



### **Starting Well 2020: A Guide for School Libraries**

This document is meant to assist school library staff as they prepare for the 2020-21 school year. School libraries play an important role in supporting learning environments - both physical and virtual.

In accordance with local school/district policy, the following questions and considerations are intended to help school librarians think about adaptations that may be needed for face-to-face learning, distance learning, or a hybrid of the two.

#### **Social distancing and PPE:**

- What personal protective equipment may be appropriate for staff and students in the library? See the PPE section on page 7 of the South Dakota Department of Education's [Starting Well 2020: A Guide for Schools](#).
- What is a safe number of patrons allowed in the library at one time?
- Could furniture (i.e. tables, chairs, study carrels, loungers, etc.) be rearranged to aid social distancing?
- Could signage on walls and/or the floor help patrons manage social distancing?
- Could a plastic, see-through barrier/shield be added to the circulation desk?
- Are there meeting rooms and small group spaces that should be closed off to patron use, either because they are too small to accommodate social distancing, or to be repurposed to allow for storing quarantined materials?
- See resources under the Cleaning and Care tab on the State Library's [COVID-19: Information for SD School Libraries](#) webpage and the Classroom Design section on page 7 of the South Dakota Department of Education's [Starting Well 2020: A Guide for Schools](#)

#### **Cleaning/disinfecting and handling materials:**

- How might you plan for cleaning/disinfecting high-touch surfaces to mitigate spread?
- Can hand sanitizer stations be made available at or near the circulation desk, library entry/exit, and bookshelves?
- Is there hard-to-sanitize décor and furnishing such as stuffed animals, pillows, padded chairs, etc. that should be put away for the time being?
- Is there access to shared supplies in the library? If so, consider communicating with classroom teachers and students that they will need to bring their own materials when visiting the library.
- What changes might be needed for book browsing, checkout and return procedures to mitigate spread? Could book drop-off receptacles be placed in the school office, classrooms, and outside of the library? See resources under the Cleaning and Care tab on the State Library's [COVID-19: Information for SD School Libraries](#) webpage.

### **Instructional considerations:**

- What changes might be needed to the way school library staff teach lessons, either in the library or classrooms? Consider your school's plans for social distancing and other mitigation measures. Will there be instances where teachers rotate in and out of classrooms with the goal of minimizing student movement? If so, could library staff who typically teach lessons in the library be part of such rotations?
- How will you manage social distancing when students are in the library?
- How will considerations for safe handling of materials impact what items are used for lessons taught by school library staff?
- What virtual opportunities might be helpful, especially for distance learning? Could you or classroom teachers provide virtual story times or recorded read-alouds?
  - Note: Many educators have questions about reading aloud and recording books online. Are they violating copyright laws? How far does fair use go during a pandemic? In response, many children's publishers have temporarily altered their policies. Find more information on this topic under the Copyright & Fair Use heading on the State Library's [COVID-19: Information for SD School Libraries](#) webpage.
- Can you plan virtual author visits and/or digital field trips that align with units of study?

### **Sharing resources to supplement distance learning:**

- Can school library staff offer curated lists of useful resources to students, teachers, and families navigating a variety of learning formats or to aid in virtual lesson planning?
- Can school library staff offer continuing education for staff with topics related to digital books and tools, research databases and skills, textual literacy, and other forms of literacy, resource selection, etc.? Find more information under the Digital Books and SDSL Databases for K-12 headings on the State Library's [COVID-19: Information for SD School Libraries](#) webpage.
- To better serve students and staff in distance learning situations, have you thought about your library's online presence (i.e. school website, library catalog, learning management system, etc.)?
- Are there ways the school library can partner with local public libraries to ensure students and families have access to needed resources?
- Have you thought about multiple formats (print and digital) for communicating with families, staff, and students, including information on new safety protocols?

### **Resources**

The South Dakota State Library has posted a variety of resources for public and school libraries on its [COVID-19: Information for SD School Libraries](#) and [COVID-19: What SD Libraries Need to Know](#) webpages. Topics include:

- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Book care
- Digital books
- Read-alouds (copyright, fair use)
- Research skills and databases
- Digital tools and activities, and much more

Questions? Contact [Alissa Adams](#), School Library Technology Coordinator. School librarians may also subscribe to the [SD School Library Listserv](#).