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# A Shared Vision for Education

Connecting Educators, Families and Libraries

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*Discover. Explore. Experience.... Grow.*  
**LIBRARIES OF WASHINGTON STATE**

## 10 facts to know about the educational value of libraries:

- 1 A study by the Gates Foundation found that 50 percent of children surveyed use library computers to do their schoolwork. The use of library computers for doing homework and accessing the Internet is especially important for minority students and youth from low-income families.
  - 2 More than 95 percent of library outlets offer public access computers, and 14 million regularly use them. Poor and minority patrons are most likely to rely on library access to computers.
  - 3 Of students under 18, 60 percent use library Internet access to do school work.
  - 4 Children in every income group who read six or more books at their grade level over the summer gained more in reading achievement than children who did not.
  - 5 Researchers estimate that if children get the proper exposure and systematic opportunities to develop foundational early-language and pre-reading skills during early childhood, as few as five percent may suffer serious reading difficulties.
  - 6 Deficiencies in student knowledge not only lead to difficulties in learning to read, but also difficulties in acquiring new knowledge.
  - 7 Reading is the single summer activity most strongly and consistently related to summer learning.
  - 8 As the world transitions from an industrial society to an information society, learning across the lifespan becomes increasingly important.
  - 9 One in three public libraries offers adult literacy classes. Substantially more libraries provide other support services, such as one-on-one tutoring, meeting spaces for learners and tutors, and special collections and programs to help immigrants improve their English literacy skills.
  - 10 Public libraries provide the only access to computers and the Internet for many people, including ethnic minorities and people who are unemployed, low-income or have not completed high school.
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- 1 "Kids Have Access, Enjoy Computers: Libraries Key for Many, Especially the Disadvantaged," Gates Foundation Oct. 2003, 3 May 2006 <[http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/Downloads/libraries/eval\\_docs/word/Kids\\_have\\_access\\_10.03.doc](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/Downloads/libraries/eval_docs/word/Kids_have_access_10.03.doc)>.
  - 2 "Toward Equality of Access: The Role of Public Libraries in Addressing the Digital Divide," Gates Foundation 2004, 1 May 2006 <<http://www.gatesfoundation.org>>.
  - 3 Tammi Moe and Keith Curry Lance, "Colorado Public Libraries and the Digital Divide," Library Research Service 2002, 5 May 2006 <[http://www.lrs.org/documents/DD\\_2002/DD\\_report\\_revised\\_oct\\_2004.pdf](http://www.lrs.org/documents/DD_2002/DD_report_revised_oct_2004.pdf)>.
  - 4 Barbara Heyns, *Summer Learning and the Effect of Schooling* (New York: Academic Press, 1978).
  - 5 "Proven Methods—Early Reading First and Reading First," U.S. Department of Education 2 Sept. 2005, 2 May 2006 <<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/methods/reading/readingfirst.html>>.
  - 6 Susan B. Neuman and Donna Celano, "The knowledge gap: Implications of leveling the playing field for low-income and middle-income children," *Reading Research Quarterly* (International Reading Association: June 2006, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 197-198).
  - 7 Barbara Heyns, *Summer Learning and the Effect of Schooling* (New York: Academic Press, 1978).
  - 8 "Free-Choice Learning," Institute for Learning Innovation 2002, 2 May 2006 <<http://www.ilinet.org/freechoicelearning.html>>.
  - 9 "21st Century Literacy @ Your Library," American Library Association 1 June 2001, 2 May 2006 <<http://www.ala.org/ala/protools/21centurylit/21stcenturyliteracy.htm>>.
  - 10 "Toward Equality of Access: The Role of Public Libraries in Addressing the Digital Divide," Gates Foundation 2004, 1 May 2006 <<http://www.gatesfoundation.org>>.

**The Washington State Library** applauds your efforts to provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children of Washington State. Libraries also play a valuable role in the network of education resources available to students, educators, parents and advocates.

Across the state, public libraries offer information and programming when schools are not in session, particularly on weekends and throughout the summer. Many libraries provide 24/7 online access to learning resources. Together libraries and schools connect the people of our communities to ideas, information and learning throughout their lifetime.

Washington libraries, both large and small, have at their core a message of lifelong learning, and they dedicate significant resources to supporting the education process. Nearly every library offers a vast array of materials, resources, services and programs tailored to the needs of students, parents and educators. The education and library communities are doing incredible work preparing young and maturing learners for academic and life success.

Libraries work side by side with schools, teachers, parents and advocates to create strong learning environments. Increased collaboration between Washington's education and library communities provides even greater support for our children to recognize their potential.

