

AIME SUMMARY AND RESPONSE TO SURVEY RESULTS: *How Students, Teachers & Principals Benefit from Strong School Libraries: The Indiana Study*

The Indiana study—*How Students, Principals, and Teachers Benefit from Strong School Libraries*—was two studies in one. The first study involved a simplified replication of a research design employed in Colorado and more than a dozen other states to measure the impact of specific characteristics of school library programs. The second study—and the chief focus—in this project explored more qualitative issues impacting test scores, most concerning the perceptions of library media specialists (LMSs), principals, and teachers. The findings of this study, while consistent with other previous research and conventional wisdom, make a start at expanding understanding of the nuances of the relationships between the three above-mentioned educator types and how those relationships benefit not only the participants, but also students.

Key Findings

The key findings of this study are clear: schools tended to perform better on the ISTEP+ tests where there were better-staffed, better-stocked, and better-funded school library programs. This finding takes into account the influence of poverty and race/ethnicity, which otherwise obscure the impact of school library programs.

Across grade levels, better-performing schools also tended to be those whose principals valued:

- collaboration between LMSs and classroom teachers in the design and delivery of instruction,
- flexible scheduling of library access,
- regular meetings between themselves and their LMSs, and
- having their LMSs serve on key school committees.

At the elementary level, schools averaged better test results where there were:

- LMSs who believed that their principals and teachers understand their roles as school leaders, curriculum designers, administrators (in the case of principals), and teachers (in the case of teachers);
- teachers who reported initiating instructional collaboration with LMSs and who believed that they teach to information literacy standards better when they engage in such collaboration; and
- both LMSs and teachers are more familiar with the document that correlates information literacy and academic standards.

Next Steps

After extensive evaluation and analysis of the survey results and the potential capacity for the library media center to play a more integral role in raising student achievement, members and officials in the AIME organization will take the following actions:

- In the next three months AIME will assemble state and national educators and civic leaders to a summit to draft a measurable vision of how media programs prepare students to be successful on mission-critical measures: fluency in literacy and numeracy, communication, information gathering, analysis, synthesis and production, collaboration.
- Within six months, AIME will share the vision created by the stakeholders for input and feedback to ensure that the drafted vision represents a shared view that will inspire the development and work of media specialists across the state.
- Within one year, AIME will work with building, district, and state leaders to advocate for the structures and resources necessary to achieve the vision so that students are able to accomplish established goals articulated in the mission statements at the state and local levels.
- Based on the vision, AIME will provide scaffolds to raise the performance levels of media programs across the state to positively impact student achievement in the State of Indiana and grow the capacity of both media specialists and the effectiveness of the media center.