

Professional Growth
Letter to the Editor

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If you entered a school library today, you might be surprised that it is not the quiet tomb of books you remember from your childhood. An average day includes class visits for primary school read-alouds while caring for live chickens, groups of middle school students playing quiet games of chess and rowdy games of UNO during lunch breaks, and high school students engaging in rigorous inquiry with a wealth of resources to create high-tech products. School libraries offer a safe space for students to visit during their day. For some the library is a respite from the chaos of the cafeteria, for others it is a second home where they come for a moment to catch their breath or catch up with friends and yes, some still come for the books.

Libraries are the point of inquiry for asking and answering questions, an inclusive place for collaborative learning, exploration, and engagement. Professional librarians teach students how to be digital citizens and navigate the fast changing information resources, as well as curate a collection of books that reflect the diverse identities of their students. School libraries are active engaging places that deserve to be celebrated and recognized for the gems that they are in our communities. This is a far cry from peddling dangerous materials as the book banning supporters would like you to think occurs in libraries. Librarians pride themselves on the relationships built over years of contact with students and the goal of fostering lifelong learning that prepares students for college, career and community. This April, please join in celebrating National School Library Month and thank a school librarian for offering our students more than just books in the library.