Quality education is the cornerstone of a child's ability to gain new skills and take advantage of life's opportunities. When schools and local libraries partner, children benefit from increased opportunities to develop a joy of reading and master necessary skills such as reading comprehension, independent problem solving, use of information technology, effective writing and research, information literacy and critical thinking.

As a part of the education network, libraries can be powerful partners in creating an effective, responsive and nurturing system of learning for Washington's more than one million children from birth to age 18. Although many strong school/library partnerships currently exist, there are still many teachers and other educational professionals who have yet to tap the significant resources that libraries can offer.



## **How to use this guide:**

As you read through this guide, we encourage you to ask yourself these questions:

- Do I have the information resources I need to best serve my students, my staff, my children, myself?
- Would it be helpful to collaborate with someone in planning this year's curriculum, research or community project?
- What else could I do if I had access to more books, DVDs and CDs, magazines, primary source materials or subject experts?
- When was the last time I talked to my school librarian or my local youth services librarian to find out what resources are available?
- Do I know what programs the library is currently offering to educational professionals, advocates, parents and young people in my community?
- Do I know this year's Summer Reading program theme and schedule?
- Do I have the funding I need to gain access to teaching, professional development, or community opportunities and resources?
- Do I have the support and partners I need to make my educational vision a reality for my students, children, school and community?

For help with any of the above, we encourage you to call your local school library or public library to ask about library resources or how you can form a partnership to accomplish your education objectives. We also invite you to share new ideas, resources or needs. Together with the education community, there is much that libraries can do to support learning excellence throughout the state.

To help you determine what help you may need, the next few pages are designed to provide a basic overview of information on a variety of education-related areas, such as early learning, information literacy and organizational partnerships. Each section is organized with the education community's needs and interests in mind, and offers a list of resources, services and programs available at libraries around the state.



# Learning: Support and Resources

Literacy is a cornerstone skill for success in life. Public and school libraries play a valuable role in providing early and ongoing literacy programs, resources and materials that help children learn and set the stage for gaining stronger skills in reading and writing.

In 2006 the state of Washington made early learning a major priority by establishing the Department of Early Learning. Thrive by Five, a public/private partnership, was formed to support new early learning initiatives.

## Learning support services provided by libraries:

- Research-based early literacy and other library programs, such as story times, family reading and Homework Help, complement and reinforce educators' efforts in creating a culture of literacy.
- The Every Child Ready to Read program encourages and supports parents, child care, and other early learning professionals and advocates on early literacy activities and creating literacy-rich environments.
- Many libraries provide S.T.A.R.S training (a federally offered career advancement program focused on child development and education for child care providers), enabling providers to maintain accreditation with low- or no-cost workshops.
- Washington's public libraries offer summer reading programs at the local level, which successfully engage hundreds of thousands of children while school is out. Programs and activities that stimulate their imagination keep them learning over the summer, preventing summer slide—the loss of as much as two and one-half months of learning over the summer.
- Libraries can provide nurturing and neutral spaces for community gatherings.

## Opportunities to partner with libraries:

- Partner with libraries to advocate for the importance of early learning in your community through public awareness efforts.
- Seek out grants periodically offered to school and public libraries supporting student learning.
- Collaborate in ongoing child development trainings for your organization's parents or for child care providers.
- Utilize your library's facilities for early learning/learning support activities.
- Support summer reading in your local community by encouraging students and parents to join in Summer Reading programs.
- Collaborate with your library on curriculum development ideas and resources.

**For more information** on early literacy, or to learn more about how your organization can partner with libraries, contact your local library. To find your local library, visit [www.libraries.wa.gov](http://www.libraries.wa.gov)

## Early Learning Partnerships

In 2008, Washington public libraries formed the Early Learning Public Library Partnership (ELPLP) to coordinate their efforts in support of early learning. Public libraries have a long history of services to youth, and libraries throughout the state continue to provide significant resources to support the efforts of Washington's early learning community. For a list of partnership members, see [www.earlylearning.org/about-us/early-learning-public-library-partnership](http://www.earlylearning.org/about-us/early-learning-public-library-partnership)

A 2005 grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation allowed the Washington State Library to provide early literacy training for more than 700 public library staff and community partners around the state in 2006 and 2007. In addition to public library staff, attendees included local Head Start and daycare staff as well as staff from the Washington State Migrant Council, Indian Education Office at the Superintendent of Public Instruction Office, and Washington Service Corps/AmeriCorps.

In addition to training, matching grants were awarded to eight libraries in support of early literacy activities. More than 100 resource collections of early literacy materials were distributed to partner organizations.

