

THE SCHOOL LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO GOAL-SETTING

Goal setting in the school library helps you move from reactive to intentional. In a busy school library, it's easy to stay in survival mode. Goals help you focus on what truly moves your program forward.

Strong goals help you:

- Align your work with school/district priorities.
- Advocate for your role with clarity and evidence.
- Measure and communicate your impact.
- Stay focused on what matters most.

Start with Your “Why”

Before setting goals, ground yourself in purpose. Ask yourself:

- What do my students need most right now?
- Where can the library make the biggest impact?
- What is one thing I want to be known for this year?

Tip: Connect your goals to your district's literacy initiative or school improvement plan.

Choose a Focus Area

Avoid trying to do everything. Choose 1-3 priority areas. Common focus areas include:

- Reading & Literacy Culture
- Collaboration with Teachers
- Information & Media Literacy
- Library Environment & Access
- Advocacy & Visibility
- Data & Impact Tracking

Write a Strong Goal

Use a simple structure that keeps your goal clear and measurable.

Formula: I will [action] so that [impact on students/staff], as measured by [evidence].

Examples:

- I will collaborate with at least 3 teachers per quarter so that students engage in research-based learning, as measured by lesson plans and student work.
- I will increase independent reading so that students build reading stamina, as measured by circulation data and student surveys.
- I will communicate weekly with staff so that the library becomes a go-to resource, as measured by increased collaboration requests.

Make It Doable (Not Perfect)

A realistic system is better than a perfect or complex system. Break your goal into:

- Quarterly targets
- Monthly actions
- Weekly habits

Example:

Goal: Increase teacher collaboration

- Monthly: Reach out to 2 teachers
- Weekly: Send 1 quick idea or resource

Track Your Progress

What you track is what you can *prove*.

Easy ways to track:

- Simple spreadsheet or checklist
- Notes in your planner
- Photos of displays, lessons, or student work
- Circulation reports
- Quick student or teacher feedback

Build in Visibility

Your goals shouldn't be invisible.

Share your work:

- Weekly staff email (quick + visual!)
- Social media or school newsletter
- End-of-quarter updates to admin
- Bulletin boards or displays in the library

Be vocal! Be visible!

Reflect & Adjust

Goals are not set in stone. At the end of each quarter, ask:

- What worked?
- What didn't?
- What impact did I see?
- What will I adjust?

Quick Start Template

Use this to draft your own:

Focus Area: _____

Goal:

I will _____ so that _____
as measured by _____.

Monthly Actions:

- _____
- _____

How I'll Track Progress:
