The Prevalence of Government Information on High School Library and Media Center Websites

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Clinton issues memorandum ordering agencies to develop resources to support education.

February 27, 2002

FirstGov Launched

Kids.gov Debuts

1997-2007:

For Immediate Release April 19, 1997

April 18, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

The Call to Action for American Education includes a goal to bring the power of modern, multimedia computers; giving teachers the training they need to be as comfortable interacting with astronauts and to share in the excitement of scientific pursuits such as the telescopes and supercomputers, and employees willing to serve as tele-mentors or answer student and teacher questions.

Consider a broad range of educational resources, including multimedia publications, archives of prior government search, was also examined.

The prevalence of several non-government websites, such as Google’s U.S. Government Search, was also examined.

The fifty schools were from twenty-two different states. Ten schools were from California, seven from Massachusetts and four from Michigan and Illinois. Six other states had two schools, with the rest of states having one school.

The context analysis performed on the websites examined and counted the number of different government resources to which each site linked. Military or “.mil” websites were not counted during the study. The prevalence of several non-government websites, such as Google’s U.S. Government search, was also examined.

The data shows that many schools do not link to government information resources.

Findings

- Government Resources are a standard part of high school library and media center websites
- There is little consensus on what government resources schools consider standard
- Resources created by government agencies specifically targeted at high school students and educators are not commonly found on these websites
- Portals and search engines that search only government resources, such as Google’s U.S. Government Search, are not commonly found on high school library and media center websites

Recommendations

- School Libraries can
  provide more access points where students can discover government information on their own
- use portals and search engines to increase students’ access to government resources and to teach students how to find specific government resources
- contact your local depository librarian for ideas and assistance
- Depository Libraries...
  need to actively seek out and educate school librarians on where government resources are available
  could engage in more teach-the-teacher kinds of models of promoting documents
  should develop resources specifically for K-12 educators and school librarians

- Government Agencies
  should work to better promote existing government information resources to educators and school librarians
  should work with educators and school librarians to determine the needs of their students when creating future resources

National Archives
Library of Congress
Smithsonian
Department of Commerce
National Library of Medicine
Department of Labor
CIA
Occupational Outlook
Handbook
MedlinePlus
World Factbook
Science.gov
GPO Access
FedStats
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