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Research Finding

The study indicates that Florida's school library media specialists may benefit from professional development opportunities in a number of areas: budgeting, information skills curriculum, instruction and integration; time management and task delegation; flexible access benefits and methods; collection development policies and procedures; weeding; distance learning technologies and opportunities; new and emerging technologies; research-based reading strategies and Florida reading initiatives; developing and maintaining school library media center web pages and resources; working with school webmasters; SUNLINK (for non-SUNLINK schools) and how SUNLINK can be used (for all schools); teaching students and teachers to use SUNLINK; working with technology coordinators; technology for special needs and universal access; leadership and public relations.

*Making the Grade: The Status of School Library
Media Centers in the Sunshine State and How
They Contribute to Student Achievement*

Donna. J. Baumbach

Program Evaluation

Annual program evaluation is recommended to determine if the library media program is effective and to ensure that the rich resources of the library media center have maximum usage. In addition to the annual observation/evaluation by the school site administrator, it is a professional responsibility of the library media specialist to continually monitor the productiveness of the library media program.

Student, teacher, and administrator surveys, like the samples on the following pages, help the library media specialist assess the strengths and weaknesses of the library media program. It is recommended that these surveys be distributed and analyzed each year. Suggestions for program modification can come from:

- | On-site evaluations, requested by the Principal, from the Library Media Services Department
- | [*Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning Mission and Goals of the School Library Media Program*](#)
- | Administrative Conferences
- | Teacher Surveys
- | Assessment Rubric
- | Suggestion Box
- | Recommendations of the school-site Library Media Advisory Committee
- | Utilization statistics (circulation and attendance)
- | Collection needs and budgetary limitations
- | Recommendations in the online *Library Media Services' Policies and Procedures*

From this abundance of data, the library media specialist should exercise professional judgment in providing a balanced program by selecting major long range goals that reflect each major area of responsibility: collaboration and instruction, collection development, management, and marketing. Input from the Library Media Advisory Committee is strongly recommended.

Long range goals focus on major improvement which may not be achieved in one year. They should be addressed in attainable, measurable, annual objectives until they are successfully completed or redefined. Annual objectives are more specific and deal with particular concerns and needs. It is important to set [long and short range goals](#) in order to keep the program focused and to be able to evaluate it effectively to see if it is accomplishing what was intended.

Administrative Conferences

Annual Plans

Administrative conferences, a review of program objectives by administrators and library media specialists, should occur at least twice each year. The fall conference should focus on long range goals and tentative current school year objectives. Well-developed annual objectives, priorities, and strategies for improving the library media program should be prepared by the library media specialist and presented to the administrator for recommendations. (Management, pages 44-46.) A firm list of annual goals, objectives, and implementation strategies should be written.

Follow-up conferences may occur throughout the year as needed with the final discussion in June. At that time, objectives should be reviewed and accomplishments noted. Those objectives not met should be reevaluated.

Budget

A budget conference in which the principal and the library media specialist assess the needs of the library media program should be held as early as possible in the school year in order to take advantage of Library Media Matching Funds revenues. The library media specialist should prepare for this conference by having the annual budget proposal ready for review. (See Management, pages 41-43.) The budget proposal should be based on the analysis of the prior spring faculty needs assessment and tied to the coming school year's goals and objectives.

Monthly Report

Computer generated monthly reports offer a means of presenting the accomplishments, as well as the needs, of the library media program to the administrator. Regular monthly reports on library media center circulation, utilization, collaborative planning and teaching sessions, meetings and inservices attended, orders submitted, and budget needs are suggestions of information which may be included. Keep the report brief and review the information with the administrator. A sample monthly report form is located under the Forms/Management heading on the Library Media Services' [Tools](#) web page.

SAMPLE TEACHER SURVEY

The following questions were posed to teachers on a Scantron form. (Based on the Virginia Beach City Public Schools' Teacher Survey and reprinted with permission from Virginia Beach City Public Schools.)

Name of School (Library Media Program): _____

Instructions: This survey is designed to capture teacher perceptions about the effectiveness of the library media program. You should complete it independently so the responses represent only your personal perceptions. Please check the box before each question indicating your level of agreement or disagreement with the statement as it applies to the library media program. If you are unable to provide an answer, mark no answer.

