



MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Open Letter to Principals of School Librarians

As president of the Mississippi Library Association, I would like to solicit your support and encouragement of the school librarian who serves the students and faculty of your school. School librarians share in the teaching mission of educators in an academic role that nurtures and develops intellectual seeking skills in what we hope will serve students as life-long learners all through their aspirations in higher education and sustains them throughout their adulthood. Libraries serve the academic and societal needs of students as they grow into responsible and well informed citizens.

There are not many opportunities for continuing education for school librarians outside of the workshops, programs and conferences that librarians themselves plan, organize and deliver to serve the needs of all librarians in Mississippi. Our unique role as information mediators empowers and enables student success in the research and study process and these skills are supportive of the classroom teaching experience. Remaining fully engaged professionally by being current in best practices in librarianship can best be found by attending professional venues that serve this specific purpose. The kinds of programming that librarians need include: learning about the best way to select new library materials that more broadly supports the school curriculum, incorporating new technologies that best serve both the teaching faculty as well as their students, and sharing creative ideas that excite students to read with understanding as well as pleasure, just to name a few.

Every school librarian, through attendance at conferences or workshops, will be able to incorporate the ideas they acquire in your school library. You should see a direct correlation between the investment of time and resources made evident by them in your school library. As a professional organization in librarianship, it is our responsibility to make that possible.

Ann Branton
MLA President, 2010