
America's Worst Libraries

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The recent "America's Most Literate Cities" report from Central Connecticut State University includes an analysis of public libraries (branches, volumes, circulation, and staff per capita).

Los Angeles ranked 62nd out of 71, and five other California cities were in the bottom 12, with Santa Ana in last place. Only San Francisco and Oakland made the top one-half.

California's school libraries are also among the worst in the US, in terms of both holdings and staffing, because of insufficient funding.

Studies show that reading achievement is related to access to books. Studies also show that children get a substantial percentage of their reading from libraries. For children of poverty, the library is often the only source of books.

California fourth graders ranked third from last in reading in the US in 2007. Now we know why.

Let's divert the huge sums spent on testing to funding libraries. Let's invest in promoting learning, not just measuring it.

Stephen Krashen

You can view the literate report at:
http://www.ccsu.edu/amlc08/rbc_education_all.htm