



## Illinois Heartland Library System

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MEMO TO: IHLS Board of Directors  
FROM: Leslie Bednar  
DATE: July 22, 2024  
RE: Statement of Support for the Hiring of Certified School Librarians

### Background

The Association of Illinois Library Educators (AISLE) has begun a campaign to contact school districts when they appear to be replacing a certified school librarian with a non-certified individual. IHLS is an active supporter of school libraries staffed by well-prepared employees. Attached are three documents to share as advocacy examples:

- Statement and supporting research from AISLE to the Marshall CUSD CU-2 board and administration encouraging the replacement of certified library staff with the same level of employee.
- Illinois Library Association (ILA) email response in of support AISLE's outreach to the Marshall CUSDE CU-2 board and administration.
- ILA's published website statement of support regarding certified school librarians.

### Requested Action

We request the IHLS Board of Directors approve the following actions:

- An IHLS reply to any email AISLE sends with this type of support including the statement "Illinois Heartland Library System supports AISLE's advocacy that every school in Illinois provide a high-quality school library program staffed by a licensed school library media specialist."
- Including a board-approved statement on the IHLS website supporting high-quality school library programs staffed by licensed school librarians.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this request. If you have questions, we will be happy to respond at tomorrow's board meeting.

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IMAGINING TOMORROW ~ DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES TODAY!

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6725 Goshen Road, Edwardsville, IL 62025 • 618.656.3216

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**AISLE**

Association of Illinois School  
Library Educators

Association of Illinois School Library Educators  
P.O. Box 110 | Seneca, IL 61360 | 815-357-6023

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May 29, 2024

To the School Board and Administration of Marshall CUSD C-2:

Did you know?

- Multiple independent studies have clearly illustrated that staffing a library with a certified school librarian - not a teacher, aide or volunteer - correlates directly to increased standardized test scores *even when* variables such as economics and demographics are taken into account.
- Licensed school library media specialists are rigorously trained to teach media literacy, credible sourcing, research, and increased reading comprehension, along with allowing students to explore and grow via STEM programs, makerspaces, book groups, and much more.
- The Illinois State Board of Education recommends one certified school librarian for every 450 elementary school students and for every 600 high school students, in addition to one library aide for every 300 students.
- Public Acts [103-0100](#) and [102-0055](#) are just two examples of the various legislations ISBE and the Illinois General Assembly have recently passed where a certified librarian will help your district excel.

As some of your current librarians and library staff prepare for retirement, the Association of Illinois School Library Educators encourages you to look at the many benefits of staffing **all** your school libraries with full-time, certified librarians - educators with the Library Information Specialist Endorsement from ISBE.

We encourage you to view "[The Value of School Libraries](#)," recently released by our state library consortiums, to see that successful school library programs staffed by licensed school librarians increase media literacy, digital knowledge, and improve overall reading scores. Additional resources documenting the efficacy and importance of school library programs follows this letter.

We at AISLE would love to see CUSD C-2 take steps to demonstrate their commitment to their students by hiring a certified school librarian for each school in your district. AISLE offers [scholarships](#) to support those in your district who are interested in taking school library coursework leading to Illinois licensure, and has created [this document](#) with information on the various programs in our state to offer this coursework. We can also put you in contact with other districts who have created and used provisional pathways for certifications. For more information or further questions, you can contact us at [advocacy@aisled.org](mailto:advocacy@aisled.org) or the address/phone number above.



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## Research on School Library Programs

### Recent Articles

“Could School Librarians Be the Secret to Increasing Literacy Scores?” EveryLibrary Institute, Jan. 2022,  
<https://www.everylibraryinstitute.org/school-librarians-literacy-scores-report>.

EveryLibrary. “School Libraries Are the Only Thing That Matters.” Medium, EveryLibrary, 6 July 2021,  
<https://medium.com/everylibrary/school-libraries-are-the-only-thing-that-matters-bbef39f73727>.

Lance, K.C. & Kachel, D.E. (2018). “Why school librarians matter: What years of research tell us.” Phi Delta Kappan, 99 (7), 15-20.

Mattheis, Janice. “The Essential Role of School Librarians.” Lira Learning, 30 April 2024,  
<https://liralearning.com/the-essential-role-of-school-librarians/>

Otero Martinez, Tania. “Investing in School Libraries and Librarians To Improve Literacy Outcomes.” The Center for American Progress, 18 April 2024,  
<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/investing-in-school-libraries-and-librarians-to-improve-literacy-outcomes/>

“School Library Research (SLR).” American Association of School Librarians (AASL), 13 Jan. 2022, <https://www.ala.org/aasl/pubs/slr>.

Soulen, Rita Reinsel, and Lara Tedrow. “Students’ Frequency of Access to School Library Materials in Transformative Times.” Journal of Librarianship and Information Science, Aug. 2021, doi:10.1177/09610006211037721 <https://doi.org/10.1177/09610006211037721>

Teich, Annie Galvin. “How School Librarians Are Evolving.” TechLearningMagazine, Tech & Learning, 4 Oct. 2021,  
<https://www.techlearning.com/how-to/how-school-librarians-are-evolving>.

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## Recent Videos

[“Librarians as Leaders for Media Literacy”](#) (YouTube) Future Ready Schools

“Discussion of a 2-year “capacity building” grant for Ithaca College’s media literacy initiative, Project Look Sharp, that will train librarians to be instructional leaders for the integration of question-based media analysis into the core curriculum from early elementary through high school. Why school librarians were selected as the leaders and importance of media literacy for all students. It is important that we provide our students with tools to develop critical thinking and metacognition enabling them to effectively analyze and evaluate the media with which they are confronted and thus have greater agency in their lives and the capacities for well-reasoned citizenship. As with any skills that need to be taught, who teaches the skills is a critical question.

