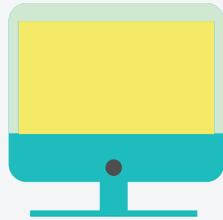


# A SCHOOL LIBRARIAN IN EVERY SCHOOL: Why Delaware Needs a School Library Ratio Bill

## STRENGTHENING SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN DELAWARE



For more than a decade, educators, parents, and library advocates have worked toward a simple goal: ensuring every Delaware student has access to a school library staffed by a certified librarian. Although statewide studies—including the 2016 Delaware School Libraries Master Plan—have repeatedly recommended this standard, Delaware still has no requirement that schools provide a staffed library program. The proposed Delaware School Library Standards and Ratio Bill would address this gap by establishing clear standards beginning in the 2030–2031 school year to ensure every public school provides students with access to a modern school library program.



## SCHOOL LIBRARIANS MATTER THEY HELP STUDENTS



Build strong reading habits and improve literacy



Learn research and information literacy skills



Evaluate online information and media



Discover books that reflect their identities and experiences



Access technology and digital resources for learning

## WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION DO



Beginning in the 2030–2031 school year, the Delaware School Library Standards and Ratio Bill would establish clear expectations for school library programs. Key components include:

- Every school would provide students with access to a school library program.
- Schools with more than 200 students would have a certified school librarian.
- Librarians would work with teachers to support student learning.
- School districts would have flexibility in how they meet the staffing requirements.
- New statewide support for School Library Programs would be deployed.

Delaware is facing serious literacy challenges. Only about one-third of third graders read at grade level. School libraries can be an important part of the solution. Delaware has invested in expanding access to books and digital resources through the Delaware Library Consortium, but school librarians are needed to help students and teachers make the most of these resources.

# Delaware School Library Ratio Bill

## As of February 18, 2026

Amends **Title 14 - Education** - Part I - Free Public Schools  
By adding a new Chapter 48 – School Libraries

**§ 4801. School Library Programs.** Beginning in the 2030-2031 school year, board of each local education agency shall establish and maintain a school library that meets at least all of the following:

(a) Provides equitable library resources for students and teachers designed to strengthen learning, improve literacy and reading scores, support the school curriculum, promote the freedom to read, respect the identity of students in the collection, and provide opportunities for students to read and learn independently;

(b) Is operated on a schedule that allows pupils and teachers access to the resources of the school library when it is necessary or convenient; and,

(c) Is a member in good standing of the Delaware Library Consortium.

**§ 4802. School Librarians.** Beginning in the 2030-2031 school year, the board of each local education agency shall employ a certified librarian in each school library operated by the school district as follows:

(i) For a school with 200 to 800 students, at least one full-time certified school librarian.

(ii) For a school with 800 or more students, at least two full-time certified school librarians, or at least one full-time certified school librarian and one full-time paraprofessional school library clerk.

(iii) For a school with fewer than 200 students, the Delaware Division of Libraries will, upon the request of the board of the local education agency, advise on an appropriate plan of service.

**§ 4803. Purpose.** A certified school librarian shall work collaboratively with classroom teachers and principals or comparable school administrators to provide literacy instruction to pupils to ensure that pupils achieve grade-level reading proficiency; the delivery of instruction in information literacy skills; the development and coordination of school library programs and resources; and the delivery of instruction in the evaluation, selection, organization, distribution, creation, and utilization of school library media.

**§ 4804. Waivers.** The Department of Education may, upon application by a board of a local education agency and in consultation with the Director of the Delaware Division of Libraries, waive any per-school staffing requirement established pursuant to this section for up to one school year if the application demonstrates that the board was unable to find a certified school librarian or that an offer of employment was made to a certified school librarian. The Secretary may not grant more than two waivers to any school within a period of five school years.

**§ 4805. Systems of Support.** Subject to appropriations, the Department of Education shall employ a position within the department to coordinate with the Delaware Division of Libraries, assisting school librarians in developing and promoting skills and strategies to effectively conduct their work.