This Library Media Program:

Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Answer	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. offers technology and different media to aid in instruction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. provides the latest materials, services, and programs available through the library media center.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. provides access for individual, group, or class use.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. has a collection which contains a variety of material for all interests and ability levels.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. is supported by a well-organized library media center.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. provides an environment that is attractive, inviting, and user friendly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. incorporates faculty and student input into the acquisition of books, audiovisual materials, and equipment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. is effective in working with students.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. welcomes new ideas and suggestions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10. provides inservices and workshops for teachers in the use of the library media center materials and equipment.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Answer	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11. provides adequate media equipment in good working order.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12. is reflective of team or individual planning with teachers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13. offers programs and activities designed to stimulate an interest in reading.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14. promotes independent use of library media resources.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	15. utilizes the library media specialist as a resource person for the use of technology.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	16. promotes collaboration with teachers and the correlation of library/information skills with classroom curriculum.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	17. makes materials available for student and teacher use.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18. provides materials and services that support student research activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	19. promotes and is involved in the overall school instructional program.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20. provides services which meet the unique needs of this school.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	21. informs teachers and students about resources outside of this school.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22. is marketed through promotional campaigns (<i>i.e.</i> , reading promotions, newsletters, posters, closed circuit television, public service announcements, e-mails, etc.)

Assessment Rubric

Expectations for Collaboration, Collections, and Connections: A Program Evaluation Rubric ([EXC³EL](#)), developed through Library Media Services, Florida Department of Education, may be utilized by the library media specialist in assessing strengths and weaknesses of the library media program. The EXC³EL rubric, rubric summary worksheet, and the program improvement plan will assist the library media specialist in developing long-range and short-range goals for the program. Regular self-monitoring and evaluation of the library media program, along with input from the school community, will ensure that needs are being met and continual improvement occurs.

Suggestion Box

Informal written or verbal suggestions should be solicited on an ongoing basis. A suggestion box, prominently displayed in the library media center, provides a convenient and anonymous vehicle for the school community to recommend purchases or improvement in programs, materials, and services. Pencils and forms such as the one on this page should be included in the display.

Suggestion Box Idea

Help improve your library media center!

Add your suggestions for

- Future book or nonprint purchases
- Program changes
- Service improvements

Thank you,

Your dedicated library media center staff

Utilization

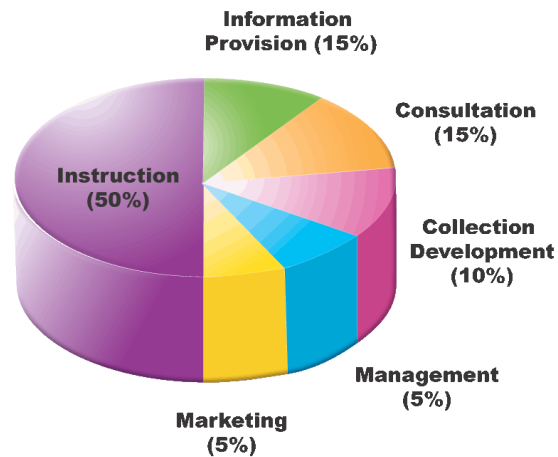
The end product of the library media program is the extent to which teachers and students utilize library media facilities, resources, and personnel. Everything that happens in the library media center should focus on increasing utilization.

In order to achieve a dynamic library media program, the following five components must interact harmoniously:

- Library Media Specialist(s)
- Teachers
- Curriculum
- Collection
- Administrator(s)

The following pages summarize the involvement necessary for each critical component, list some ways in which involvement is accomplished, and suggest the evaluative tools that may be used for objectively measuring each one. Administrators and library media specialists should use this chart when evaluating the effectiveness of the library media program.

Approximate Weekly Time Allocations for Program Delivery



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS LIBRARY MEDIA SERVICES

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER UTILIZATION

Utilization occurs when:	Activities included:	Evaluation tools are:
1. The library media specialist(s) provides an accessible, stimulating environment and active instructional services program.	“Flexible Access” policy	Library media center policies
	Accommodation for total class, small group and individual	Library media specialist self evaluation checklist
	Variety of reading-related activities	Library media center observation form
	Warm atmosphere	Annual library media program objectives
	Attractive displays	Library media specialist’s plans for instruction and activities
	Skills instruction coordinated with curriculum	Circulation and attendance statistics
	Variety of hands-on activities	
	Liberal circulation policy	
	Variety of production activities	
2. Teachers incorporate multiple learning resources into classroom activities and assignments.	Variety of promotion activities	Circulation statistics
	Extensive print and nonprint circulation by teachers	Teachers’ lesson plans/units
	Use of district media services (Film/Video Library, Instructional Television)	Classroom media utilization checklist
	Lessons include use of multiple resources	Student reference projects
	Class time is provided for use of library media center	
	Assignments require students to locate and use a variety of media materials	
	Students are encouraged to use creative ways to report, <i>i.e.</i> , video recordings, charts, transparencies, computers	

Utilization occurs when:

3. The curriculum is developed using the library media center as an extension of the classroom.

4. The collection is up-to-date and provides accurate information to supplement the text, stimulate original inquiry beyond the curriculum, and encourage use of resources for recreation.

