

# NEWS

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## School Library Cuts

Galesburg--Current statistics regarding school libraries in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) recently released by the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) are alarming. The Chicago Teachers' Union reports that as a result of cuts since 2012, "just a third of all high schools [have] a librarian." Only three certified librarians remain CPS schools that have a 90% or greater population of African American students, including Daniel Hale Williams Preparatory Academy and DuSable High School.

Several state and national organizations, including the Illinois School Library Media Association (ISLMA); the Illinois Library Association (ILA); and the Young Adult Library Service Association (YALSA); a division of the American Library Association, strongly oppose these cuts and the profound effect they have on students.

At a time when students need increasing levels of instruction in digital and information literacy, both of which are the primary focus of school librarians, failure to provide students and teachers with this support is irresponsible. Current research, as compiled in the 2016 edition of *School Libraries Work* published by Scholastic, confirms that schools with certified librarians show improved reading test scores and have students with more developed 21st century learning skills.

ISLMA commends the DuSable students for recognizing the important role their school librarian plays in ensuring they succeed in school and are prepared for 21st century careers, and praises them for taking a stand against the layoff of their librarian. All students, regardless of race, deserve a high quality education, and a school librarian is an essential part of any learning community. For today's students to succeed and grow into productive citizens, we should be investing more in libraries, not less. While ISLMA

commends CPS for reinstating one of the librarians, Sara Sayigh, we hope that CPS restores school librarian positions at all schools throughout the city to support and invest in our children's future.

The Illinois School Library Media Association has empowered students with the essential skills for using ideas and information effectively, enabling them to become lifelong learners. For more information about ISLMA or to access our state-wide programs and other resources go to [www.islma.org](http://www.islma.org)