



**Department of  
Education**

*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

*Phil Weinberg, Deputy Chancellor*

February 26, 2018

Community Education Council District 5  
123 Morningside Drive, Unit 2 Room 232  
New York, NY 10027

Dear CEC 5 Members:

Thank you for your letter to Chancellor Fariña regarding library media specialists (LMS) in New York City public schools. We appreciate you sharing your concerns with us, and apologize for the delayed response.

Please know that we at the Department of Education are committed to providing school library services to all students throughout the City. In order to fulfill this commitment, our new Director of Library Services and the Library Services Team are taking the following steps to recruit and retain highly effective school LMSs:

- Currently working with Long Island University (LIU) to support a cohort of graduate students enrolled in their Library and Information Science (LIS) master's program to become New York State-certified school LMSs;
- Working with LIU to develop and recruit certified teachers for a third cohort, as well as create a recruitment program for new LIU graduates;
- In conversation with Syracuse University to organize a cohort of certified teachers to recruit candidates for the Syracuse LIS program so they can obtain LMS certification;
- In preliminary talks with New Visions for Public Schools to recruit and retain certified school LMSs as campus librarians;
- Interviewed and screened 11 LMS candidates who will complete their certification within the next six months and will be seeking positions for September 2018;
- Exploring funding opportunities to support recruitment efforts and develop scholarship programs to help certified teachers obtain their LMS certification; and
- Provide frequent trainings and support for all new hires, including Newly Assigned Institute, Library Services Fall Conference, Spring Institute, as well as workshops, networking, and mentoring opportunities.

As we work to recruit qualified LMS candidates for placement in our schools, we have organized and trained Field Support School Library Liaisons to communicate with those in the field and to support school LMSs. Our staff have also arranged for outreach to administrators and Borough Instructional Leads on the necessity of developing effective academic library programs in their schools and the sharing of instructional resources.

To communicate the need to strengthen our school library programs and show our support for program development, we have:

- Communicated to administrators the regulations for maintaining and staffing a library in their school or on their campus;
- Developed a citywide newsletter, *Sharing Times*, to promote library programming and share best practices;
- Presented workshops and networked at the Chancellor's Principal Conference, Assistant Principal Conference, and Educators Conference; and
- Obtained Citywide access to *The New York Times* Replica Edition, shared via Principals' Weekly and I TEACH NYC.

Additionally, we continue to provide outreach to schools to support their efforts to develop effective library programs, including monetary grants to cover automation costs, site visits, consultation, and professional learning opportunities.

I hope that this information helps to clarify the steps we are taking to recruit certified LMS candidates for our schools, as well as support and expand our school library programs. Thank you again for writing to us and for your continued advocacy on behalf of New York City's public school students.

Sincerely,



Phil Weinberg  
Deputy Chancellor