

To Mr. Aziz and the trustees of SD #57,

My name is Monica McKee and I have been with the district for 14 years now, spending half that time in both elementary and high school libraries as a clerk. I am writing to you in hopes of changing your mind about your decision to cut the position of library clerk. The position is so much more than just shelving books, both student and teaching staff rely on us for so much.

Books are the bridge for us to connect with the students, whether it be textbook, silent reading books, or one of the many genres. Libraries are the heartbeat of any school. It's where every single student must visit at least three times a year for textbook sign out and exchange, where SLR students mix with the rest of their peers, where tests are taken, where assignments are printed, where students feel most safe. In the 5 years I've worked in a high school library, I have had students approach me every year to say thank you for creating a safe space. Within the first 3 months of working at Duchess Park, I had a vulnerable student ask me how to file a police report because they were sexually assaulted. There are so many stories I could tell and I know I am not alone in the stories of support we give all students. Some are heart breaking, many positive.

The work we do behind the scenes with the TL's is invaluable. We do all the "heavy lifting" so that TL's are free to support staff and classes. Without clerks, when will they have time to repair books, place orders and do receiving, create displays for a welcoming and encouraging environment, track down resources for the ever-expanding indigenous content. And we can't forget about start up, semester turn and year end, when they deal with over 4,000 textbooks within a week. Clerks also free up time for TL's to support classroom teachers in lesson plans and teaching important skills such as digital literacy, how to find credible books and online resources to build research skills, and bring in outside guests such as R.E.A.P's to expand their skills and knowledge outside the walls of school.

I have given you a small snapshot of what clerks do, both for staff and student and I ask you to again, reconsider removing library clerks from the buildings of SD#57.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter,

Monica McKee