

Public Comments Rules
Hearing Date 09/15/2014

24:15:03:08 Exhibit A

Sharlene Lien - School Section Chair - South Dakota State Library Association

Dear South Dakota Board of Education,

Over the last year, the school section of SDLA has been reviewing the Administrative Rules of the school library media endorsement. We support the following Administrative Rules for the school library endorsement and school library media specialist certificate: 24:15:06:17 and 24:15:09:02. However, it has come to our attention that there is an additional Administrative Rule (24:15:03:08), which would allow individuals to obtain an endorsement in school library media without a bachelor's degree, which is in conflict with the previous administrative rules. As a representative of the school section of SDLA, I would like to express our concern over the wording in Administrative Rule 24:15:03:08; which includes school library/media endorsement programs with other stand-alone certificates. Including the library/media endorsement program with these certificates has created an option in which those without a four year degree may obtain an endorsement in school library/media. Endorsing individuals without a bachelor's degree is inconsistent with our philosophy of providing highly qualified professionals for our students. We would like to request that the words "school library/media endorsement program" be removed from the list of stand-alone certificates in Administrative Rule 24:15:03:08. By removing this wording, we can clear up any confusion about the expectations of this endorsement, which is intended to be an endorsement to an existing teaching certificate and not a stand-alone certificate. I appreciate your interest in creating the clearest and highest professional expectations for our certified teacher/librarian staff within the state in the 21st century. Thank you so much for your consideration in this matter.

24:15:03:08 Exhibit B

Ann Smith, Library Coordinator, Sioux Falls Public Schools

I support the proposed rule change to exclude "school/library media endorsement programs" from AR24:15:03:08. The South Dakota Department of Education has adopted 4 powerful aspirations: All students enter 4th grade proficient or advanced in reading. All students enter 9th grade proficient or advanced in mathematics. The gap for Native American students is eliminated. Students graduate high school ready for postsecondary or the work force. Achieving these goals will require South Dakota's schools to truly transform education so that each and every child learns to their full potential every day. As the coordinator of 34 school libraries in the Sioux Falls School District, I have seen the difference an effective school librarian makes in transforming learning and I have learned through experience that school libraries are truly transformed when an effective classroom teacher becomes a certified librarian. The fundamental role of the school library is to support literacy—the foundation that undergirds successful learning in every subject. An effective school librarian with a strong background in literacy and instruction makes sure teachers have the right resources to support effective lesson plans focused on building skills in thinking critically, communicating, collaborating and creating. It is essential that school librarians know about and promote best practices in literacy instruction so that they can collaborate as peers with classroom teachers to facilitate the effective use of a wide variety of instructional resources. When a librarian does not have a strong background in literacy and instruction, the school library languishes on the sidelines as a warehouse for books or, worse, emerges as a distraction from the school's instructional focus. When school librarian positions open in our schools, our first priority is finding a certified teacher with a strong literacy background. We know that these individuals can complete the necessary courses to attain the specialized knowledge and skills necessary to run an effective school library program. I encourage the Board of Education to ensure that South Dakota's requirements for certification as a school library/media specialist set a standard that supports the most effective educational environment by closing any loopholes that allow an individual without a teaching certificate to become a certified librarian.