For complete information on the Every Child Ready to Read initiative, visit [www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/every\\_child.aspx](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/every_child.aspx)

# Information Literacy: Librarian Support

Information literacy is an essential survival skill of the information age, yet a study by the nonprofit testing group Educational Testing Service found that of 3,000 college students and 800 high school students, only 13 percent were considered "information literate." Information literacy is vital to the development of critical thinking skills in students as well as lifelong learners of all ages. It is key to an individual's ability to achieve personal, social, occupational and educational goals, enabling learners to interpret content, investigate interests and assume greater control over their own learning. Reference librarians and other library staff are uniquely qualified to help find data and, just as important, to assess whether that data is reliable and usable.

## Information literacy services and resources offered by libraries:

- Access to different kinds of information through books, magazines, journal articles, studies and online resources.
- Guidance in learning to use advanced research resources and information indexes such as ProQuest (access to popular and scholarly information); Washington Newsstand (a newspaper search engine); and more.
- Help in finding community resources, job information and events.
- Help in not only getting access to information, but also in understanding what you have found and knowing where else to look. To accommodate busy schedules and different information needs, guidance is available in person, by phone and online (24 hours a day, every day).
- Tours and orientations on library services and systems to help teachers and students gain familiarity with new resources.

## Opportunities to partner with libraries:

- Engage library staff for presentations (either at the library or off-site) on information literacy tools and research techniques for community or business groups.
- Identify ways for school libraries to maximize resources and assistance for students when school is in session as well as during holidays and breaks.
- Collaborate on integrating classes/instruction on how to do research using the library catalogue and other databases into the education schedule and curriculum.
- Arrange ongoing classes on basic computer training to enhance computer knowledge for all library users including school administrators, staff and students and help them keep up with evolving technology.

To learn more about information literacy or to explore partnership opportunities, contact your local library or visit the Washington Library Media Association at [www.WLMA.org](http://www.WLMA.org).

## Virtual Reference

Virtual reference services have grown dramatically over the past years as the Internet becomes more ubiquitous and more people look for information they can trust online. Many Washington libraries have joined a statewide virtual reference cooperative, allowing their librarians to answer each other's questions and providing the public 24/7 access to a live librarian from the comfort of home. Even more libraries are providing their own, in-house chat during their open hours to provide yet another service point for their users. Either way, chat numbers increase yearly as people become more aware of the need for refereed information from a reliable source: their library.

Virtual reference services are often used by libraries to answer the same sorts of questions they receive in person: quick facts, in-depth reference, step-by-step homework help, and guides to quality resources. By providing these services, libraries are recognizing and addressing the fact that people need information they can trust wherever they happen to be, and not just when they're inside the library.

To learn more about virtual reference services, contact Ahniwa Ferrari at [aferrari@secstate.wa.gov](mailto:aferrari@secstate.wa.gov) or 360.570.5587, or visit [www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/sdl/](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/sdl/)

# High School and Beyond: Support and Resources

Whether looking for data for a research paper or entrance criteria for a university or trade school, students need a broad range of services and support in order to be successful in school and plan for their future. Washington's libraries provide academic support, continued learning, help with college preparation and more.

## Academic support and college preparation services offered by libraries:

- SAT/ACT and GED preparation resources, providing students with the information needed to take the path toward graduation and higher education.
- Career discovery classes, enabling students to explore different career paths.
- Homework help programs to further student achievement. Programs include Homework Help, Homework Help Online and tutoring.
- Assistance from public and school librarians to develop a research project and to explore individual interests.
- School librarians are available to help with researching scholarships and admission requirements to colleges, community colleges and trade schools.
- Online reading lists of recommended books on a variety of topics.
- 24-hour Ask a Librarian online service.

## Opportunities to partner with libraries:

- Collaborate with library staff to lead or partner on career discovery classes for students in the classroom.
- Work with librarians to help students find the information they need. Librarians can also teach students the skills necessary to do independent research.
- Arrange for librarians to help students with research on scholarships and admission to colleges, community colleges and trade schools.
- Bring library staff to schools to talk about books and to support research assignments that meet academic standards.
- Work with librarians to create a customized resource list for classes, or for personal development/college preparation.
- Bring programs and authors to schools.

**For more information** about the learning support available in your area, contact your local school library or public library. For help in finding information for your local library, visit [www.libraries.wa.gov](http://www.libraries.wa.gov).

## Supporting Student Success

In the 2008–2009 school year, the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28A.230.095 requires Washington schools to report on the implementation of Social Studies Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs). In 2007, WSL launched Supporting Student Success, a project designed to assist public schools and public libraries in developing partnership projects that support the successful completion of the CBAs by K–12 students.

