

Dear Kathleen Taylor,

As the Joint Student Success Committee prioritizes their policy recommendations for new investments in early care and K-12 education, I hope you will make having a licensed school librarian in every school a priority!

#### HERE'S WHY FUNDING A LICENSED LIBRARIAN IN EVERY SCHOOL MATTERS:

Research explicitly links a strong school library program with increased student achievement and graduation rates. In a 2015 Washington (state) study, high schools with licensed school librarians saw graduation rates of 85% compared to 76% for high schools without licensed librarians. Per a 2012 South Carolina study, elementary and middle grade students in school with full-time librarians were more likely to meet exemplary-level standards for using literacy text and conducting research.

Research also shows that licensed school librarians have a disproportionately positive impact on students of color, students with disabilities, and students living in poverty. For example, a 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress report showed an increase in reading scores for low-income, Black and Latino students in schools that were staffed with licensed librarians over a 5 year period. A 2012 Pennsylvania study found that in schools with a licensed full time librarian, Black students were 5.5% less likely to score below basic on reading and writing assessments, Latinx students were 5.2% less likely, and students with disabilities were 4.6% less likely.

Last Fall, your Interim Joint Committee on Student Success (JCROSS) released education policy recommendations; many of those recommendations align with the work conducted in strong school libraries. These include administering literacy programs, preparing students for college and career, maximizing learning time, and creating high quality classrooms. A licensed librarian in EVERY school will help accomplish these goals!

Sincerely,  
Rosa Rothenberger

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