

## **Using funding in the right way: School Librarians.**

**Oct 10, Published in the Los Angeles Times.**

Response to: "Tests scores don't matter to students' grades, so of course they haven't improved enough" (Editorial)

**To the editor:** The Times asks the right question: Are schools using funding the right way to help disadvantaged students? Research gives us a clear direction.

Reading achievement is strongly related to how much pleasure-reading students do, which in turn is strongly related to access to books, which in turn is related to school and public library quality. For students living in poverty, libraries often provide their only access to books.

School libraries in California have improved in the last decade, with increased numbers of books per student, but there is one area where they need help.

Research shows that presence of credentialed school librarians makes a strong contribution to improving reading achievement. Only 9% of California school libraries have credentialed librarians, compared with the national average of 66%.

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*The writer is a professor emeritus of education at USC.*

Sources (not included with the published letter)

Reading achievement and pleasure reading, pleasure reading and access to books, access to books and library quality: McQuillan, J. 1998. *The Literacy Crisis: False Claims and Real Solutions*. Heinemann; Krashen, S. 2004. *The Power of Reading (Second Edition)*. Libraries Unlimited. Krashen, S., Lee, S.Y. and McQuillan, J. 2012. Is the library important? Multivariate studies at the national and international level. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 8(1): 26-36. Poverty and access to books: Neuman, S. & Celano, D. (2001). Access to print in low-income and middle-income communities. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 36(1). 9%: Statistics about California School Libraries (California Department of Education) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/lb/schoollibrstats08.asp> 66%: Library/Media Centers in U.S. Public Schools: Growth, Staffing, and Resources (National Education Association)

<http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Trends%20in%20School%20Library%20Media%20Centers%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

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Kappan. <http://www.kappanonline.org/lance-kachel-school-librarians-matter-years-research/>; Small, R., Shanahan, K. and Stasak, M. 2010. The impact of New York's school libraries on student achievement and motivation. Phase III. *School Library Media Research*, 13