The project raises awareness of the value for students when public libraries and public schools collaborate.

A grant cycle will open in September 2008 giving public school and public library partners the opportunity to apply for non-competitive small grant projects in amounts less than \$4,000 and competitive-based grants up to \$40,000. For information on the Supporting Student Success Project, contact Martha Shinners at [mshinners@secstate.wa.gov](mailto:mshinners@secstate.wa.gov) or visit [www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/SupportStudentsSuccess.aspx](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/SupportStudentsSuccess.aspx)

This project follows the successful Connecting Learners to Libraries Project, which awarded 50 minigrants in 2005 and 42 minigrants in 2006 to public and school library collaborations.

# **Students with Disabilities: Support and Resources**

According to the 2006 American Community Survey, 15.9 percent of the state's population—more than one of every seven residents—possesses one or more disabilities. Gaining access to learning tools customized for this population is vital. That's where the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL) and the Instructional Resource Center (IRC) come in. Together, they serve the needs of people living with a disability—including those who are blind, deaf, visually impaired or mentally, physically or learning challenged.

Approximately 11,000 Washingtonians with disabilities—almost 700 are children and teens through age 18—use WTBBL every year. Some 61 public libraries and 300 schools in Washington also borrow materials from WTBBL to have on hand for students and patrons. These might be print/braille books to assist with braille instruction, or items in any of WTBBL's alternative formats to provide equal access to titles on school reading lists. The National Library Service selects and produces most titles in the WTBBL collection, but large print titles are purchased locally, and each year WTBBL's Braille and Audio Departments enrich the collection with a limited number of local content and high-demand titles. The Instructional Resource Center at the Washington State School for the Blind offers textbooks in alternative formats, including braille and large-print texts and materials.

Public education institutions, the Instructional Resource Center and WTBBL can support one another in providing students with disabilities the academic support and services they need to succeed in school and beyond.

## **Services for students with disabilities offered by WTBBL and the IRC:**

- A lending library for children and teens of more than 15,000 cassette titles, 3,000 large print titles, and 7,000 braille titles, plus 1,200 more preschool and elementary titles in both print and braille. Many titles are available in Spanish.
- Library reference services that meet the specific needs of students with disabilities.
- Closed-circuit magnifiers that enlarge text for people who are visually impaired (where available).
- Special cassette players and accessories needed to use WTBBL audio materials.
- Selected free magazine subscriptions available in braille or audio, chosen from several children's and teen publications, as well as numerous adult titles.
- WTBBL's Braille and Taping Services expand the collection provided by the National Library Service by locally producing a limited number of children's, teen, and adult titles each year. They also produce other local interest items, such as sports schedules and library communications.

## **WTBBL Summer Reading**

The WTBBL Summer Reading program invites 4–13 year-olds to read all summer long, keeping their minds sharp for the school year. Currently about 78 children with disabilities enroll and enjoy a packet arriving in the mail each week for eight weeks. Packets include jokes, booklists and sometimes activities. All documents are in large print, and also in braille if the child so requests. At the end of the program, the kids receive a certificate and small prizes. Almost all of the children complete the goal of reading at least the equivalent of 20 minutes a day in their chosen formats (1,000 minutes during the eight-week program). So far, the top reader has logged 3,600 minutes. This encouragement is important for all readers, but particularly for reluctant readers and those who are struggling with braille.

## **Services for students with disabilities offered by WTBBL and the IRC, continued:**

- WTBBL's Evergreen Radio Reading Service is available to patrons 24 hours a day via special radios or webstream. Programming provides nationally produced content as well as numerous locally produced programs, including daily coverage of local newspaper content.
- Access to books and other materials from throughout the state through interlibrary loan—a service that allows students to order books from other libraries to be delivered by mail to their home, school or local library.
- Resources for the hearing impaired and blind like InfoEyes, a service that allows people with hearing and/or visual impairment to chat live with a librarian to access reference services.
- Online, telephone, and e-mail ordering available.
- Many Accelerated Reading, award nominee, and school reading list titles available.
- Kits for early braille learners containing both a large print book and braille transcriptions.
- Free audio magazine subscriptions to titles like *National Geographic Kids*, *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, *Boy's Life*, *Cricket*, and *Odyssey*.
- Thematic annotated booklists archived at [www.wtbbbl.org](http://www.wtbbbl.org). Even more comprehensive lists available by e-mail.
- Summer Reading program by mail for children who are preschool–elementary by age or ability.
- A standard-print information collection for parents and educators.
- A youth librarian available for individualized assistance.

