

(AASL Position Statement) [reading]

## **POSITION STATEMENT ON THE VALUE OF INDEPENDENT READING IN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAM**

In an information age, literacy demands not only the ability to read and write, but also the ability to process information and communicate effectively. Research suggests that reading proficiency increases with the amount of time spent reading voluntarily. Unfortunately, independent reading is often a casualty in our fast paced, media-oriented society. Today's students know how to read but have little or no interest in doing so. They have failed to "catch" the love of reading; therefore, they choose not to read.

The adoption of Goals 2000 has made literacy an issue of national importance; therefore, a primary goal of the school library media program must be to create life-long readers. It is imperative that school library media specialists work with teachers and parents to find ways to instill in students the joy of reading while helping them build the reading habit.

To become life-long readers, students must have:

- \*access to current, quality, high interest, and extensive collections of books and other print materials in their library media centers, classrooms, and public libraries;
- \*contact with adults who read regularly and widely and who serve as positive reading role models;
- \*certified school library media specialists and classroom teachers who demonstrate their enthusiasm for reading by reading aloud and booktalking;
- \*time during the school day dedicated to reading for pleasure, information, and exploration;
- \*opportunities specifically designed to engage young people in reading;
- \*schools that create an environment where independent reading is valued, promoted, and encouraged; and
- \*opportunities that involve parents and other family members in reading.

"The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them."--Mark Twain

(6-94)