shows how the school library media program impacts learning ● current market data about information resource costs
<p>V. Policies The school library media program includes policies, procedures, and guidelines that support equitable access to ideas and information throughout the school community.</p>	<p>The school library media program policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reflect input from members of the school community ● demonstrate compliance with approved selection and purchasing policies ● include acceptable use of technology resources ● promote ethical use of information ● establish procedures for the equitable circulation of library materials ● reflect appropriate use of library spaces and resources ● reference any district policy on library/instructional material reconsideration
<p>VI. Collection And Information Access The school library media program includes a well-developed collection of material in a variety of formats that support the school curriculum and are suited to user needs and interests.</p>	<p>The school library media program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reflects an up-to-date collection of resources ● provides access to high-quality, inclusive, and high-interest collections of books and other reading resources in multiple formats ● provides and protects intellectual access to information and ideas and ensures that the collection meets the needs of the school curriculum ● takes advantage of available virtual resources to support the school curriculum ● includes a current automation system to track holdings ● collection is robust and can support the needs of students ● collection has a minimum of 10 print books per student ● ensures that the library collection is up to date through regular weeding (removal of materials that are no longer accurate, relevant, and or are in poor condition)
<p>VII. Outreach The school library media program builds support from local decision-makers.</p>	<p>The school library media program builds support through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● relationships with local, state, and national decision-makers ● promotional efforts aligned with school and learning community goals ● partnerships with the local and global community that promote student learning ● school-based advisory committee or parent groups ● volunteers in the library

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication resources (e.g. library website, newsletters, social networks) • regular reports giving concrete evidence of what the library does to support all learners
<p>VIII. Professional Learning The school library media program supports professional learning to sustain and increase the knowledge and skills of educators.</p>	<p>The school library media program supports professional learning through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to professional materials and resources • opportunities for collaboration with the school media librarian • group presentations (e.g. webinars, speakers, video conferencing, demonstrations, action research, book studies) • access to meeting space and equipment

Demonstrator: Empowering Learning Through Leadership

High-quality Characteristics	Examples of Evidence
<p>I. Professional Responsibilities The school library media program is built by professionals who model leadership and best practice for the school community.</p>	<p>The school library media program leadership (e.g. school media librarian, principal, superintendent, SBDM, school board):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures that the school library media program has the prescribed funding, staff, policies, facilities, resources, and support • is an early adopter of changes in current educational and technology trends • aligns program to the school, state, and national educational program standards • supports participation in local, regional, state and national school library and education technology professional associations for education and librarianship (e.g. KASL, KYSTE, AASL, ISTE) • stays informed and shares knowledge about school libraries and learning • uses research to inform practice and makes evidence-based decisions • fosters an atmosphere of respect and rapport between the school library media specialist and all members of the learning community to encourage student learning and to promote teacher enthusiasm and participation • creates an environment that is conducive to active and participatory learning, resource-based learning, and collaboration with teaching staff

Additional Resources

The following additional resources will help guide school librarians, school administrators, and other school leaders in maintaining and improving the library programs in their schools:

[KDE Library Media Specialist Framework \(Other Professionals\)](#)

[AASL School Library Evaluation Checklist](#)

[AASL Role of the School Library](#)

[Future Ready Librarians® Framework](#)

[AASL School Library Standards crosswalk with Future Ready Librarians](#)

[The Future Ready Schools® Librarian Self-Reflection Tool](#)

[Crosswalk Future Ready Librarians® Framework and ISTE Standards for Educators](#)

Sources

American Association of School Librarians. (2018). *AASL Standards Framework for Learners: National School Library Standards*. ALA Editions, an imprint of the American Library Association.

American Association of School Librarians. (1998). *Information power: Building Partnerships for Learning, Updated Edition*. American Library Association.

School libraries work!: A Compendium of Research Supporting the Effectiveness of School Libraries. (2016). *Scholastic*.

2024-2030 Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) Master Plan. (2024). In Kentucky Department of Education. Kentucky Department of Education. Retrieved January 7, 2025, from <https://www.education.ky.gov/districts/tech/Pages/KETS-2024-2030-KETS-Master-Plan.aspx>

Appendix

Funding Resources:

North Carolina: IMPACT: [Guidelines for North Carolina Media and Technology Programs](#)

There are at least three formulas from which to choose to determine budget amounts:

FORMULA 1: IMPACT recommends that **60% of the per pupil allotment of state funds be spent on non-consumable materials** available to all students and teachers through the media center. (See <<http://www.ncwiseowl.org/>>, follow the path through Media and Technology to IMPACT, ©2005). Use this formula method: 60% of state allotted funds x number of students = amount needed to determine the amount recommended. For example, 60% of 2003-2004 per pupil allotment is 60% of \$46.51 = \$28; thus a school of 500 students would need 500 x \$28 = \$14,000 per year, or a five-year total of \$70,000.

FORMULA 2: The second method for determining a recommended budget is by calculating the minimum amount needed to add one book per child, per year (per David Loertscher's presentation at the 1998 North Carolina Association of School Librarians). **If the average cost of a print resource is \$25**, then a school of 500 students would need \$12,500 per year, or \$62,500 over the five-year period of the plan to maintain, not build, the media collection.

FORMULA 3: The third method for determining a recommended budget is by basing it on accreditation standards such as Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. If a collection currently meets the standard of ten usable books per child, for example, and 300 books are discarded, the amount needed is no less than 300 x **\$25** = \$7500 for that year to maintain Accreditation.

Wisconsin: [Common School Fund](#)

Common School Fund distributions for the 2022-23 school year will be **\$45.38 (rounded) per census student**. This figure is based upon the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands' estimate of \$52 million being available for payment. This amount is a conservative estimate and the Department of Public Instruction is confident the funds will be distributed in April 2023. Payments to districts will be made on Monday, April 24, 2023. Funds are to be used in the same fiscal year as they are received or allocated as restricted fund balance (WUFAR account 10 B 936130).

Oregon: [Quality Education Model Staffing & Materials Expenditures Levels](#)

The 2022 Quality Education Model (QEM) report includes the following library staffing best practices per prototype school (pgs. 7, 10). Materials expenditure levels for books and periodicals, both print and electronic formats, are based on the Quality Education Commission (QEC) 2022 cost model from the Oregon Department of Education. The current service level (CSL) amount is based on actual spending in the prior biennium with an adjustment for inflation and enrollment growth, and the fully-implemented amount is based on adopting the best practices recommended in the Quality Education Model report.

Materials CSL / Base

Elementary School \$18 per student

Middle School \$20 per student

High School \$23 per student

Materials Full

Elementary School **\$28 per student**

Middle School **\$34 per student**

High School **\$40 per student**