

## NYC Bids To Bypass School Library Mandate

New York City’s librarians, teachers, and parents are prepping for a major battle with the city’s Department of Education (DOE) on the heels of the DOE’s official request to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) on August 9 that the city’s public schools be exempt from state minimum staffing requirements for certified school library media specialists. The DOE’s move follows years of quiet noncompliance with the state mandate, despite two petitions from the local teachers union to the State Commissioner of Education.

The union—the United Federation of Teachers (UFT)—and the New York Library Association (NYLA) both said they strongly oppose the DOE’s variance request, which, if the state approves it, would allow NYC schools “to provide equivalent library services to students at secondary schools in alternative ways,” according to a copy of the request obtained by *Hotline*.

“Equivalent library services’ is really slippery. It’s the most dangerous

action a district could take,” said librarian Sara Kelly Johns, NYLA’s president-elect. “It is not equitable,” she told *Hotline*. “We can’t set aside the requirements for school librarians. Not as policy.”



Tom Dunn, director of communications for NYSED, confirmed that the state received the DOE’s request but said the state would not comment until it had prepared its response.

The UFT has been waiting for months for a response from State Commissioner John King on the second of its petitions, which it filed late last year in hopes that the state would be able to enforce the city’s compliance with Commissioner’s Regulation 91.2. The rule stipulates that all NYC

secondary schools must employ at least a part-time certified school library media specialist, and schools with more than 700 students must employ a full-time media specialist. According to the UFT, city officials admit that more than half of the city’s secondary schools are in violation of this mandate.

One of the biggest challenges in enforcing Regulation 91.2, Alison Gendar, a media rep for the UFT, said, is that the commissioner typically issues his decision after the end of the school year, making it moot. This time around, however, “We are considering our legal options to make the commissioner

rule in time for it to be meaningful,” Gendar said. “We have to wait for the state to come back with some kind of decision and then...that will clear the roadway for going to the (state) Supreme Court with this.”

In the meantime, NYLA joined forces with other advocacy groups—including Urban Librarians Unite (ULU), the Alliance for a Quality Education (AQE), and Make the Road New York—in endorsing a “Read In” on August 21, organized by New Yorkers for Great

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## Who Taught You the Most?

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## Interview

### Sarah Peed

Sarah Peed is the associate editor at Hydra, Random House's new digital-only sf/fantasy imprint.



#### Why did Random House decide to do digital-only imprints?

We felt that digital-first imprints would create opportunities

for our authors to reach an exploding audience for great digital genre fiction. We separated by these different genres (romance, mystery/thriller, new adult, and sf/fantasy/horror) because these categories are the hard-hitters of the digital domain. Readers in these genres are migrating to digital in the largest numbers, and we know there is a huge audience for our authors to reach.

#### Why is it important to focus on digital publishing as a separate market from print?

Random House wants to deliver excellent and compelling content to our readers, regardless of format. However, there is a section of readers who read either entirely or mostly digitally, and we're hoping to connect with them in innovative new ways using these digital-first imprints.

#### Do you think there will be any eventual print-on-demand for these titles?

The most exciting opportunities for authors is in digital, and we are pursuing that head on. That said, we are committed to doing whatever is best for each title and that may include additional formats.

Public Schools, on the steps of NYC's DOE headquarters. In addition, NYLA prepared its own opposition statement, addressed directly to Commissioner King, while Christian Zabriskie, ULU founder—a 2012 *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker—and AQE have created petitions. On the national level, the American Association of School Librarians, the American Library Association's school library division, is standing by to offer support, according to its president, Gail Dickinson.

### Miami-Dade No Longer Closing Branches

The Miami-Dade Public Library System, FL, which was originally told it would have to close many branches owing to budget cuts, is no longer slated to close any, the *Miami Herald* reported on August 24.

In July, when Mayor Carlos Gimenez recommended no tax increase, which left the library with a \$15 million shortfall, he first estimated that 42 of 49 branches would have to close. That number fell to 22 before the county commissioners voted to approve the mayor's recommended tax rate, which can now be lowered but not raised.

With both the mayor's office and Raymond Santiago, director of the Miami-Dade Public Library System and *LJ's* 2003 Librarian of the Year, working on mitigating the impact, the number of branches to close fell to 16, then 14, then four, and now none. Layoff estimates have also fallen from 251 to 192, to the current 169. Hours, however, would still be reduced by 25 percent.

