



February 4, 2019

The Honorable Jane Nelson  
Texas Senate  
PO Box 12068  
Austin, Texas 78711-2068

Dear Senator Nelson,

On behalf of the Texas Library Association's (TLA) more than 6,500 members, we want to express our appreciation for your strong support for public education and understanding of the tremendous value libraries bring to our communities. We look forward to working with you on issues of mutual interest.

One such issue is salaries for public school employees. Several bills relating to increasing salaries for classroom teachers and professional employees such as librarians, counselors and nurses have been filed. Senate Bill 3 is of specific concern to our members as it singles out classroom teachers for a \$5,000 raise. While classroom teachers are certainly deserving of a much needed salary increase, this bill excludes school librarians. TLA and the Texas Association of School Librarians (a TLA division) oppose any bill that excludes school librarians from a salary increase.

Certified librarians are highly qualified, experienced educators who are often the teachers of record for a variety of classes offered in the largest classroom in the school. They must have a master's degree, be certified teachers with at least two years of teaching experience, and pass a state examination on school library and information content areas to obtain a School Librarian certificate. While many times individuals assigned to work in libraries are referred to as "librarians", only an individual who meets these qualifications is a certified librarian with the expertise and experience to positively impact student achievement and campus performance.

These valuable educators not only provide individual and classroom instruction to students at all grade levels - and to parents and other community members - they support and partner with classroom teachers and administrators on curriculum development, professional development, and literacy initiatives. Librarians are critical partners in the integration of technology as a tool to enhance instruction and engage students. Additionally, school librarians are experts in information, and in the curation and appropriate use of open educational resources.

As the Legislature works through the complicated issue of public education funding, we request that members recognize the benefits and resources of the largest classroom on campus, the school library, and the expertise of school librarians by including these educators in any salary increases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer LaBoon".

Jennifer LaBoon  
TLA President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dana Braccia".

Dana Braccia  
Executive Director