

**SENATE, No. 1586**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**219th LEGISLATURE**

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 13, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator JAMES BEACH**

**District 6 (Burlington and Camden)**

**Senator LINDA R. GREENSTEIN**

**District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Senators Turner, A.M.Bucco, Singer and Schepisi**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires certain ratios of school library media specialists to students in public schools.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/22/2021)**

1 AN ACT concerning school library media specialists employed in  
2 public schools and supplementing chapter 27 of Title 18A of the  
3 New Jersey Statutes.

4  
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
6 *of New Jersey:*

7  
8 1. a. (1) In each public school having an enrollment of less  
9 than 300 students on October 15 of the prior school year, the board  
10 of education shall employ, at a minimum, one half-time staff  
11 member who holds an educational services certificate with a school  
12 library media specialist endorsement.

13 (2) In each public school having an enrollment of between 300  
14 and 1,499 students on October 15 of the prior school year, the board  
15 of education shall employ, at a minimum, one full-time staff  
16 member who holds an educational services certificate with a school  
17 library media specialist endorsement.

18 (3) In each public school having an enrollment of 1,500 or more  
19 students on October 15 of the prior school year, the board of  
20 education shall employ, at a minimum, two full-time staff members  
21 who hold an educational services certificate with a school library  
22 media specialist endorsement.

23 b. The Commissioner of Education may, upon application by a  
24 board of education, waive the staffing requirements established  
25 pursuant to subsection a. of this section for up to one school year if  
26 the application demonstrates that the school was unable to find a  
27 certified school library media specialist and that an offer of  
28 employment was made to a certified school library media specialist.  
29 The commissioner may not grant more than two waivers within a  
30 period of five school years.

31 c. In addition to the staffing requirements established pursuant  
32 to subsection a. of this section, a public school having an  
33 enrollment of 500 or more students on October 15 of the prior  
34 school year shall employ, at a minimum, one full-time staff member  
35 to serve as a library clerk, and shall employ one additional full-time  
36 staff member to serve as a library clerk for each additional 500  
37 students enrolled in the school.

38  
39 2. a. A school library media specialist employed pursuant to  
40 section 1 of this act in a secondary school in the district shall:

41 (1) in a secondary school having an enrollment of less than 100  
42 students on October 15 of the prior school year, devote at least one  
43 period in each school day to school library work;

44 (2) in a secondary school having an enrollment of between 100  
45 and 299 students on October 15 of the prior school year, devote at  
46 least two periods in each school day to school library work;

1 (3) in a secondary school having an enrollment of between 300  
2 and 499 students on October 15 of the prior school year, devote at  
3 least one-half of each school day to school library work;

4 (4) in a secondary school having an enrollment of between 500  
5 and 699 students on October 15 of the prior school year, devote at  
6 least five periods in each school day to school library work; and

7 (5) in a secondary school having an enrollment of 700 or more  
8 students on October 15 of the prior school year, devote the full  
9 school day to school library work.

10 b. As used in this section, "school library work" means the  
11 delivery of instruction in information literacy skills; the  
12 development and coordination of school library media programs  
13 and resources; and the delivery of instruction in the evaluation,  
14 selection, organization, distribution, creation, and utilization of  
15 school library media.

16  
17 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first be  
18 applicable to the first full school year following enactment.

19  
20  
21 STATEMENT

22  
23 This bill establishes minimum ratios of school library media  
24 specialists to students required in school districts. The ratios are:

- 25 • in each public school having an enrollment of less than 300  
26 students on October 15 of the prior school year, the board of  
27 education is required to employ, at a minimum, one half-  
28 time staff member who holds an educational services  
29 certificate with a school library media specialist  
30 endorsement;
- 31 • in each public school having an enrollment of between 300  
32 and 1,499 students on October 15 of the prior school year,  
33 the board of education is required to employ, at a minimum,  
34 one full-time staff member who holds an educational  
35 services certificate with a school library media specialist  
36 endorsement; and
- 37 • in each public school having an enrollment of 1,500 or more  
38 students on October 15 of the prior school year, the board of  
39 education is required to employ, at a minimum, two full-  
40 time staff members who hold an educational services  
41 certificate with a school library media specialist  
42 endorsement.

43 The bill specifies how much time in each school day the school  
44 library media specialist is required to devote to school library work  
45 in public secondary schools, which is dependent upon the  
46 enrollment in the school.

**S1586 BEACH, GREENSTEIN**

1       The bill also requires a public school having an enrollment of  
2 500 or more students on October 15 of the prior school year to  
3 employ a minimum of one full-time staff member to serve as a  
4 library clerk, and to employ one additional full-time staff member  
5 to serve as a library clerk for each additional 500 students enrolled  
6 in the school.

7       In order to be college- and career-ready in the twenty-first  
8 century, students must be able to use a wide range of information  
9 resources including books, media, technology, and the Internet. All  
10 students must be able to locate, evaluate, and interpret information  
11 accurately for academic and professional success.

12       A qualified school library media specialist is uniquely suited  
13 through educational training and professional development to  
14 provide this educational foundation for all students. Twenty-two  
15 states currently require school library media specialists in their  
16 schools and 12 use student enrollment to determine the number of  
17 school library media specialists the schools employ.