



## THE RESEARCH ESSAY

Research in the humanities  
is not simply  
a gathering of facts.

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# Demonstrating Impact:

by Brenda Dillon

It simply can't be said too often: school libraries have a positive impact on student learning and achievement. And there's an incredible amount of research that says so.

Keeping up with the research can be a challenge. Why bother? Because we owe it to our students to fight as hard as we can for the school libraries they need. We have a responsibility to ensure that those who make policy and budget decisions are aware of the research and understand the impact of cuts to school libraries. This means we have to be aware of the research and its implications, know where to find the various studies and reports, and be willing to share them with others.

As I said, this can be a challenge. However, the resources noted in this column should give you a good start on this vital work.

## LITERATURE REVIEWS

### **The Crisis in Canada's School Libraries: The Case for Reform and Reinvestment**

In this report, released in June 2003, Dr. Ken Haycock examines the nation-wide school library crisis and provides a thorough literature review. He concludes with thirteen recommendations, all addressed to Ministries of Education, that outline ways and means of rebuilding Canadian school libraries.

A copy of Haycock's report is enclosed with this issue of *The Teaching Librarian* to ensure you have an opportunity to become familiar with it. OSLA members are asked to support and reinforce the advocacy efforts of the OLA Board by reading the report and discussing it with key persons at both the school and district levels.

The OLA Board of Directors is sending a copy of this report to every Director, principal, and supervisory officer in the province. You might want to provide copies of the report to key persons - such as federation representatives and School Council Chairs - not included in the OLA mailing. Professionally printed copies can be purchased for \$6.00 from the Association of Canadian Publishers (whose grant paid for the research). Thereport is also available on-line as a PDF file and can be downloaded from <[www.publishers.ca/pages/HaycockACP2\\_w2.pdf](http://www.publishers.ca/pages/HaycockACP2_w2.pdf)> or from the OLA web site, Issues section under School Libraries.

### **Impact of School Libraries on Student Achievement: A Review of the Research**

Michele Lonsdale prepared this report in March 2003 for the Australian School Libraries Association. The focus is on research conducted since 1990, including all of the major studies by Lance and his colleagues. The Australian perspective is interesting.  
[www.asla.org.au/research/index.htm](http://www.asla.org.au/research/index.htm)