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**VP, Group Publisher** Ian Singer

**Editorial Director** Rebecca T. Miller

**Editor** Meredith Schwartz

#### Contributing Editors

Lauren Barack, Kristi Chadwick,  
Kate DiGirolomo, Matt Enis, Bette-Lee Fox,  
Kathy Ishizuka, Dodie Ownes,  
Karyn M. Peterson, Wilda Williams

**Art Production** Josephine Marc-Anthony

**Creative Director** Mark Tuchman

#### TO CONTACT HOTLINE:

##### Editorial

Phone: (646) 380-0700

Fax: (646) 380-0756/0757

E-mail: [LJHotline@mediasourceinc.com](mailto:LJHotline@mediasourceinc.com)

160 Varick Street, 11th floor  
New York, NY 10013

##### Advertising

Roy Futterman or your LJ rep

Phone: (646) 380-0718

[rutterman@mediasourceinc.com](mailto:rutterman@mediasourceinc.com)

##### Classified

Howard Katz, Classified Manager

Phone: (646) 380-0730

##### Production

JoAnn Powell, Production Manager

Phone: (646) 380-0741

##### Subscriptions

Phone: 800-588-1030

[www.libraryhotline.com/sub](http://www.libraryhotline.com/sub)

##### Outside U.S.

Phone: 515-247-2984

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LEAD THE  
CHANGE

### Coming to Phoenix, Arizona

On September 10, B.A. David Company founder David Bendekovic and local library innovators will lead attendees through exercises to develop

an action plan for leadership at any level. For more information and to register, visit: [www.LibraryJournal.com/LeadTheChange](http://www.LibraryJournal.com/LeadTheChange)

## Nielsen Acquires Two Bowker Divisions

ProQuest affiliate R.R. Bowker, a bibliographic information provider, on August 21 signed a definitive agreement to sell its Bowker Business Intelligence and Commerce Solutions products to global information company Nielsen. Once the acquisition is final, ProQuest said in an announcement, the products will be integrated into Nielsen's existing book portfolio. Bowker and Nielsen expect the sale to be finalized within a month.

Bowker products that will be available as part of the Nielsen Book portfolio will include business intelligence products PubTrack Digital, PubTrack Christian, PubTrack Higher-Ed, Bowker Market Research Books & Consumers, Global Ebook Monitor, and custom research. Commerce solutions products will include PubEasy, Pubnet, and PacStream. The Nielsen Book portfolio currently includes BookData, BookNet, Registration Agencies, and BookScan.

The announcement noted the acquisition will enable Nielsen "to measure the impact of ebook sales in the [United States] and UK and provide insights and trends around the volume and value of books sales by various demographic criteria." In addition, it said, "Nielsen will also be able to offer for the first time a B2B service that enables retailers to source and order books throughout the English-language book market."

With its affiliate ProQuest, Bowker will focus on its book discovery solutions, including Summon and Syndetic Solutions.

"Our commitment at Bowker and ProQuest is to develop solutions that streamline the workflow of our customers," ProQuest CEO Kurt Sanford said in the announcement. "By bringing together Nielsen and Bowker analytic services, book publishers will re-

ceive the critical data they require to navigate the transition to digital-first publishing, through one tool set from one source."

## Philly School Librarians Still in Flux

Philadelphia schools faced their first day with fewer school librarians—continuing a trend in the metropolitan school district and the state of Pennsylvania. Of the approximately 22 remaining certified school librarians working in the Philadelphia school district, some are not returning to their school librarian positions. Some are being sent back as prep teachers, with at least one returning as an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher and another as a classroom teacher, accord-

ing to sources close to the matter.

The changes come as the district faced a \$304 million shortfall in its budget for the 2013–14 school year. The city agreed to borrow \$50 million just to open schools, as Superintendent William R. Hite had threatened to delay opening without those funds.

In addition, the Philadelphia School Reform Commission (SRC) passed a measure during a contentious meeting on August 16 allowing principals to hire back staff based on the needs of the school—not based on seniority. Parents and educators both voiced opposition to the measure by the SRC, which replaced the school board in 2001 with appointees from the governor and the mayor.

