

FACT SHEET

School Library Media Center Incentive Grant

BACKGROUND

Through an LSTA funded study by the Ohio Educational Library Media Association, Dr. Ross J. Todd and Carol C. Kuhlthau confirmed that “the effective school library led by a credentialed school librarian plays a critical role in facilitating learning in general, and information literacy, in particular.”¹ In June 2007, Congress introduced the Strengthening Kids’ Interest in Learning and Libraries (SKILLS) Act, which guarantees students across America will be served by state-certified school library media specialists and will have the library resources they need to succeed.²

Thanks to the three “Spokane Moms,” in 2009, the state of Washington made “school library materials and teacher librarians part of the state’s definition of “basic education” for prototype schools...to be phased in over the next decade once funding is in place.”³

The Massachusetts School Library Association’s *Position Statement on School Libraries in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts* recognizes the critical role of the credentialed school librarian: “in today’s information age, an individual’s success, even existence, depends largely on the ability to access, evaluate and utilize information. Library media specialists are leaders in carrying out the school’s instructional program through their separate but overlapping roles of information specialist, teacher and instructional consultant.” However, according to U.S. DOE statistics for 2003-2004, Massachusetts has the 13th largest number of public school students of any state, but has only .542 fulltime, paid certified library media center specialists per school, which ranks Massachusetts as 31 out of 50 states. Massachusetts ranked 44th for total materials expenditures per student and 40th for number of books acquired during the year per 100 students. Even more shocking is that the Commonwealth ranked merely 45th in the percent of public school libraries/media center having connection to the Internet.

The purpose of this LSTA program is to provide an opportunity for school library teachers to develop programs and services that meet the needs of their users based on their approved long-range plans.

MASSACHUSETTS LONG-RANGE PLAN GOAL

Goal 3: All Massachusetts residents will be better prepared to meet life’s challenges at school, in the workplace, and in their daily lives through access to programs and training that foster their development of information literacy skills and communication technology skills.

Goal 4: Massachusetts children and young adults will have access to public and school libraries that are active partners in providing resources and learning opportunities that foster literacy from birth through the teen years.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program provides funding for K-12 library teachers to update collections to meet current curriculum frameworks and/or develop a project to help their students develop information literacy skills (knowing how to find, evaluate and use information from a variety of sources) to showcase their school library as a vibrant, transformative resource.

REQUIREMENTS

Collaborate with teachers and the local public library as per MBLC’s *Policy on Cooperation between School Libraries and*

1 *Student Learning Through Ohio School Libraries; a Summary of the Ohio Research Study*. Presented to the Ohio Educational Library Media Association, by Dr. Ross J. Todd, December 15, 2003; <http://www.oelma.org/studentlearning/htm>.

2 American Association of School Librarians “The Skills Act
http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/aaslissues/SKILLS_Act.cfm

3 Washington Coalition for School Librarians & Information Technology www.fundourfuturewashington.org

Public Libraries (http://mbc.state.ma.us/advisory/trustees/trustees_handbook/apes02.php).

Applicants are required to include the rationale for collections to be purchased with grant funds, backed up by analysis of their present collections and failure to meet relevant standards for their type of libraries and target groups. Collections purchased with grant funds should be developed in consultation with teachers and local public librarians. Purchase collections for **use during the grant year**. Collection costs may include cost of cataloging and processing. Grant-funded purchases are the property of the school library media center to be housed there except when on loan (no indefinite loans to another location).

Plan and hold at least two grant programs during the grant period to increase the visibility of the school library and the grant to their constituents. One session may be for the teachers to inform, plan with and update them on the grant's progress and the other session is for the students and may involve a guest speaker relevant to the grant and collection, a field trip, or other event approved by your project consultant.

Spending guidelines: If additional paid staffing for hours beyond regular school hours is required to carry out the project's activities, no more than \$500 of the total grant amount may be used for this purpose. No more than \$750 for equipment (no computers)/furniture (no permanent fixtures allowed). No more than \$750 of grant funds may be spent on performers or speakers.

School Library Incentive Grants (SLIG) for \$5,000 will be funded under this competitive grant program.

ELIGIBILITY

Any school library that meets standard eligibility requirements for Direct Grant programs is eligible to apply.

Schools may:

- **Individual schools not in a district** should file a *individual* long-range plan and may apply for one SLIG.
- **Individual schools in a school district** may submit an *individual* school library long-range plan and may apply for a SLIG to be spent at their school. The school Principal and the district-wide school library coordinator (if position exists) should sign the SLIG application.
- **A school district** may submit a *district-wide* long-range plan and may apply for and receive **one** district-wide grant provided that they meet the planning requirements stated above. Grant funds can only be spent for regional member schools that have not received an individual School Library Incentive Grant. The Superintendent and the district-wide school library coordinator (if position exists) should sign the SLIG application for a district.

Please note: Multiple schools within a school district are not eligible to each receive an LSTA School Library Incentive Grant except as described below:

Regional member schools covered by *individual plans* that are part of a school district in municipalities with populations of **150,000 or greater** may apply for one School Library Incentive Grant provided that they meet the planning requirements stated above. The Superintendent and the District-wide school library coordinator (if position exists) should sign the SLIG application for a district.

We recommend that an individual school and its district not apply for a School Library Incentive Grant in the same round to avoid competing with each other.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit a **Letter of Intent** form with the "School Library Incentive Grant" option checked off under **TYPE**. For additional information about this program, please contact Marlene Heroux at the MBLC at 800-952-7403, ext. 250 or by e-mail at marlene.heroux@state.ma.us.