

(AASL Position Statement) [wlang]

POSITION STATEMENT ON RESOURCE BASED INSTRUCTION: ROLE OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALIST IN THE WHOLE LANGUAGE APPROACH

The whole language program is a process for developing literacy by integrating oral and written language experiences into the literature and content areas. Spoken language, reading, and writing are learned simultaneously. Through this holistic approach, with students reading "real books" and writing for the purpose of communicating, learning becomes relevant, interesting, and motivational and prepares students for life-long learning. Acquisition, organization, and dissemination of resources to support the whole language program through the library media center is cost-effective for the entire school district.

The following elements are integral to an effective whole language program:

- *The library media center is flexibly scheduled so that students and teachers have unlimited physical and intellectual access to a wide range of materials. Students are not limited to using only commercially prescribed or teacher-selected materials.
- *Students choose from a varied, non-graded collection of materials which reflect their personal interests.
- *Students learn to identify, analyze, and synthesize information by using a variety of materials in a variety of formats.
- *Multi-disciplinary approaches to teaching and learning are encouraged.
- *Teachers and library media specialist cooperatively select materials and collaboratively plan activities that offer students an integrated approach to learning.
- *Teachers and library media specialists share responsibility for reading and information skill instruction. They plan and teach cooperatively based on the needs of the student.
- *Continual staff development is critical to whole language instruction.

The responsibility for successful implementation of whole language is shared by the entire school community; teachers, library media specialists, and administrators working together.

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