



DATE: Monday, August 10, 2026

TO: RAILS Advocacy Committee

FROM: Monica Harris, Executive Director

SUBJECT: 6.2. RAILS Statement on School Library Programs Staffed by Licensed School Librarians

On March 13, 2023, the RAILS Board approved the following statement (which can also be found on the [RAILS website](#)):

RAILS strongly supports the Association of Illinois School Library Educator's (AISLE) efforts to encourage school districts to offer school library programs staffed by licensed school librarians. According to AISLE research, more than 25 research studies have proven conclusively that licensed school librarians contribute directly to student achievement.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) recommends one certified school librarian for every 600 high school students and one for every 450 elementary school students. School districts that have openings for school library positions should work with AISLE to find qualified professionals that can increase media literacy, digital knowledge, and improve overall reading scores.

This statement was originally approved, in part, to support Illinois legislative efforts moving forward at that time. Although those legislative efforts ultimately halted, RAILS continues to use this statement to affirm our stance on school library staffing when responding to local media or similar inquiries.

At our August 20 meeting, RAILS Data Analyst Janette Derucki will join us to review the context around the original statement. Together, we will discuss whether the statement should be updated and brought to the full RAILS Board to reaffirm our support.

I look forward to our conversation on August 20.