




Literacy Partners: A Principal's Guide to an Effective Library Media Program for the 21st Century

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Literacy Partners: A Principal's Guide to an Effective Library Media Program for the 21st Century, published by the Office of Technology Initiatives of the Alabama Department of Education. Available online: www.alsde.edu/general/literacypartners.pdf

A broad-based effort by library media specialists and higher education personnel across Alabama provided this guide to “help principals understand good school library media practices.” According to these professionals, a high-quality library media program can promote literacy in a variety of ways—from working with individual students to foster an interest in reading to collaborating with teachers in ways that support standards-based instruction. The report identifies four core service objectives for a library media program and elaborates on ways principals can support each:

- Provide *access to information* for students and staff that is appropriate to student development and features diversity in perspective, format, and interest;
- Collaborate with teachers so *every student learns to access, evaluate, and use information* through activities that are planned and assessed in ways that help them achieve classroom instructional objectives;
- Join others in the learning community to *encourage every student to read, view, and listen for information and enjoyment*; and
- Administer a planned program that provides a *welcoming environment* conducive to learning and promotes students' intellectual and personal growth.

The authors note that “on a smaller scale, the management responsibilities required of a media specialist are similar to those of a principal managing a school program.” To help principals and media specialists engage in conversations focused on the library facility and program, a management checklist form is provided. Two additional and potentially useful forms focus attention on the library's resources—books, periodicals, and audiovisual materials—and its core reference collection. Simply reading each of these three forms would help a principal expand his or her understanding of the range of issues to be addressed in building and maintaining a school library media center that effectively supports the school's instructional program.