How school librarians may fare in the coming days is unclear. At least one school librarian whose position

### Flocabulary Launches "We Heart Librarians" Contest

Calling all performance-inclined library media specialists. Think you can pull off a song about what librarians do—as a rap? Flocabulary, creator of multimedia K–12 lessons to a hip-hop beat, is seeking video submissions of fans rapping along to the lyrics of "Ode to Librarians," a new unit produced by the Brooklyn-based outfit.

Geared for grades six to 12, the song teaches students about the role of media specialists. To "search better than Google," declare the lyrics, "come and find me." The production also addresses "a few misconceptions about our profession.... We don't read all day, our hair's not in a bun. We don't all wear glasses, don't always say 'shush.'"

To enter the "We Heart Librarians" contest, record a video of yourself—solo or with a group—singing or lip-synching along to the song for a chance to be featured in an "Ode to Librarians" remix video. (To hear the song and read the lyrics, visit [ow.ly/ohL9N](http://ow.ly/ohL9N).)

You don't have to be a librarian to submit; students are encouraged to participate (with the necessary permissions secured). Complete rules are available via the contest page, [ow.ly/ohLf0](http://ow.ly/ohLf0).

**Submissions are due by November 30, 2013;  
winners will be announced December 15.**



was transferred from an elementary school to a high school was told librarians might be hired back if and when the \$50 million came through. However, with so many other persons, including assistant principals, secretaries, school nurses, and guidance counselors, laid off at the end of the 2012–13 school year, there's no guarantee librarians will get priority.

“Apparently, they pretty much let principals decide how funds will be allocated in each building,” said Deb Kachel, cochair of the legislation committee for the Pennsylvania School Librarians Association. “So it's very uneven which schools will have librarians and which won't.”

## News in Brief

**Oakland Public Library** and **Monterey Public Library, CA**, and **East Lansing Public Library, MI**, integrated **SkyRiver, Innovative Interface's** cataloging service, into their systems. The California libraries were previously using **OCLC's Connexion**. Additionally, during the first half of 2013, Innovative Interface's **Sierra Services Platform** integrated library system was selected by 50 academic libraries, including libraries in Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America.

The **Association of Research Libraries (ARL)** and **Digital Library Federation (DLF)** opened applications for the **ARL/DLF Forum Fellowship for Underrepresented Groups**. Up to five Fellows will be chosen to attend the DLF Forum held in November to promote racial diversity.

**Nonprofit Friends of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County** received the **2012–13 Ohio Friends of the Library Recognition Award** for promotion and support of the library through securing grants and raising money at the Friends' shop located at the Main Library.

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## NovoEd Introduces Entrepreneurship MOOCs

NovoEd, a privately held massive open online course (MOOC) platform, has announced a new entrepreneurship curriculum in partnership with several institutions, including Stanford University, where NovoEd was developed before being taken private in April. Other partners include Babson College, the Haas School of Business at the University of California (UC)—Berkeley, UC—San Francisco, and the Kauffman Fellows Academy.

The new series of 12 courses begins this fall and will cover topics in-

cluding accounting for entrepreneurs, negotiating, raising start-up capital, and technology entrepreneurship. Some courses will be available in Spanish and Mandarin. Most courses are free, though some are priced at \$250; one course, on venture capital, is priced at \$999.

Though the popularity of MOOCs has skyrocketed since they first came on the higher ed scene, dropout rates are often steep. The NovoEd platform was developed to address this problem by facilitating collaboration on projects and allowing students to rate the work and participation of their peers, creating a system of accountability.

So far, the system seems to have an impact. This spring, one of the first courses offered by NovoEd boasted a 17 percent completion rate, NovoEd cofounder and CEO Amin Saberi told *Hotline*. While that may not seem high, one study indicated that the average MOOC completion rate was less than seven percent, *Inside Higher Ed* reported in May.

“The social component of the NovoEd platform is critical to this curriculum. True learning is not done in isolation, and neither is entrepreneurship,” Clint Korver, director, Kauffman Fellows Academy and one of the program's instructors, said in an announcement. The platform also allows students to develop, maintain, and expand their network of peers and collaborators across courses.

Saberi said that he views libraries as institutions that could help patrons build local collaborative groups around these and other MOOCs, further enhancing the engagement and accountability generated when working with others.

“They can be a great resource for local discussion, local meet-ups,” he said. “Students can have access to the content, the computers, and then work among themselves.”

