



Dear Rep. Gorsek and members of the House Committee on Education,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for HB 3263 on the importance of school librarians in every school in Oregon.

The Oregon Association of College and Research Libraries represents librarians in public universities, community colleges, and private colleges and universities across the State of Oregon. Our members recognize the critical role school librarians play in helping students develop information literacy skills from kindergarten through 12th grade, an increasingly vital set of competencies as their education continues into associate, baccalaureate, and graduate-level education.

Information literacy is a critical skill that supports empowered problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making, and informed community engagement throughout an individual's life. The number of school librarians serving Oregon's schools has declined significantly in the past few decades and we at Oregon colleges and universities have seen the impact first-hand. Students are coming into college underprepared and without the skills needed to define a focused area of research, find relevant information, engage critically with sources of information, assess misinformation and fake news, and use information to support an argument with proper attribution (avoiding plagiarism). They struggle to meet the expectations of college-level work. Given the research suggesting that information literacy skills and library use impact student achievement and retention,¹ student experiences with a school librarian can set them up for future success in college.

School librarians are the individuals most-qualified to teach information literacy skills and to support teachers in integrating information literacy learning in their classrooms. The Oregon Association of School Libraries' work to develop granular Grade-Level Learning Goals² which outline the sequence of Information Literacy skills taught in each grade from K-14 is a testament

¹ Soria, Krista M., Jan Fransen, and Shane Nackerud. "Library use and undergraduate student outcomes: New evidence for students' retention and academic success." *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 13.2 (2013): 147-164; Squibb, Sara Davidson, and Susan Mikkelsen. "Assessing the value of course-embedded information literacy on student learning and achievement." *College & research libraries* 77.2 (2016): 164-183. <https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/viewFile/16502/17948>

² OASL Grade Level Learning Goals (2017). <https://sites.google.com/site/oregonschoollibrarystandards/grade-level-learning-goals---draft-2017>

to the value of their expertise. The document describes what information literacy looks like at every grade level, providing a roadmap for teaching information literacy.

An investment in school libraries and school librarians is an investment in Oregon students. Scholarly research has shown that the presence of a school librarian impacts student reading ability, academic test scores, teacher support, and school/classroom technology adoption.³ School librarians often play a critical role in educational equity, providing students with access to reading materials, technology, and information literacy instruction regardless of whether their parent(s) or guardian(s) take them to a public library. School librarians are often at the forefront of supporting the use of learning technologies in the classroom and can play a vital role in supporting less tech-savvy teachers so every student has access to educational technologies.

Simply put, school librarians are integral to our work in higher education and help ensure that Oregon's K-12 students become tech-savvy, information literate college students, workers, leaders, and members of their communities. We thank you for your support of strong school libraries staffed by school librarians.

Sincerely,

The Association of College and Research Libraries, Oregon Board

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³ Small, Ruth V., Kathryn A. Shanahan, and Megan Stasak. "The Impact of New York's School Libraries on Student Achievement and Motivation: Phase III." *School Library Media Research* 13 (2010). http://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/aaslpubsandjournals/slr/vol12/SLMR_ImpactofNewYork_V12.pdf; Lance, Keith Curry. "Impact of school library media programs on academic achievement." *Teacher librarian* 29.3 (2002): 29; Barrett, Lynn. "Effective school libraries: evidence of impact on student achievement." *The School Librarian* 58.3 (2010): 136. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.731.2463&rep=rep1&type=pdf#page=10>