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July 21, 2023

TO: RAILS Board of Directors

FROM: Monica Harris

SUBJECT: 9.5 AISLE Library Paraprofessional Statement of Support

The AISLE Library Paraprofessional Statement of Support was approved by the AISLE Executive Board on June 10, 2023. RAILS has been asked to consider signing on to this statement of support as a show of solidarity for the important role that library paraprofessionals play in an adequately staffed school library.

The RAILS Board Advocacy Committee reviewed this statement at their meeting on July 13, and unanimously voted to recommend to the RAILS Board to approve the Library Paraprofessional Statement of Support. This is now being brought to the full RAILS Board for consideration.

Introducing statements of support to the RAILS Advocacy Committee before being brought to the RAILS Board is a new process intended to formalize consideration to these important issues of advocacy by the RAILS Board. I look forward to discussing this in more detail at our meeting on July 28.

AISLE Library Paraprofessional Statement of Support

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



AISLE

Association of Illinois School
Library Educators