## **Opportunities to partner with libraries and WTBBL:**

- Collaborate with school library, public library or WTBBL staff to integrate library reference services designed to meet specific students' needs and to maximize services for students with disabilities.
- Coordinate with school library, public library or WTBBL staff to enable students with disabilities to access services such as textbook taping and brailling services.
- Work with libraries to ensure that the individual needs of students with disabilities are met by providing them with multiple ways to access reference services, such as by phone, e-mail or InfoEyes.
- Partner with the library to provide students access to its extensive collection of large-print and cassette books, which may be loaned to libraries and schools.

**To learn more** about support for students with disabilities or to explore partnership opportunities, contact Washington Talking Book & Braille Library representative Kathryn Pierce at 206.615.1253, or visit [www.wtbbbl.org](http://www.wtbbbl.org).

# Historical, Cultural and Other Educational Resources

Washington libraries' resources, services and materials support the needs of formal and informal learners, no matter the topic or interest. For instance, Washington State Library and many local public and academic libraries have significant collections of historical and cultural materials and archives that help students and educators alike access information on the state's rich history and growing diversity. Libraries throughout Washington also support students through interactive programs and recreational activities such as cultural events, guest speaker events, citizenship classes, new immigrant language classes, book discussion groups, and other activities that foster independent and in-the-moment learning environments. These contribute to the richness and success of individuals' lives. Many community libraries serve as a repository of newspaper photo archives and city and county genealogical data, providing an excellent resource for school assignments, as well as professional and personal enrichment projects.

In 2012 a new Washington State Heritage Center will open to the public. It will house and display the state's legal, historical and cultural archives in a secure, climate-controlled and customer-friendly environment. The Heritage Center will also include space for rotating displays, exhibits and public events sponsored by the State Library and State Archives, as well as the State Capitol Museum.

## Historical and cultural programs and other educational services and resources offered by libraries:

- A diverse collection of books on history and culture, newspapers, magazines, CDs, DVDs and downloadable audio books, all in a number of different languages.
- Genealogical resources to enable students and adults to research their family histories.
- Exceptional collection of books and materials related to the state of Washington's history.
- Appropriate historical and cultural displays and exhibits that educate students about the contributions of individuals and/or events to our cultural heritage. For example, Black History Month, Women's History Month, Washington Statehood, Dia de los niños, and Teen Read Week.
- Workshops, classes and trainings that develop personal interests such as arts and craft, life skills, photography, etc.
- 24-hour Ask a Librarian online service.
- Author visits and book and civic discussion groups.

## Washington Rural Heritage

Washington Rural Heritage is a statewide collaborative digitization project that aims to create an online collection of historically significant items from the collections of small rural communities. The project takes advantage of traveling equipment and trainers to teach libraries to digitize and offer special collections online. Besides partnering with the Washington State Library, many libraries participating in Washington Rural Heritage are also collaborating with organizations and individuals in their communities. The result is a larger collection of primary resources that directly relate to the history, settlement and culture of Washington state. So far, libraries have partnered with local historical societies, schools, local governments, churches and private citizens in the creation of their collections.

One example of such collaboration is the San Juan Island Heritage Collection. The San Juan Island Library collaborated with the San Juan Historical Museum and the National Park Service, resulting in a virtual reunification of the Jim Crook Collection. The collection is made up of items from all three institutions to create an online display about a famous islander who lived for many years at English Camp, near Roche Harbor.

To learn more about Washington Rural Heritage, contact Evan Robb at [erobb@secstat.wa.gov](mailto:erobb@secstat.wa.gov) or 360.704.5228, or visit [www.washingtonruralheritage.org](http://www.washingtonruralheritage.org).

## **Opportunities to partner with libraries:**

- Partner with libraries to advocate for a diverse cultural and historical curriculum.
- Partner with libraries to host events that showcase cultures, current events or historical milestones in area schools and/or in libraries.
- Collaborate with libraries to develop a historical display for spaces in the community that will educate students and families on a topic of interest.
- Arrange workshops where library staff teach students how to access and use library resources.
- Collaborate with libraries in developing workshops, trainings and class topics that will advance students' independent learning.

**For more information** on cultural, historical and other educational resources, contact your local public or academic library, museum or historical society, or visit the Washington State Library website at [www.secstate.wa.gov/library](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library).



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**Washington State Library**

The Washington State Library is a division of the Office of the Secretary of State. As the federally designated state library administrative agency (SLAA) for Washington, it receives Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). LSTA funds training, competitive grants, continuing education grants and statewide projects for library staff from Washington's diverse library community.

**Further information:**

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