



The School Library Link to Education Innovation: School Library Month 2010

School Library Month (SLM) is the American Association of School Librarians' (AASL) annual recognition of school librarians and their programs. This year, SLM is celebrating its **25th anniversary** with the theme "Communities Thrive @ your Library." Education innovation is one way school libraries help communities thrive.

Reading is what most people think of when they think of a school library. Encouraging free reading, or reading for pleasure, is certainly a primary goal. But how does this get accomplished? How do we compete for students' attention in an age of Internet, television, and video games? By developing innovative reading programs (such as online book discussions, book trailer video contests, and podcast book reviews), school librarians are attracting students back to the written word. School librarians expand their collections to include nonfiction related to their students' interests and they stay "in the know" on professional sources recommending fiction that kids *want* to read. School librarians are aiming to create a nation of lifelong readers.

Information literacy is the ability to find information, decipher its legitimacy or bias, and then to repeat or present that information as learning (without plagiarizing). School libraries are the information centers of schools. There is no other place in education where information literacy is being taught consistently and specifically except in school libraries. In an age of fake and harmful Web sites, unsupervised social media, and just plain wrong information, students without school libraries and certified school librarians aren't learning



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the skills they need to survive in a digital world. School librarians help students find the best Web sites for research. They teach students lessons on how to take notes and how to cite sources. School librarians are certified teachers who are trained in instructional strategies to help students navigate a quagmire of information that is growing every day.

Technology is an essential element of education innovation, because many careers of tomorrow do not even exist yet! School librarians are not only tech-savvy, but they show students how to use that technology in the real world. They teach students how to use a plethora of hardware and software, from computers and video cameras to word processing, graphic design, and presentation software, not to mention Web publishing technology. But school librarians also teach students

how to use technology *responsibly*. How do we teach students how to use social media (and combat social problems like cyberbullying), and who has the skills to plan that lesson? The school librarian does. How do we guide students to *create* (writing, filming, photographing) without stealing in an age of copy-and-paste and downloadable everything? We ask the copyright and fair use expert, the school librarian. What is a Web 2.0 tool? What does it mean if your child "tweets?" Staying on top of the latest technology is one of the most important tasks of the school librarian.

Continue to celebrate School Library Month on page 2 with some online videos showing how the school library is the link to education innovation. ☞

THE LINK TO...

Laurie Halse Anderson

Award-winning author **Laurie Halse Anderson** is the official spokesperson for the American Association of School Librarians' (AASL) *School Library Month 2010*.



Laurie Halse Anderson visited with students in the school library at Mexico Academy High School in Mexico, NY on Tuesday, March 30. Anderson talked about the essential role school libraries and librarians play in education. **Watch the video at <http://tiny.cc/61wti>.**

Anderson's first novel, *Speak*, was a National Book Award Finalist, a Michael L. Printz Honor book, a *New York Times* bestseller and an American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults. She also was awarded the Margaret A. Edwards Award for Lifetime Achievement for her body of work for young adults in 2009. Though best known for her young-adult novels, Anderson also writes picture books and chapter books for elementary age children, including her chapter book series *Vet Volunteers*.

On her blog, Anderson wrote passionately about the importance of school libraries and school librarians:

"A school without a library is like a body without a heart. A school library without a librarian is just a room with some books in it. Our children need school libraries staffed by professional librarians."

(<http://halseanderson.livejournal.com/288309.html>)

For more information about the life and work of Laurie Halse Anderson visit www.writerlady.com.

School Libraries Demonstrate Innovation Online

SLM Video Contest 2010

This year, the AASL conducted a video contest for School Library Month. School librarians were encouraged to submit videos

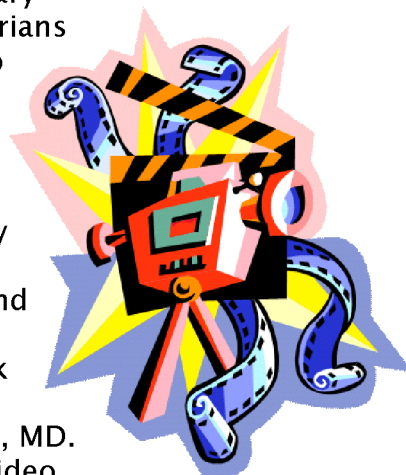
"detailing how they help their school community thrive."

The first place entry this year was entitled, "We Thrive," and was created by Ali Schilpp of Sudbrook Magnet Middle

Library in Baltimore, MD.

You can view this video, plus the second, third, and fourth place winners here:

<http://tiny.cc/t78ky>.



Ask a Teacher Librarian!

Watch this video by the UTA Library Professionals Committee about Los Angeles Unified School District teacher librarians and what they do for students every day:

<http://bit.ly/bk8iYj>.

The 21st Century Media Center Program

A collaboration between the Library of Michigan and the Michigan Association for Media in Education, this video details the many tasks and goals of a successful school library program and a certified school library media specialist: <http://tiny.cc/os148>.

Watch for next month's issue of
The School Library Link to
Standards Achievement