

The School Library Monthly Update



STUDENT VOICE IN THE LIBRARY



April invites us to think about the role student voice plays in shaping a thriving school library. When students see their ideas reflected in the books you highlight, the spaces you curate, and the experiences you design, their connection to the library grows deeper and more personal. This month, we are exploring practical, approachable ways to invite students into the decision-making process without adding more to your workload. And because it's **School Library Month**, we also share simple celebration ideas you can use to highlight your work and your library's impact on students and staff.

See more on page 2.

TO-DO

- ✓ Consider applying for the [2026 School Achievement Through Libraries \(SATL\) Award](#)! It's open year-round.
- ✓ Join the chat! The December School Library Collect + Connect is Wednesday 4/1 at 3:30pm CT. [Enroll HERE.](#)

REMINDERS

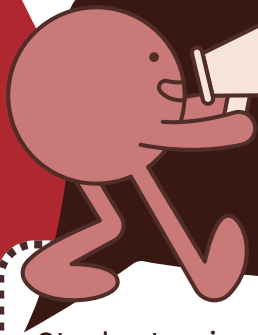


Check out [SDSL's CE Catalog](#) for all continuing education opportunities.



You can also view [SDSL's Training Calendar](#) for CE/PD opportunities from our database vendors, etc.

**EVERY MONTH, WE WILL HIGHLIGHT
A SATL AWARD RECIPIENT! SEE P.4!**



STUDENT VOICE

IN THE LIBRARY

Student voice is about building a culture where students feel that their ideas matter. While this may include using surveys and suggestion boxes, it is also listening to every book recommendation they make, every display theme they propose, and every question they ask. These all offer insight into what resonates with them. These everyday moments of listening can guide your decisions in authentic ways. When students recognize that their preferences influence the library, they develop a sense of ownership that fosters stronger reading habits and ongoing engagement. Gathering student perspectives doesn't have to be formal or time-consuming. Informal input often provides the most genuine results and fits naturally into your routines. Below are two structured yet simple ways to invite student voice.

QUICK WAYS STUDENTS CAN SHARE THEIR IDEAS

- A "Choose the Next Display" voting board
- Sticky-note question of the month (like "What book should everyone read this spring?")
- Student-recommended books shelf or cart
- Short classroom book-talk visits where students highlight a favorite
- A "What Should We Buy Next?" board with category or genre options

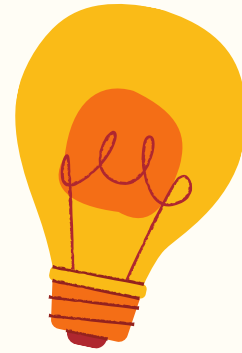
WAYS TO INVOLVE STUDENTS IN LIBRARY EXPERIENCES

- Invite a student (or small group) to help create a display
- Co-design a book list connected to a class topic or interest
- Feature weekly or monthly "student curator picks"
- Host a mini reading challenge created by a class or student group
- Ask students to help label or organize a special collection (genres, themes, etc.)



Bringing student voice into the library is ultimately about forming partnerships!

SCHOOL LIBRARY MONTH



Easy Ways to Celebrate!

- Create a “Why I Love Our Library” wall with student or staff notes
- Spotlights on popular programs or collaborations in your staff newsletter
- A bookmark-making station for a low-prep, high-engagement activity
- A short “Library Fun Fact of the Week” shared during announcements
- Invite a class or student group to help assemble a display celebrating reading

Get Students Engaged

- Feature a “Guess the Book” challenge using a first line or silhouette cover
- Create a simple reading bingo card for a class or grade level
- Sponsor a 5-day mini challenge (Try a new genre, read outside, find a new favorite author, etc.)
- Let students vote for fun library superlatives: “Most Unputdownable,” “Best Plot Twist,” etc.

Share Your Library’s Impact

- Post (or send to staff/admin) a one-page highlight sheet: recent wins, popular books, student quotes
- Feature student-recommended books on a “Reading Picks from Our School Community” display
- Share circulation or program snapshots with teachers to spark new collaborations
- Host a brief “Drop-In Tour” showcasing what’s new or what’s coming next
- Gather a handful of student reflections and share them with your principal

AASL APRIL IS
**SCHOOL
LIBRARY
MONTH**
www.ala.org/aasl/slm





Sioux Falls Terry Redlin Elementary School Library



Librarian: Stefanie Hage

At Terry Redlin, librarian Stefanie Hage is building a warm, student-centered library program grounded in intentionality and a deep understanding of her community. Guided by a mission to foster a love of reading within a nurturing environment, Stefanie has created a space where students feel supported, and excited about books. Her responsive collection development, meaningful programs, and thoughtful library design are helping students develop ownership over their reading choices, even as she navigates limited resources and the unique needs of a mobile, multilingual student population. Stefanie is shaping a library that is truly becoming the heart of the school introducing new genres, building routines for emerging readers, and offering engaging STEM experiences.

Mission-Driven Library Goals

Stefanie's mission centers on fostering a love of reading, supporting classroom learning, and helping students build early research, digital citizenship, and STEM skills. Reviewed annually with staff, her mission ensures the library remains welcoming, inclusive, and focused on student needs.

Responsive Collection Development

Stefanie uses student interests and Titlewave data to guide her purchases, ensuring the collection reflects what students want and need. She ran a solo Scholastic book fair that funded prizes, seating, and new books, and she earned an \$1,850 grant to add adaptive materials for special needs learners.

A Welcome, Student-Centered Space

The library is becoming a bright and inviting hub with flexible seating, genrefied collections, and appealing nonfiction. Students feel comfortable choosing books, exploring new genres, and participating in programs like One Book One School, Read Across America, and engaging STEM activities.

Program & Professional Strengths

Stefanie brings strong relationships and student-centered decision-making to her work. Her next goal is strengthening her literacy instruction, building on the momentum of a successful first year filled with thoughtful programming and responsive collection development.