

How to Search for School Library Research and Why You Should

By Deborah Rinio

Like any field, research into school libraries helps inform librarians on the newest trends, methodologies, and thinking around school library practice. Trade publications such as *School Library Journal* and *Voice of Youth Advocates* contain articles and advice from practitioners and are definitely useful, but they rarely contain research reports and are not peer-reviewed.

Taking the time to read the newest research can help school librarians improve their teaching, management, and advocacy by exploring the newest trends and methods in the field. For example, an article on guided inquiry in *School Library Journal* might focus on the how of the approach; whereas an article on the same topic in *School Library Research* will explore not only the how, but the why, and the resulting data from the researcher's study. This additional information can be used by the school librarian in applying the approach to their own circumstance, as well as making a case for the approach to teachers and administrators.

Although some research is available for free online much of it requires a subscription. And no matter where you get it from, staying on top of the newest articles is time consuming. Fortunately, as Alaskans, we have access to databases through the State Library Electronic Doorway that enable us to locate articles and set up alerts for new articles in library and educational research journals. In this blog post, I will share some journals that cover school library research, where to access them, and how to set up alerts for new content so you can stay on top of the trends.

What journals to read

There are lots of journals that contain research pertaining to school libraries including school library specific publications, K-12 educational publications, and general library publications. The list below are those publications that are most relevant and accessible to school librarians. Journals marked with an asterisk are free to access and read.

*School Library Research** (<http://www.ala.org/aasl/pubs/slr>) is the scholarly refereed research journal of the American Association of School Librarians. It includes research on management, implementation, and evaluation of school libraries; as well as instructional theory, teaching methods, and other issues of relevance to school libraries and librarians.

*Knowledge Quest** (<https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/>) is the bi-monthly journal of the American Association of School Librarians that focuses on the integration of theory and practice. It seeks to offer information for school librarians, supervisors, library educators, and other decision makers.

School Libraries Worldwide (<https://www.iasl-online.org/publications/slw/index.html>) is the official professional peer-reviewed journal of the International Association of School Librarianship. Full archived content is available to members.

Library Trends (<https://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/library-trends>) explores trends and issues in librarians and their practical applications in all types of libraries.

How to Locate Articles and Set up Alerts

As Alaskans, we are fortunate to have access to numerous databases through the Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (<http://lam.alaska.gov/sled/>). The one most useful in finding school library research is “Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts.” To access this database, click on the A to Z List. Then, follow these steps to set up an alert for each of the journals listed above (or any other journal you’d like!).

1. Sign In – In order to set up alerts, you must sign in to EBSCOHost. This is a personal login and is not the same login information you used to login to the database. You can use your Google sign-in or create an account manually.
2. Click on Publications (located in the menu at the top of the page)
3. Search for the journal you would like to set up an alert in the lower text box (see image).

EBSCOhost Searching: **Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts** | [Choose Databases](#)

Basic Search Advanced Search Search History

Publications

Browsing: **Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts -- Publications**

Alphabetical By Subject & Description Match Any Words

4. Click on the RSS feed button to the left to the journal title.

Create Alert

Journal Alert: ""School Libraries Worldwide" on 2019-02-11 06:34 PM"

E-mail

Subject

EBSCO Alert: School Lib

Hide addresses from recipients

E-mail from

epalerts@epnet.com

E-mail format

Plain Text HTML

E-mail to

Separate each e-mail address with a semicolon. Leave E-mail to field blank if you do not wish to receive e-mail alerts.

E-mail contents

Link to table of contents Link to individual articles

General Settings

Results format

Brief

Alert on full text only

RSS Feed

<http://rss.ebscohost.com.sled.idm.oclc.org/AlertSyndicationService/Syndication.aspx/GetFeed?guid=5844791>

Save Alert

Cancel Alert

[Advanced Settings](#)

5. Enter the email you would like to receive the alert at in the E-mail to field. You can also customize the subject, change the e-mail format, change the results format, or select "alert on full text only." If you'd like additional options (such as the length of time you'd like to run the alert for) click Advanced Settings at the bottom of the screen. Otherwise, click Save Alert.