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House Committee on Education
State of Rhode Island General Assembly
Testimony in Support of *Senate Bill No. [2078](#)*

Dear Members of the House Committee on Education,

My name is Melanie Roy, and I have served as a school librarian in the Barrington Public Schools for the past twelve years. This is my 30th year as an educator. I am writing in support of the Save RI School Libraries Act.

I was a [Golden Apple](#) recipient in 2018, a [Rhode Island Educator Leader](#) in 2019, the [Rhode Island School Librarian of the Year](#) in 2019, and the [Barrington Teacher of the Year](#) in 2020. I was featured in the Rhode Island Department of Education's Science of Reading training [video](#) in 2022. I have been a National Board Certified educator for the past 18 years. I am not writing all of this to be boastful, but to let you know that I care deeply about education.

Moving from the classroom to the library was an eye-opening experience. A school librarian has the unique opportunity to positively impact the entire school's culture. I take pride in providing this space as a place of learning, opportunity, and possibility for all students and adults. As a school librarian, I ensure students are actively engaged in new titles and series. Since COVID, our SORA digital library options have exploded, and our students are taking full advantage of the ease of use. I also work hard to collaborate with adults to ensure students are freely reading in various preferred formats. For a real-world example of our library stats, feel free to peruse our February 2026 [newsletter](#). The last slide has links to the monthly newsletters from this school year.

I also know how important it is in this quickly changing world to ensure students are being taught research, digital, and media literacy skills. For instance, when I teach students about evaluating sources, students are learning about [click restraint](#) and [lateral reading](#). I work hard to stay up-to-date so that I am providing students with the best information possible to help them search and evaluate information. What worked as a research lesson 5 years ago would not work today. Every year, the landscape is changing. It is important not to assume that these "digital natives" know it all. They must be taught critical thinking skills to find the most credible sources.

I am on our district's AI team to ensure we are educating both our adults (myself included) and students on artificial intelligence. I am also teaching Common Sense Media AI lessons to all

grade levels this year. I feel it is crucial to have conversations about artificial intelligence so that we can be aware of how it is impacting our daily lives and how we can be critical thinkers about what this means when sharing data.

Studies show that students who have access to full-time school librarians with well-funded school libraries perform better on standardized tests. This should not be an option but a right of every Rhode Island taxpayer. We should want only the best opportunities for our students to grow into thoughtful, empathetic, critical thinkers, and both local and global citizens.

I can be reached at roym@barringtonschools.org if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Melanie Roy