

From: Robyn York <robynyork@npsri.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 5:10 PM
To: SLegislation <slegislation@rilegislature.gov>
Subject: Testimony to support S2078 The School Libraries Act

Dear Ms. Hayden,

My name is Robyn York and I am the part-time librarian at Rogers High School (RHS) in Newport and I support the S2078 The School Libraries Act. While implementing the full-time requirement may be an end to my role at RHS due to more senior staff with library teacher certifications still working in the district, having a full-time, certified librarian is essential to boost school-wide literacy, support classroom instruction, and provide a resource-rich environment for students. Additionally, libraries serve as a third space in the school and that space must be preserved. While primarily a place where students can develop critical research skills and discover stories that inspire them, the school library is also a refuge for students when they need a quiet space and a break from the busy day.

The RHS community highly values their library and members visit frequently. Students are able to come during English classes and study periods to get books for personal interest and free reading and classes visit for information literacy instruction and research help. Recently, I collaborated with Angela Johnson's AP African-American Literature class to support student-driven inquiry projects. Less formally, the RHS Library serves as a learning lab with activities that complement classroom instruction, programs to encourage academic achievement, and opportunities to cultivate creativity. For example, for Engineering Week, the library offered make and take basic circuit kits and Lego-like catapult sets for students to gain experience with simple engineering tasks. In the new high school which opened this year, the school library remains at the center.

Working in partnership with students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders to create strong learning communities is something certified librarians are trained to do. Today's students have a challenging world to navigate, one where jobs are changing rapidly due to implementation of artificial intelligence and competition is fierce and they need highly skilled teachers and support staff to navigate these challenges successfully. I highly endorse the enactment of S2078 The School Libraries Act. Every student in Rhode Island must have access to a highly-qualified, certified librarian in their school. School librarians demonstrate through their work, and cultivate in their community, critical and ethical research skills, the desire for lifelong learning, and a love of literacy.

Sincerely,

Robyn York

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Robyn York

Librarian

Rogers High School

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