

# Library/Information Literacy

Today's school library media center is a force and a source for educational excellence. To act as a force for quality education, libraries function as an integral component of the total school instructional program.

The library media program's operational objectives are to enrich, to support, and to vitalize the educational program as it strives to meet the needs of each student. The program's continuing aim is to encourage and to enable students to achieve their optimum potential as learners, as citizens, and as human beings.

The proliferation of information presents major challenges for today's students and educators. Technological innovations have made this vast quantity of information available in a wide range of formats, necessitating the acquisition of additional access skills. Dade County Public Schools' library media programs are addressing these needs through components of the Competency-Based Curriculum.

All subject areas in the Competency-Based Curriculum have made provisions to equip students with the survival skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. These skills revolve around information literacy, or knowing how to learn. The process of becoming information literate requires that students:

- ◆ Know when they have a need for information;
- ◆ Identify information needed to address a given problem or issue;
- ◆ Locate needed information;
- ◆ Evaluate the information;

- ◆ Organize and synthesize the information; and
- ◆ Use the information effectively to address the problem or issue at hand.

These skills involve the ability to think critically and creatively, to solve problems, and to use metacognitive strategies. As a framework to address these skills, the Competency-Based Curriculum is designed to produce students who understand not only broad content-area concepts but also specific facts and ideas. These students also acquire skills necessary to communicate information in a variety of ways, resulting in the accomplishment of specific outcomes identified for each curricular area.

The library/information literacy curriculum provides a scope-and-sequence of fundamental skills needed to produce knowledgeable readers and learners. Specifically, the following components outline the steps needed to enable students to effectively value and manage information: lifelong reading, pre-search strategies, research strategies, application, and communication. Acquisition of these skills results in the students' appreciation of literature and mastery of the research process, thus promoting the ability to transfer knowledge from practice activities to realistic situations.