

Parent becomes unlikely advocate

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Abstract: Ramey and fellow parents created a video about the importance of school librarians and launched the Facebook page "I heart Public School Libraries," which has 188 followers.

Full text: Salem mom Jessica Ramey says she's not a typical advocate.

But when she heard about Salem-Keizer School District's plan to cut school librarians, she had to act.

"I'm not a public speaker," she said, "I'm just a typical person who cares about my kids' education and about everyone's education."

Ramey and fellow parents created a video about the importance of school librarians and launched the Facebook page "I heart Public School Libraries," which has 188 followers.

"It's amazing the response we've had."

Her two children attend McKinley Elementary School where they both enjoy checking out books.

"A library without a librarian is just a room full of books," she said. "Kids don't know how to navigate it. It becomes dated the minute the librarian leaves."

It's also where kids go to learn about technology and the place where she first learned to use a computer.

Without librarians she worries there will be a huge gap in technology education.

To support the program, she has made T-shirts and encouraged people to write letters and attend Tuesday's budget meeting.

"This is a huge program," she said, "I don't understand how we can get rid of it."

-- Stefanie Knowlton

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