5. Administrators are supportive, set program expectations for the library media and instructional staff, and continuously evaluate all components of the library media program.

Activities included:

Including the library media specialist on curriculum and grade level planning committees

Frequent teacher/library media specialist planning and team teaching

Teaching related information literacy skills throughout the curriculum

Large group, small group and individual use of the media center for learning activities, reference and exploration

Constant updating of collection for changing curriculum needs on all reading levels

Weeding out-of-date resources on a regular basis

Adding equipment to address new learning technologies

Staff recommendations for new materials

Including controversial and unpopular items to stimulate discussion and reference

Supplying popular, contemporary fiction to stimulate recreational reading

Using commercial media and original productions

Frequent visits to the library media center by all administrators

Regularly schedule conferences between the media specialist and administrators

Including staff in planning for the library media program

Providing time for library media inservice activities

Monitoring utilization statistics

Budgeting for library media material and equipment

Evaluation tools are:

Committee reports

Teachers' lesson plans/unit

Attendance statistics

Circulation statistics

Review of collection by administrators, library media specialists, department chairpersons, and teachers

Criteria for evaluating and weeding library media collections

Media center inventory reports

Funding data

All of the above

Library Media Program Evaluation Checklist

M-DCPS Annual Observation and Evaluation of the Library Media Specialist

To effectively evaluate the library media specialist, the school site administrator must observe that person in each of the following situations:

- Preparation and planning
- Knowledge of subject matter
- Library media center management
- Techniques of instruction
- Library media specialist/student relationship
- Professional responsibility

In order to properly determine if the library media specialist is performing in an acceptable manner and providing a quality program, an administrator should visit the library media center frequently and at different times of the day. Look for evidence that students are using the library media center to develop research skills, independent learning, and recreational reading. Observe if students are doing research, brainstorming, developing essential questions, thinking about what they know and what they want to know about a subject, and finding answers to their questions from a variety of sources including books, magazines, people, computer programs, the Internet, videos and DVD's. Ask to see the schedule of classes utilizing the library for informational literacy lessons. Observe teacher and library media specialist's lesson plans or collaborative worksheet. Teachers and library media specialists who collaboratively develop strong lesson plans are a good indicator of a program's effectiveness. Evidence of student's work on display should also give an indication of how effectively the program is functioning. Active, hands-on activities culminate in projects where students communicate and share their learning.

Look at circulation and attendance statistics which should show that most of the school population is visiting the library media center individually or in small groups weekly. Does the library media specialist develop reading incentive programs, special "month" celebrations, or school-wide themes to encourage reading? Do the policies of the library media center allow maximum usage with minimum restriction?

Miami-Dade County Public Schools has a specific form for conducting observations and evaluation of library media specialists. The [sample form](#) for library media specialists, along with detailed information on colleague teachers and the professional development plan, can be found on the [PACES](#) website.

Professional Growth

As a professional, the library media specialist is responsible for keeping abreast of new developments and technologies as they relate to school library media programs. The following section cites many opportunities for personal and professional growth as well as renewal of educator's certification.

University Courses

Local colleges and universities offer individual library media courses in graduate programs. Additionally, appropriate courses in specific subjects, such as computer applications may be taken to satisfy recertification requirements. Before registering for classes, library media specialists are advised to check with the [certification office](#) of the Florida Department of Education to determine that the courses are acceptable for renewing their certificates.

Professional Workshops/Inservices

Inservice workshops are offered through the Department of Professional Development and may be taken for Master Plan Points (MPP). Accumulated credits may be used for renewal of teaching certificate.

Workshops conducted by Library Media Services and professional meetings sponsored by the Miami-Dade Media Specialists' Association (MDMSA) are considered an integral part of professional growth. Library media specialists are urged to participate in all professional workshop opportunities.