[Resources:](#)” (Uploaded Feb 28, 2022)

## Research and Researchers

### [Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners: The Illinois Study \(2005\)](#)

In Fall 2003, 657 Illinois schools representing all grade levels, enrollment ranges, and regions of the state participated in a voluntary survey of their school libraries. The survey gathered data on hours of operation, staff and their activities, the library's collection and educational technology, total library expenditures, and several types of library usage.

- [Illinois Study Executive Summary Report](#) (revised 3/1/05; 55 pages)
- [Order the Illinois Study by Mail](#)
- [Power Point Presentation](#)
- [Trifold Brochure](#)
- [Illinois Study Fact Sheet](#)

### [Idaho School Library Impact Study](#)

“This research brief summarizes a study contracted for by the Idaho Commission for Libraries and endorsed by the Idaho Department of Education. Building on previous studies completed in a number of other states (see The Idaho School Library Impact Study–2009, page 1) and designed to assess the impact of school libraries on student success, researchers set out to determine: • the relationships administrators and teachers have with librarians, • how school libraries and librarians are valued and perceived, and • how those factors affect libraries and their impact on academic achievement by students.”



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[School Libraries Work!](#) (2016 ed.)

This is a research foundation paper that collects position statements and research findings on the impact that school libraries and school library information specialists have on student achievement. This booklet, in PDF format, is an easy-to-read and understand summary of the research.

[Stephen D. Krashen](#)

Author of *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*, includes information in his books and website on the importance of providing students with a print-rich environment.

[Keith Curry Lance](#)

“Keith is best known in the school library community as the principal investigator of the most prolific research team studying the impact of school libraries and librarians on academic achievement and student learning.”

[Debra E. Kachel](#)

“Deb Kachel is an Affiliate Faculty living in Pennsylvania and teaching online graduate courses in AUS’s School Library Media Endorsement program. She was a high school librarian and supervisor of a Pennsylvania K-12 school district library program for over 30 years...Kachel is currently the Project Director of SLIDE: School Library Investigation- Decline or Evolution? an IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grant, ... With researcher Keith Curry Lance, RSL Research Group (CO), they will examine the national decline of school library positions, the changing roles of librarians and the expectations of school leaders, and the impact to equity of school library learning opportunities for marginalized student populations.”

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[Visit the AISLE Advocacy page for more information and resources.](#)

## Leah Gregory

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**From:** Sarah Anderson <sanderson@ila.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 29, 2024 2:22 PM  
**To:** advocacy@aisled.org; jsisson@marshallk12.net; elake@marshallk12.net; jmaxwell@marshallk12.net; jritchey@marshallk12.net; kross@marshallk12.net; schoolboard@marshallk12.net; aclausen@ilsos.gov; isl-aisle@aisled.org; jervin@isbe.net; kegan@ilsos.gov; gmccormick@ilsos.net; ila@ila.org; robinson@ila.org; advocacy@ala.org; aasl@ala.org; aaslpresident@ala.org; execsecretary@aisled.org; preselect@aisled.org; president@aisled.org; pastpres@aisled.org; Leah Gregory  
**Subject:** Re: Certified School Librarians in Marshall CUSD C-2

Hello,

The Illinois Library Association (ILA) supports AISLE's advocacy that every school in Illinois provide a high quality school library program staffed by a licensed school library media specialist.

Please see ILA's statement of support: <https://www.ila.org/news/3569/ila-s-statement-in-support-of-school-library-programs-staffed-by-licensed-school>

On Wed, May 29, 2024 at 12:42 PM <[advocacy@aisled.org](mailto:advocacy@aisled.org)> wrote:

Please find attached a statement from the Association of Illinois School Library Educators regarding certified school librarians in CUSD C-2.

Feel free to contact our organization with any questions or for further information.

Gail Meyer, Advocacy Chair

Association of Illinois School Library Educators



*"Some people foolishly think technology has lessened the need for librarians. This could not be further from the truth. Our nation's public schools need certified librarians now more than ever."*

*Joe Stephan, President*

*Thornton Fractional Teachers Union*

*AFT Local 683*

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\*ILA moved offices in July 2023. Be sure that all mailed items are sent to the address in my signature.

Sarah

**Sarah Anderson (she, her)** | Member Services Specialist & Assistant Editor

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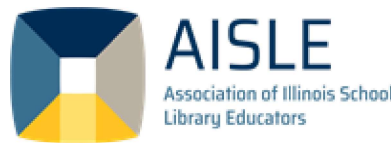


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## ILA's Statement in Support of School Library Programs Staffed by Licensed School Librarians

March 30, 2023

The Illinois Library Association supports the Association of Illinois School Library Educators' (AISLE) advocacy to provide a high quality school library program staffed by a licensed school library media specialist at every school in the state. Licensed school library media specialists are rigorously trained to teach media literacy, credible sourcing, research, and increased reading comprehension, along with allowing students to explore and grow via STEM programs, makerspaces, book groups, and much more.



Multiple independent studies have clearly illustrated that staffing a library with a certified school librarian correlates directly to increased standardized test scores even when variables such as economics and demographics are taken into account. Our school librarian colleagues at AISLE are available to help districts find qualified professionals who can help continue the essential work of retiring librarians.

Approved by the ILA Executive Board March 30, 2023. For more information, visit [aisled.org](https://aisled.org).

## PUBLICATIONS

[Committee & Forum News](#)

[Dear Elsie](#)

[ILA Connector](#)

[ILA E-Newsletter](#)

- [ILA E-Newsletter Archives](#)

[ILA Reporter](#)

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