
19 August 2022

TO: RAILS Board of Directors

FROM: Deirdre Brennan

SUBJECT: St. Andrew Catholic School

On July 13, Member Engagement Manager Dan Bostrom learned that St. Andrew Catholic School in Rock Falls had terminated their school librarian due to budget issues. St. Andrew is also a member of the Rock River Library Consortium which is managed by the Sterling Library Director Jennifer Slaney.

Dan and Jenny both informed the school principal Katie Blakeslee of the consequences of the decision to eliminate paid staff in the library; loss of system membership and loss of RRLC membership. In any situation where we learn that a library does not have paid staff, we attempt to contact the administrators to find out more about the situation. If we find out that the library intends to continue without paid staff, we must send a certified letter notifying the organization of our intention to suspend their membership. The library then has an opportunity to appeal to the RAILS Board of Directors at a future board meeting.

Dan and Jenny both attempted to talk to the principal and on August 8, Ms. Blakeslee responded by email. She noted that the position of librarian was eliminated for the 2022-2023 school year due to financial reasons. She stated that she intended to have the library staffed by volunteers. She said that this was the only option for her school.

Since the principal indicated that they would not be complying with system membership requirements, Dan emailed the suspension letter and sent it via certified mail as required.

We have asked the principal to attend the August board meeting, and I am continuing to try to contact her and hopefully convince her to employ staff in the library for at least 15 hours per week, as required.