

## **An Ohio Educational Library Media Association White Paper: Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee and the Library Media Specialist**

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate the ways in which the library media specialist can serve as a literacy leader in today's Ohio schools. As a partner with other educators, the library media specialist delivers instruction that will enable students to meet and exceed the requirements of the *Third Grade Reading Guarantee*.

### **Audience:**

The intended audience for this document includes school board members, school administrators, teachers, library media specialists, parents, State Librarian of Ohio, children's public librarians and all others who support literacy education in Ohio.

### **Definitions:**

- *Third Grade Reading Guarantee* (alternatively *3rd Grade Reading Guarantee*) - The Third Grade Reading Guarantee (S.B. 21/ [ORC 3313.608](#)) requires each school district and community-school to use diagnostic assessments adopted by the State Board of Education to assess a student's reading skills at the beginning of kindergarten, first, second, and third grade to identify students reading below grade level. Upon identification of a student as underperforming, the district or school must notify the student's parent and provide the student with intervention services. To that end, the district or school must develop a reading improvement and monitoring plan within 60 days after receiving the student's results in the diagnostic assessment. Current law generally prohibits school districts and community schools from promoting to fourth grade a student who does not attain at least the "equivalent level of achievement" as determined by the Department of Education (R.C. 3313.608 (A)(1) and (2)). There are exceptions for students in specific circumstances.
- *Library Media Specialist* - a teacher who holds library/media licensure in the state of Ohio that includes advanced training in literacy.
- *Instruction* - teaching, learning and assessment using literary and informational texts to teach a variety of skills including: foundational reading skills, writing, speaking, listening and language acquisition.

### **Overview:**

According to *The Third Grade Reading Guarantee Guidance Document* prepared by the Ohio Department of Education (1-9-13) "districts are encouraged to do whatever is necessary above and beyond the law's minimum requirement to ensure their students are reading at grade level." Library media specialists are uniquely positioned to partner with other educators to positively affect reading at all grade levels but specifically the early learner up through and including grade three. Recent studies in Colorado, New York, and Pennsylvania show that regardless of socio-economic level, racial/ethnic composition, or disability status in schools with licensed library media specialists:

- Reading scores are consistently better for students who have a full-time certified librarian than those who do not. With a full-time librarian, students are more likely to score Advanced and less likely to score Below Basic (Pennsylvania 2011).
- Elementary students in schools with certified school library media specialists are more likely to have higher English/Language Arts achievement scores than those in schools with non-certified school library media specialists (New York 2010)

- Schools that either maintained or gained an endorsed librarian between 2005 and 2011 tended to have more students scoring advanced in reading in 2011 and to have increased their performance more than schools that either lost their librarians or never had one (Colorado 2012).

### **Elementary Library Media Specialist's Role in Reading:**

As the hub of literacy learning, the library/media center is where children and reading naturally come together. With a licensed library media specialist at the helm, teaching and learning occurs in a variety of formal and informal ways. When you enter an elementary school library/media center you will observe these examples of learning in action:

- **Reading Literary Texts:** book clubs both enriched and remedial; interactive read alouds; author studies as mentor texts; family literacy opportunities.
- **Reading Informational Texts:** model and teach non-fiction features; use inquiry for short and sustained research; compare and contrast texts on the same topic; evaluate the quality and reliability of sources.
- **Foundational Reading Skills:** use the online library/media center catalog to select materials of interest and need; use search strategies with appropriate vocabulary for successful information retrieval; engage in sustained silent reading to develop focus and stamina; reinforce concepts of print and e-print.
- **Writing:** response to literary and informational texts; process writing skills; written demonstration of new understandings.
- **Speaking and Listening:** dramatic readings including poetry, recitation, and reader's theatre; oral demonstration of new understandings; video conferencing with experts in the field.
- **Language Acquisition:** use a variety of reference tools (print and electronic) to make greater sense of literary and informational texts; gain understanding and transferability of academic vocabulary through all media.

### **Conclusion:**

Literacy is not a skill that develops in isolation but in the context of a literature- and media-rich environment. Elementary library media specialists have long been a resource for book talks of quality titles and provided access to these titles through responsive collection development that supports a literature- and media- rich environment. Although these strategies promote literacy and motivate lifelong readers, the library media specialist's impact is much broader. The uniqueness of their position enables collaboration with other educators both within the school district and the larger community to bolster the skills, stamina, and engagement necessary for students to be successful on the *Third Grade Reading Guarantee*.

### **Additional Resources**

AASL *Position Statement on the School Librarian's Role in Reading*

<http://www.ala.org/aasl/advocacy/resources/position-statements/reading-role>

AASL *School Librarian's Role in Reading Toolkit* <http://www.ala.org/aasl/advocacy/tools/toolkits/role-reading>

OELMA created a series of short video clips on YouTube to demonstrate how library media specialists use interactive read alouds for developing important reading skills in elementary-age children. The series is entitled "*Making Meaning from Text*" - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCGp6Q1Rjqs>

***Approved by the Ohio Educational Library Media Association Executive Board June 6, 2013.***