Online Courses

- [SUNLINK](#)
- [PBS Teacherline](#)

Tuition Reimbursement

Guidelines for [tuition reimbursement](#) for college/university credits are outlined in the contract between the Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the [United Teachers of Dade \(UTD\)](#). Additional information may be obtained by contacting the [M-DCPS Division of Compensation Administration](#).

Professional Journals

It is the professional responsibility of the library media specialist to keep informed of trends, issues, and updated techniques in the field of library and information services. The following publications are a sample of recommended professional reading resources:

American Libraries: American Library Association publication containing articles of interest to all personnel in information professions

The Book Report: articles dealing with theory, operation, information skills, and materials for middle and senior high school library media centers

Booklist: a guide for librarians with each issue covering reviews in five major areas: forthcoming books, adult books, books for youth, audiovisual media, and reference books. "A review in *Booklist* constitutes a recommendation for purchase."

Book Links: featured articles on children's books and regular columns that suggest ways to incorporate fine children's literature into the curriculum

Education Week: articles relating the latest news and information about the field of education.

Florida Media Quarterly (FMQ): FAME's quarterly publication of news and programs around the state

The Horn Book: publications about books for children and young adults.

Information Searcher: quarterly newsletter for software reviews, online searching, and integration of the Internet in schools

Library Talk: practical articles pertaining to issues for elementary school library media specialists and numerous book reviews

M-DCPS Online Databases: include such periodical indexes as eLibrary, ERIC, Facts on File, NewsBank, SIRS, and Thompson Gale.

Media and Methods: articles pertaining to the use of instructional technology in education

Phi Delta Kappan: professional journal for education, addresses issues of policy and practice for educators at all levels.

School Librarian's Workshop: creative ideas for implementation and practical advice by working library media specialists

School Library Journal: in addition to materials recommendations, timely articles on trends and issues in the field of school library media services

School Library Media Research, the successor to *School Library Media Quarterly*: essential news of the profession for school library media specialists. Information on legislation, reviews of professional reading, software, and audiovisual

School Library Media Activities Monthly: provides activities, suggestions, and methods for teaching information skills, particularly at the elementary and middle school level

Teacher Librarian formerly *Emergency Librarian*: articles focusing on cooperative program planning and teaching, as well as program advocacy for school librarians

Voices of Youth Advocates (VOYA): excellent publication for practitioners working with young adults

Professional Websites

There are many websites, listservs and weblogs (blogs) to keep library media specialists informed of trends, issues, and new techniques in the school library media field. The following are a sample of some recommended sites. Others can be found by using various search engines.

LM_NET: This Internet discussion group serves the worldwide school library community. LM_NET is a group of practitioners sharing ideas, solving problems, telling each other about new publications, up-coming conferences, and asking for assistance and information. To subscribe, send an e-mail message to: LISTSERV@LISTSERV.SYR.EDU and in the body of the message send the command: SUBSCRIBE LM_NET Firstname Lastname (i.e., SUBSCRIBE LM_NET Jane Doe).

FIRN: The Florida Information Resource Network provides free e-mail and Internet access to all K-12 educators in Florida. The FIRN website is <http://www.firn.edu>.

FAME_NET: The [Florida Association for Media in Education](#) (FAME) has a school library media specialist discussion group on FIRN. Similar to LM_NET, it is a vehicle for Florida school library media specialists to share ideas, solve problems, and ask for assistance and information.

AASL: The American Association of School Librarians and the American Library Association both have websites full of news, awards, and information for the school library community. The site is: <http://ala.org/aasl/>

ALAWON: ALAWON is a free, irregular publication of the American Library Association Washington Office.

AECT: The Association for Educational Computing and Technology has a [School Media and Technology Division](#) to promote communication among school media personnel who share a common concern in the development, implementation, and evaluation of school library media programs. AECT also has a [listserv](#) to discuss concerns of interest to the entire AECT membership

Professional Conferences

Professional organizations hold periodic conferences that provide excellent opportunities for library media specialists to update skills, acquire new techniques, and examine print and nonprint materials, software, equipment, and services. It is recommended that library media specialists attend these conferences whenever possible.

Valuable conferences for library media specialists are:

Florida Association for Media in Education (FAME) Annual Conference

American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Conference

American Library Association (ALA) Conferences

Two annual conferences. The primary conference is held in a major U.S. city each summer. The mid-winter meeting is held primarily to conduct association business and for committee meetings. It is held in January or February in various U.S. cities.

Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) Annual Conference

Florida Educational Technology Conference (FETC) Annual Conference

Region VI Florida Association for Computers in Education (FACE) Conference

Impact II Conference

Local conference sponsored by The Education Fund for Excellence in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, held annually in the fall.

Temporary Duty Leave for Professional Events

Principals may grant temporary duty leave to library media specialists who attend any of the conferences listed above and other events sponsored and/or approved by Miami-Dade County Public Schools' administrative offices. To obtain approved leave, the library media specialist should fill out an "Application for Leave" card ([FM-2671](#) rev. 06-93) and indicate "Temporary Duty." The form must be signed by the principal and submitted with payroll reports.

Master Plan Points for Professional Events

Library media specialists who want to receive Professional Development Master Plan Points for attending a professional conference must contact Library Media Services in order to obtain an application prior to attending the conference. The library media specialist is responsible for returning the completed application and the required documentation to Library Media Services within 30 days of the conference. Library Media Services will forward the appropriate documentation to Professional Development and facilitate the process of awarding recertification points.

Professional Organizations

Library media specialists are encouraged to participate in professional media associations. Professional organizations provide stimulating opportunities for professional growth. Membership enrollment forms are offered in the fall of each school year.

[Miami-Dade Media Specialists' Association \(M-DMSA\)](#)

This local organization works for the maintenance and improvement of local school library media services and is open to all local school personnel actively involved with any phase of school library media work.

[Florida Association of Supervisors of Media \(FASM\)](#)

This state organization provides opportunities for members to act as a professional group in all statewide matters pertaining to educational media, to support and supplement the work of the Florida Department of Education, FAME, and other organizations with similar goals in media education, and to establish and maintain a communications network for media supervisors.

[Florida Association for Media in Education \(FAME\)](#)

This state organization sponsors an educational media conference each fall, attended by media personnel from the entire state, and features outstanding consultants. The organization works for the improvement of school media programs statewide through workshops, the encouragement of professional growth, and the support of legislation vital to the interests of educational media.

[Florida Association for Computers in Education \(FACE\)](#)

The organization works for the inclusion of technology in the educational process. It places special emphasis on using new technologies, enriching teaching strategies, and telecommunication. This state organization sponsors a conference periodically.

[American Library Association / American Association of School Librarians \(ALA/AASL\)](#)

The American Library Association (ALA) is open to all librarians working in all types of centers and at all levels. Membership in the parent organization includes membership in a type-of-library division. For school media personnel, this division would be the American Association of School Librarians (AASL). Journals published by the parent organization and its divisions serve to keep the school media specialist aware of developments in the profession and offer a channel of professional communication.

□ [Association for Educational Communications & Technology \(AECT\)](#)

AECT is open to all those concerned with the technological aspect of commercial and educational media. The association publishes the periodical *Audio-visual Instruction*. Membership is for the school year. Dues include subscription to *Instructional Innovator* and one division. There is now a Media Specialist Division. Membership is also available at a reduced cost without the periodical.

Certification Requirements for Library Media Specialists and Renewal of Certificates

At the present time, 30 semester hours in Educational Media or a Master of Library and Information Science is required for certification as a library media specialist PK-12, although each college/university may have additional requirements. Re-certification requires six semester hours every five years which can be accomplished by Master Plan Points (MPP) through the Department of Professional Development and/or college credit.

University Programs

Some schools that offer masters and/or certification in media are listed below. The schools that are not local offer online courses and degrees.

Nova Southeastern University <http://www.nova.edu/~yates>

Florida State University http://ci.fsu.edu/go/graduate/online_degrees_grad

University of Central Florida <http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~edmedia/program.html>

University of South Florida <http://www.coedu.usf.edu/sas/certification/mediaspecial.htm>

Subject Area Examination

Current Florida law grants certification to individuals who pass the subject area certification. The Florida Department of Education provides [Information About Teaching for the Career Changer or College Graduate of a Non-education Program](#). While passing the library media certification examination will make an individual eligible to seek employment as a school library media specialist, Library Media Services, M-DCPS, recommends that individuals enroll in library media classes to be fully prepared to handle the challenges of running an effective school library media program.

Currently, in the State of Florida, proof of mastery of the knowledge in educational media or library and information sciences is a requirement for certification as a library media specialist, PK-12. Certificate types and requirements can be found on the [Florida Department of Education's Certification](#) site.