

Mari Butler-Abry
Perry School District Librarian

My name is Mari Butler-Abry, and I am the Perry School District librarian and head high school speech coach. Before coming to Perry, I taught secondary English Language Arts in Mount Pleasant. I received my bachelor's from Wartburg College and my master's in School Library from UNI.

As the Perry School District librarian, I follow a specific set of standards. According to the American Association of School Libraries, a librarian's duties fall under four main domains: Think, Create, Share, and Grow. Within these domains, we carry out our duties and shape our libraries under the following six foundations: Engage, Explore, Curate, Collaborate, Include, and Inquire.

These standards and foundations provide a space to create well-prepared learners ready for college, career, and life.

Our school library is an essential part of our learning community, where all members should have access to information and technology that connects learning to real-world events. A robust library provides well-managed resources promoting and fostering inquiry and critical thinking with high-quality materials to encourage lifelong learning and reading.

All learners should be free to speak and hear what others say rather than be limited to only certain ideas and information. Our students and their families deserve access to choose the stories and characters that talk to them. Books and materials serve as windows and doors into other worlds and experiences for growth and learning. They should not be closed based on the preferences of a few.

Strong school communities offer robust materials that are scrutinized for their age relevance and rigor. These decisions are and should remain experts' determinations within the parameters of our school district' approved education standards. Parents and guardians have always been able to participate in their students' learning opportunities. Like other educators, I welcome such participation, even if that includes opting out of specific materials.

We cannot let any particular political or personal viewpoint control learning opportunities for all students. That is the opposite of a strong and vibrant learning community. That is not the Iowa way.