

"The library..... a palace of everything awesome". According to an Oklahoma 2nd Grade Student

School librarians are **teacher leaders** who serve an integral part of their school and professional community. Their vision and passion for learning and teaching permeates all facets of their work. Librarians play a pivotal role in supporting academics, literacy, creativity, and collaborative endeavors for all students in the school. To accomplish this mission, teacher librarians co-teach with classroom and content area teachers, provide opportunities for participatory and exploratory learning, and develop a culture of literacy throughout the school.

Teacher librarians are masters at curating information for student and staff alike and connecting students with the "just the right book at the right time." Teacher librarians develop multiple literacies and digital citizenship in all students by providing opportunities that engage students in seeking, using and creating knowledge. To actualize these goals, teacher librarians partner with classroom teachers to deliver instruction that helps prepare students for our global society by developing authentic inquiry skills that prepare them for college and career. School teacher librarians create a safe atmosphere where **equal access and equity** are ensured.

The school library functions as the heart of the school. It provides a space for reading, innovation and collaboration that creates a stimulating atmosphere with access to learning tools that allows students full participation and ownership of their learning. Teacher librarians teach students to love to read and think critically to solve problems. School libraries serve at the nexus of learning where students are free to be curious and turn their ideas into real-world solutions. At the helm of the library learning space is the certified teacher librarian who provides instruction, along with information and technology access, that ignites imagination and thinking.

This **access reaches far beyond physical walls, extending student learning virtually 24/7** so that curiosity and information seeking do not have to stop when the school day ends. Teacher librarians teach ethical information use, and offer digital access to a wealth of information through the use of paid databases vetted and acquired specifically for the school community. The school library opens up a safe place where students are free to read, explore their passions and become lifelong learners.

Nationwide studies of school libraries show that **students in schools with certified school librarians score better on standardized tests**. Research consistently confirms student test scores tend to be significantly higher when full-time certified school librarians play an integral role in instruction, including teaching information and technology skills to students, collaborating with classroom teachers, and providing in-service training to teacher. Moreover, school libraries are essential places for students to develop skills to be successful in life - creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. Teacher librarians engage youth in student-driven, inquiry-based learning, making connections across the curriculum.

By insisting that all Oklahoma schools have a certified librarian, appropriate staff support, and adequate materials funding, we can influence the future of every Oklahoma student ensuring that our students are informed and contributing global citizens who can thrive in our ever-changing world.