



GROSSMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

From the office of Superintendent Robert Collins

Access and Equity

"The only true equalizers in the world are books; the only treasure-house open to all comers is a library."

J.A. Langford

In my visit with the Library Council, a point was raised that emphasized why we want to support our libraries. Libraries are the "great equalizer." They level the playing field for our students.

I thought about the comment at length and it is true. Think about it for a moment:

1. A student who doesn't have a computer may **access technology** at the library to do homework.
2. A student who has no **internet access** at home may utilize the library to find information, be tutored or take an online course.
3. A student may access resources such as **eLibrary**, **CQ Researcher**, **Britannica.com** and information in other libraries and data bases.
4. A student who can't get to a public library in the city, or who does not have resources at home, may access those resources in the school's library and **check them out** for use at home.
5. **There's always a librarian** or other staff member to help guide them. Students are never alone.



Carl Sagan
Astronomer and
Author

"I think the health of our civilization, the depth of our awareness about the underpinnings of our culture and our concern for the future can all be tested by how well we support our libraries."

Carl Sagan

When you begin to think of libraries in terms of providing access and equity for all students, you begin to see the need for a commitment to, and plan that supports our school libraries.



Book Display at
Monte Vista High
School Library

Get rid of
your image
of the old-
time
librarian.



Librarians Rock!



Mount Miguel High
School Library Website

On Tuesday, I had the opportunity to meet with the Grossmont District librarians and their president Lynn Kraszewski from Granite Hills High School. It was the regular meeting of the Library Council, the Professional Learning Community for librarians. Like all meetings I have with teachers, administrators, support personnel, classified staff, business and civic leaders and parents; I listen to ideas, concerns and goals. I then translate those ideas into themes, a larger context, and a strategic plan. This week, there was no shortage of ideas.

1. Librarians in our District are teachers. **Teacher-librarians** are a critical component of each school's instructional and academic programs. They work hand in glove with departments and teachers in acquiring materials, designing instructional programs, working directly with students and advising teachers.
2. Our librarians are **active participants in state and national organizations** and **contributors to the national dialogue** on school libraries. Our District received national exposure when GUHSD librarians conducted research on the positive effects of collaboration between librarians and classroom teachers. Valhalla librarian Bonnie Lange, Santana librarian Nancy Magee, and El Cajon Valley librarian Steve Montgomery compiled these results in an article that was published in *School Library Journal*.
3. The work of Grossmont District librarians is guided by a set of **national library standards** designed to teach our students the 21st Century information literacy skills they will need to succeed after high school.

**World Class
Schools Have
World Class
Libraries**

So, where are we missing out? We certainly have the people to do the work. The three areas we need to concentrate on and include in any strategic plan are: **books per pupil**, **Internet capacity** and **library renovation**. We are discussing the following goals to be achieved over the next 3 years.

1. Find resources to bring our library **book-to-pupil ratio to the recommended American Library Association standard**.
2. Address issues of **internet connectivity** and **bandwidth** in each library to **ensure capacity and access**, addressing the needs of teachers and students.
3. **Review and expand internet sites** that support our instructional initiatives, as appropriate.
4. Ensure the **renovation of libraries is a priority** in Proposition H or any new Bond extension.

Can we meet all of these goals in a time of limited resources? What I know is that we should set goals that are "right" for our teachers, students and parents. We then look for the dollars to make them happen. Even if we fall short of these goals, we will certainly be further ahead than if we had never made them in the first place. I'm not half as concerned with not meeting a goal, as I am with not trying. **We owe our schools and students nothing less.**