



COOS BAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Blossom Gulch Elementary School ★ Madison Elementary School
Millicoma School ★ Sunset School ★ Marshfield High School ★ Harding Learning Center

LEARNING FOR ALL – WHATEVER IT TAKES!

November 20, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of our state endorsement of the proposed school library standards. These standards do more than define skills and knowledge which are necessary for our students' success and the establishment of lifelong learning habits, they provide essential critical thinking and social responsibility which will not only keep our children safe in the technological world of today, but enable them to seek out and use new information to evaluate technologies and situations which do not exist today. In terms of information, technology and social media, they will equip our graduates with what some people are calling "grit" and I have always thought of as resiliency.

The library standards address needs which, as essential and readily supported as they may be once they are known, are not being taught consistently across our state. Most teachers have not heard of them and have only a vague understanding of the technology skills which our state has endorsed for years. As a career educator I have seen classroom teachers attempt to integrate some of these standards into their instruction. In the past it has been unsuccessful due to the lack of skill, access to the library, technology or time. Currently our teachers are using every available moment of classroom instructional time to assure the learning of the Common Core, but I believe the library standards will actually magnify the learning potential of the school library as well as classrooms and are really the only way that the goals of 40-40-20 and establishing an educated and resilient citizenship will be accomplished.

The proposed library standards work to support research and ethical use of information. This is a huge part of our Common Core. The structure for teaching research is found in the standards. Having the standards as a guide and framework for not only teacher librarians, but for the classroom educator is important if we are to assure that students can do research and evaluate ideas, analyze events and become informed in order to make decisions.

Our educators are being asked to do so much and I agree with the work we are trying to accomplish. It is sometimes overwhelming for a classroom teacher to try to take on these additional areas which may not have been a part of their teacher preparation or college experience. The teacher librarian does have this expertise and can assist them or even guide the instruction. In the absence of a teacher librarian these standards can provide the framework for professional development. There is already curriculum online, developed by teacher librarians to meet these standards and readily available and free to teachers who understand their importance without state endorsement.

I have personally witnessed the difference between students who are literate in the school library standards and those who are not. The potential impact to our graduates who graduate without these skills is akin to a handicap. In many ways they are entering adulthood defenseless against predators,



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unable to rely upon their own knowledge to make key decisions or to research something effectively so they can gain the knowledge to do so, incapable of seeing possibilities when their plans do not come to fruition, and easy prey for the kind of criminals and predators who populate our real and digital worlds.

I view the School Library Standards as being as essential to the ultimate success of our students as reading, math or health standards as these skills have as much direct effect on the quality of the lives our graduates will lead.

Sincerely,

Dawn Rae Granger
Superintendent