



# School and Public Library Partnership

*Libraries are a cornerstone of democracy—where information is free and equally available to everyone.*

—DR. CARLA HAYDEN, Librarian of Congress

## One to Know: School and Public Library Partnership

As we engage in promoting community literacy, our first-choice partner should be our local public library. Libraries level the playing field. They provide free access to their print and digital collections, as well as reference services. Libraries are our “literacy equalizer” and “social safety net” (Farmer, 2021) because they are open to all, and offer the resources we need to live, learn, and thrive.

Libraries also offer a range of programming that can provide alluring lifelines for children and adults alike. Typical programs include summer reading, book clubs, family literacy and storytelling, adult language and literacy learning, and more.

School libraries have an added dimension in that they are likely to be in sync with the curriculum in the grades and subject areas within a school. That partnership with the instructional staff means that school librarians are a valuable resource for targeted learning. Access to books and academic success go hand in hand. High-achieving schools tend to have rich and extensive library collections—staffed by professional librarians—and more students who read frequently.

Indeed, research known as the “school library impact studies” has consistently shown positive correlations between high-quality library programs and student achievement (Gretes, 2013). Data from more than 34 statewide studies demonstrates that in schools with strong library programs, students score higher on standardized tests, meet academic standards, and enjoy higher graduation rates.

But most of all, with rare exceptions, public libraries are our source of the most extensive collection of books in our communities, curated and cared for by those most knowledgeable—professional librarians!

## What to Know and Do

Bring Me A Book—in partnership with Bookelicious—is committed to helping all children, particularly those in under-resourced communities, develop a comfortable and joyful relationship with their public and school libraries. At the forefront of this initiative is helping every child develop reading agency, identity, choice, and ownership. Indeed, book access together with reading agency, identity, and choice are equity in action, and are the key to avid reading. The breakthrough technology of Bookelicious makes it all possible. Here's how it works:

Bookelicious is a for-profit, socially responsible, digital bookstore for children that sells physical, print books to children and their families. In addition, children and families may enter Bookelicious and be able to access its entire collection of books, tools, and resources at no cost. Once children enter the site, they are invited to create a bookemoji, a personal avatar that helps individualize and define who they are as readers. The process follows this flow of events.

**First, children:**

are invited to think about who they are and what they are interested in.



**And then they:**

dress and accessorize a bookemoji in ways that reflect their interests.



**And then the children:**

receive links to book collections as well as specific book recommendations, which match their reading interests and passions. (Indeed, the books actually pop up onto their “reading shelf” next to their bookemoji!)



**And then the children:**

are encouraged to explore and browse their book matches! Browsing, which is essential to becoming an avid reader, may include reading book reviews by other children, discussing recommended books with their peers, and peeking inside the books to check out the text, format, and illustrations.



**Next, children:**

are invited to select the books they want to read.



**And then they:**

are encouraged to create a Reading Wish List, capturing all their favorite, must-read, self-selected books!



**Finally, with Reading Wish List in hand**—which also includes their bookmoji, reflecting the full spectrum of their interests—the children take their lists to their school or public library. Instead of arriving at the library door feeling out of place and somewhat overwhelmed, children, armed with their Bookelicious Reading Wish List, can approach the librarian with confidence, knowing exactly what they want to read! The librarian is delighted to help them find their self-selected books in the library. And if for some reason, the library doesn't have a particular book the child wants, the librarian can order it. The librarian can also look at the child's bookmoji on the Reading Wish List and suggest other books in the library collection that align with the child's interests.

**An added bonus:** The librarian receives invaluable information about what the children are interested in reading—what's hot and what's not—information the librarian can use to cull and expand the children's collection. Ultimately, the child's visit to the library becomes a deeply satisfying experience for both the young reader and the librarian!

For this reason, we believe that Bring Me A Book, in partnership with public and school libraries and Bookelicious, is going to play a profound role in helping children and families develop a lifelong reading love affair with their local library. The ultimate aim is to create a virtuous cycle of book abundance and grow a nation of readers.

## More to Know and Do

Bookelicious is also linked to [WorldCat](#), the world's largest network of library content and services. WorldCat libraries are dedicated to providing access to their resources on the Web, where most people start their search for information. A Bookelicious visitor can find out in an instant if a book she wants to read is available in her local library. In fact, WorldCat includes a list of all the libraries in her community, beginning with the one closest to her home.

## References

- Farmer, Lesley S. (2021). *Impactful Community-Based Literacy Projects*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association.
- Gretes, F. (2013, August 12). *School library impact studies: A review of findings and guide to sources*. Prepared for the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

For more information see [Bring Me A Book](#).