## Today Launches Book Club

Will *Today* host Natalie Morales become the next Oprah? Publishers frustrated by the lack of national television exposure for their authors are keeping their fingers crossed. On August 20, NBC's *Today* announced the launch of the Today Book Club, a monthly interactive digital and on-air initiative.

The club's first pick is Samantha Shannon's *The Bone Season* (Bloomsbury U.S.A., Aug.), the first installment of a seven-part fantasy series set in a dystopian London.

"*Hunger Games* fans, this book may be for you," said Morales, who will host the first Today Book Club Google Hangout on Monday, September 16, with the 21-year-old author and recent Oxford University graduate. According to a *New York Times* report, Bloomsbury said that retailers' orders of the book roughly doubled when they were told that it would be the first selection of the book club. Librarians may want to do the same.

## Buffalo Grad Students Help Improve Literacy

Education students studying to become literacy specialists at the University at Buffalo's (UB) Center for Literacy and Reading Instruction (CLaRI) have spent four weeks this summer tutoring 180 elementary students in reading and writing through a partnership with two school districts. As reported by Buffalo's National Public Radio station, WBFO,

**Jennifer Goforth** was named Research and Design Services Librarian at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She was previously a Web Librarian at Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

**Michael Lorenzen** was appointed Dean of Western Illinois University Libraries, Macomb. He was previously Associate Dean for Public Services at Western Washington University, Bellingham.

**Joseph Sanchez** was appointed Director at Mesa County Libraries, Grand Junction, CO. A 2011 *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker, he previously held the same title at the Red Rocks Community College Library, Lakewood, CO.

**Mollie Stanford** was named Regional Librarian for Youth Services and Training at the Arrowhead Library System, Mountain Iron, MN. She was formerly Regional Librarian at Southeastern Libraries Cooperating (SEL-CO), Rochester, MN.

**Beth Trupp** retired as Children's Librarian at the Gering Public Library, NE. She had been with the library for 33 years.

**Keith G. Webster** was named Dean of Libraries at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, following the departure of **Gloriana St. Clair**. He was formerly Vice President and Director of Academic Relations and Strategy at John Wiley & Sons.

## In Memoriam

**Evelyn Brewster**, a former Public Library Consultant at the Colorado State Library, Fort Collins, died on July 25. She was 97 years old.

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36 UB graduate students worked with middle graders to boost their reading and writing skills, help struggling readers, and improve reading comprehension.

CLaRI is a nonprofit center that has served hundreds of children and families in Western New York for 50 years. There is no charge for the reading program. While the children benefit from the reading and writing instruction, this program also provides the grad students with intensive hands-on teaching time before they head off to the classroom for their practicum. The program could serve as a model for library schools, too.

## Maker Summer Offers DIY Opportunities

Tinkerers of all ages flexed their creative muscles during the Summer of Making and Connecting, a global project geared to empower digital crafters and match people with Maker activities, online or on the street.

Running from June to mid-September, the campaign offered dozens of ways for kids, parents, and educators to make stuff digitally during the summer months and beyond. The venture is sponsored by the MacArthur Foundation in partnership with the National Writing Project (NWP) Educator Innovator and the Mozilla Foundation.

The project kicked off in June with the Maker Party, an online happening linking interested Makers with design events, Maker camps, coding challenges, and other activities. The idea was for people to apply digital tools to re-

**BIG NEWS!!**

THE ANNUAL ARCHITECTURAL ISSUE HAS MOVED UP

LJ's building feature is now in the NOVEMBER 15, 2013 issue. Submissions are due on SEPTEMBER 23, 2013.

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mix, collaborate, and share their creations over the open web. Summer-time Makers used the hashtag #clmooc on Twitter and elsewhere to tag their projects. Activities were also posted to the NWP Educator Innovator blog.

Makers participated in real life,

from Brooklyn to Uruguay, at physical events listed on the Maker Party site. Virginia-based educators Chad Sansing (@chadsansing) and Melissa Techman (@mtechman) launched a program called #nerdcamp this spring, and it continued through the summer.

