



Quality School Libraries...
Because Student Achievement is the Bottom Line
Alaska Association of School Librarians

Mary A. Francis, Executive Director
Alaska Association of School Administrators
326 Fourth Street, Suite 404
Juneau, AK 99801-1101

Dear Ms. Francis,

On behalf of the Alaska Association of School Librarians (AkASL), I would like to introduce an innovative Senate Bill that has the potential to improve school libraries across our state. SB 119 requests financial assistance for qualified school libraries seeking to correct deficiencies in their collections.

A variety of credible studies prove that schools with good library programs have students who do better academically. School library media centers can contribute to improved student achievement by providing instructional materials aligned to the curriculum.

SB 119 will take the form of a grant providing books, magazines, reference materials and electronic databases to increase Alaskan students' access to new and varied library materials.

An annual grant of \$2,500 will be available to Alaskan school libraries that meet the following criteria:

- Provides physical space that can be identified as a library and is reserved for that purpose;
- Provides regularly scheduled library hours for all students;
- Provides designated library personnel to staff the library;
- Provides evidence that library/information literacy standards are being promoted;
- Maintains an ongoing library budget to include library staffing and materials;

This bill has the potential to increase student access to a variety of relevant and up to date materials, support school curriculum, encourage the love of reading, and instill life long learning skills.

We are asking for your support in regard to this bill and encourage you to write to your legislators. If you would like additional information or would like to discuss SB 119 further, we welcome the opportunity to speak with you. You may contact me and I will put you in touch with an AkASL member currently working on SB 119. Information may also be obtained from our web site <http://www.akla.org/akasl/index.html>. Click on "Legislative Proposal."

We were encouraged by the positive feedback we received from our state legislators when this bill was first introduced last April. Your support will be invaluable during this year's legislative process. We look forward to working with you as this bill passes through the Senate.

Best Regards,

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