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ALA American Library Association

April 29, 2021

John Horchak, III, Superintendent
Board of Education Members
Clearview Regional High School District
420 Cedar Road
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062

Dear Superintendent Horchak, President Giaquinto, and Board Members:

At a moment when the ability to navigate a vast and constantly shifting world of information is a matter of profound consequence, we are concerned to learn that Clearview Regional High School is dismantling an award-winning school library media program¹ and reducing student and teacher access to the very information professional—the librarian, or school library media specialist—who makes that program possible.

More than 60 studies from across the country show that student achievement—from reading scores and digital proficiency to graduation rates—is higher in schools with full-time, professionally staffed libraries.² Pairing *National School Library Standards*³ and *New Jersey's Learning Standards*, your school librarian impacts every learner in Clearview Regional High School, embedding a continuum of literacies across the curriculum and providing access to resources, tools and learning experiences that nurture critical thinking, exploration, and innovation. They support their colleagues with curated resources, collaborative instruction, thoughtful technology integration, and professional development. And they partner with external organizations to expand opportunities for learning in and beyond school.

Your high school librarian has risen to the challenges of this past year with intentionality for the academic and emotional well-being of the learning community, continuing to build a shared culture of reading, inquiry, and agency. Now, as your district addresses the impacts of COVID-19 on students, school librarians are integral to your community's resilience and to the priorities outlined by Education Secretary Cardona for allocation of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds.

New Jersey's administrative code requires that students receive library media services and information literacy instruction. Clearview Regional students are already at a disadvantage with the earlier loss of

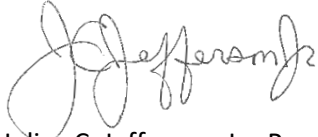
¹ <http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2015/05/arden-kimmelman-build-agents-change-inaugural-ruth-toor-grant>;
https://www.clearviewregional.edu/news/district_news/teacher_educational_professional_of_the_year

² <https://www.baltimorelibraryproject.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/09/Library-Impact-Studies.pdf>

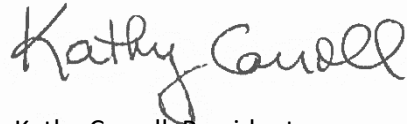
³ <https://standards.aasl.org/>

the middle school librarian and discontinuation of the school library program for 7th and 8th graders. That loss will only be exacerbated by cuts to the high school program. Education in this information age requires full-time certified information specialists in every school. We urge you to revisit the board-adopted position descriptions and appropriately staff⁴ Clearview Regional schools with full-time school librarians.

Sincerely,



Julius C. Jefferson, Jr., President
American Library Association



Kathy Carroll, President
American Association of School Librarians

cc: Beth Thomas, President, New Jersey Association of School Librarians
Jen Schureman, President, New Jersey Library Association

⁴ http://www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org/aasl/files/content/advocacy/statements/docs/AASL_Appropriate_Staffing.pdf