



AISLE Statement in Support of Paraprofessionals

MEMO TO: IHLS Board of Directors
FROM: Leslie M. Bednar
DATE: October 20, 2023
RE: AISLE Statement in Support of Paraprofessionals

We received a request from AISLE (Association of Illinois School Library Educators) to share the following statement with our board for acceptance. AISLE's intent for the letter is to be sent via email to a school board/district when requested by a district staff member or community member, similar to their other support statements. However, AISLE's involvement will end with the release of the statement. Having other organizations on the same letter saves us all time and emails. It is a simple statement demonstrating our collective support of the American Association of School Librarians' Paraprofessional staffing statement from 2019 and mentioning the ISBE evidence-based funding staffing ratios

The statement reads as follows. With IHLS Board of Directors adoption, we will be listed along with our partner organizations at the bottom of the statement.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you.

AISLE Statement in Support of Paraprofessionals

Our organizations strongly support the American Association of School Librarians' (AASL) statement on Appropriate Staffing for School Libraries. AASL states that in addition to qualified school library professionals, highly trained technical and clerical support staff are essential for all school libraries at every grade level. To transform teaching and learning throughout the school community, it is recommended each school employ at least one full-time technical assistant, clerk, or paraprofessional to enable the school librarian to perform professional duties in the area of teaching and learning.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) in their Evidence-Based Funding documentation and in Illinois School Code Sec. 18-8.15 recommends not only one certified school librarian for every 600 high school students and one for every 450 elementary school students, but one library assistant for every 300 students. We encourage school districts to fully staff their school libraries with BOTH a certified library media specialist AND at least one library assistant to ensure a successful program that supports student growth and achievement.

Approved by the following organizations:

AISLE Executive Board, June 10, 2023

RAILS Board of Directors, July 28, 2023

ILA Executive Board, September 14, 2023