“The whole point is to tinker and see,” said Sansing, a language arts teacher at Shelburne Middle School in Staunton, VA (and author of the *School Library Journal* feature “Life with Raspberry Pi”). Not all #nerdcamp projects succeed, however. That doesn’t matter to Sansing—and it shouldn’t to participants, either, he said. He especially likes it when grown-ups experience the rewards of “what it’s like to work on something you want to work on, for a long time, where you’re fully engaged.”

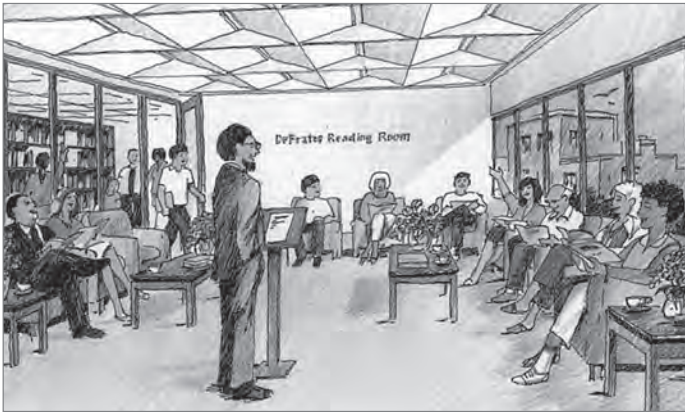
Virtual Summer of Making and Connecting participants included Susan Angel (@zsuzsannangel), a sixth- and seventh-grade teacher in Vancouver, BC, who built a short slide show using Haiku Deck to promote her teaching and learning credo. Valerie Hill (@valibrarian), a teacher librarian at the Lewisville Independent School District, TX, and adjunct instructor at Texas Woman’s University, Denton, built a 3-D virtual book about media before and after Gutenberg. Adapting templates that Sansing had made, Techman crafted a page featuring thoughts people encounter while writing.

What will happen to this outpouring of activity now that it is September? The Summer of Making and Connecting “is not meant to live in the summer and die,” said Techman, a school librarian at Broadus Wood Elementary School in Earlysville, VA. “We want to bring ideas from the summer into classrooms, public libraries, and to other constituents.”

NWP’s Educator Innovator project is working on strategies to keep the creative connections flowing. And for those who didn’t get a jump-start on the event this year, NWP and its partners plan to launch another one in the summer of 2014.

“This really is a movement,” said Elyse Eidman-Aadahl, NWP’s director of national programs and site development. “We want every young person to see that they can be a creator and Maker of their own life.”

## Branching Out



Devereaux Architects and a master plan from Johnson Favaro. The new library will feature state-of-the-art technology, including self-checkout machines; dedicated teen and early childhood areas; a homework center; and a 100-seat community room. Along with targeting Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification, the project has been charged with “mirror[ing] the architectural and construction trends of surrounding buildings,” while staying within budget.

The **Rose Street Central Library** of the Kalamazoo Public Library (KPL), MI, Children’s Room has been chosen as a Family Place Library (FPL), “a network of children’s librarians nationwide who believe that literacy begins at birth, and that libraries can help build healthy communities by nourishing healthy families.” The new designation has engendered a need to spruce up the space, with a renovation that began in August. Under the guidance of the Miller-Davis Co. construction firm, the KPL Children’s Room will gain an activity space for interactive toys and programming, covered by a grant from FPL, according to MLive.com. The second floor local history room will be refurbished as well, with an expansion into space formerly housing the library’s tech center. Most of the funding for both efforts is coming from the KPL endowment and private dollars.

The **Lincoln Library** (pictured), Springfield, IL, built in 1976 to replace a 1904 Carnegie building, is looking to renovate. The three-story, 94,500 square foot library received \$500,000 from the estate of Joe and Rose DeFrates, which is expected to pay for the upgrades. On deck are a new reading room and a coffee shop on the library’s second floor, according to the *State Journal Register*. In addition, the second floor will house the library’s ever-expanding AV collection, alongside the existing nonfiction holdings. The project includes new furnishings and small meeting and study rooms, plus a new reference desk. The design by Graham & Hyde Architects has been approved, leading to the construction bid process, which is now open until September 19. A prebid meeting will be held on September 4.

Ground was broken in late August for the new **Manhattan Beach Public Library**, CA. The current 43-year-old library will be demolished and replaced with a 22,000 square foot, two-story facility, which is nearly double its size. The \$19 million design-build project is being led by C.W. Driver, with design by Harley Ellis

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