

Call to Action!

Contact the ISBE in support of the new rules in regards to Library Media Programs!

New rules that require all students to have access to library media programs and staffed by certified library information specialists have been presented for public comment by the state board.

Opposition has been launched by the Illinois Statewide School Management Alliance. They contend that the new rules are an unfunded mandate and that the state board does not have the authority to require certified staff in school libraries. In their memo to their membership, school libraries are described as a "luxury" item.

Please contact the ISBE by December 24!

- Thank the ISBE for addressing the issue of library media programs in Illinois K-12 schools.
- These rules are in agreement with "Section 1.755 Requirements for Library Information Specialists" which states that no one can be assigned to provide library media services unless certified and went into effect July 28, 2005.
- School library media programs are not a "luxury" in 21st century schools. They are essential to student achievement as shown in Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners: The Illinois Study and confirmed by studies done in sixteen other states.
- That study states that students "achieve academically when their visits to libraries bring them into contact with librarians as teachers and co-teachers."
- The new standards of the American Association of School Librarians state that "school libraries are essential to the development of learning skills."
- Personalize this by adding other information from your personal experiences and professional reading.
- Share this with your colleagues, parents, and others who support school libraries. We need everyone to contact ISBE.

Comments can be sent either via e-mail (addressed to rules@isbe.net) or via standard mail (addressed to Sally Vogl, Agency Rules Coordinator, ISBE, 100 North First Street - S-493, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001.) BE SURE TO IDENTIFY YOURSELF (NAME, ADDRESS)

Here is the exact wording from the present rules-

Each attendance center shall provide a program of media services to meet the curricular and instructional needs of the school.
(Source: <http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/oneark.pdf>, page 77)

The proposed language--

Section 1.420 Basic Standards

- o) Library Media Programs
Each attendance center shall provide a program of library media services to meet the curricular and instructional needs of the school. No later than the beginning of the 2010-11 school year, each district's program shall meet the requirements of this subsection (o).
 - 1) General
The program shall include a library media center containing a collection of resources that circulate to students and staff for the purpose of supporting learning activities that require the use of multiple sources of information and other resources such as relevant technologies (e.g., personal computers, LCD projectors, white boards, DVD players). Specifically:
 - A) The center shall include an organized collection of resources that users can locate, including printed materials, audiovisual resources such as videocassettes, DVDs, and CDS, and electronic resources such as Internet access, on-line resources, and e-books.
 - B) Resources in the collection shall be available for students and staff to check out.
 - 2) Facilities
There shall be space within each attendance center specifically devoted to a library media center. The designated space shall provide adequate shelving for materials and seating that is appropriate to the needs of the students in the grade levels served. The designated space shall accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.
 - 3) Staff
A library information specialist shall be assigned to each attendance center, with responsibility for instructional activities such as information literacy, collaboration with other teachers, technology instruction, and reading motivation. Clerical or paraprofessional staff shall be assigned to assist with the library media program by implementing routine, non-professional library operations and providing technical support. Specifically:
 - A) There shall be at least one library information specialist employed full-time in each high school.
 - B) There shall be at least one library information specialist assigned to each attendance center other than a high school. Full- or part-time professional staffing shall be commensurate with the number of students and faculty to be served and their needs related to the program of library media services.
 - C) The level of clerical or paraprofessional support provided shall be commensurate with the number and ages of the students to be served and their needs related to the program of library media services.
 - 4) Financial Resources
Each district's annual budget shall include an identifiable allocation for resources and supplies for the program of library media services. Authority for managing expenditures from this allocation shall reside with a library information specialist.

(Source: <http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/pdfs/1wf.pdf>, pages 21-23.

From the Statewide School Management Alliance Legislative Report of October 25, 2007--

“Requiring each school to maintain a library and to hire a certified librarian and an assistant will be grossly expensive and another unfunded mandate upon our local school districts. As much as each local district would enjoy the luxury of having such a center in every school – complete with a certified librarian and an assistant – this is many times not possible for financial reasons...”

“Further, the ISBE *has no statutory authority* to prescribe such a mandate through its administrative rules. *Nowhere in the School Code* does it require a school district to hire librarians or non-certified personnel to work in a library or media center.”

SSMA Objections can be found on the web at <http://www.iasb.com/govrel/alr9542.cfm>