



August 2026

8/20/2026

Welcome, SNL members.

([JOIN OUR MAILING LIST HERE.](#))

Share with your friends so they can join as well.

We promised you periodic information with suggestions of action you might take. Here you go.

Please share questions or

ideas: studentsneedlibraries@gmail.com



Welcome back!

School has started and the HISD Takeover continues to wreak havoc. There are fewer and fewer libraries, leaving way too many HISD students without access to a wide selection of pleasure reading to cement their literacy skills and love of learning.

CVPE continues to lead all kinds of pushback against the state takeover, and every one of us can help them.

Speak at a Board meeting. Block walk for candidates. GET OUT THE VOTE in any way you can. The fastest way to end the takeover is to vote for change in Texas leadership.

Themes today:

- SNL Report & Friends of HISD Libraries
- Getting ready to vote in November
- The Impacts of the HISD Takeover
- Censorship
- Why school libraries matter
- Impacts of AI on all of us, especially K-12 students



SNL reports that 161 HISD campuses had no library services as of May 2026. We have been using 274 as the total number of schools in the district, but 12 have closed, leaving 262 in fall 2026. We do not know what count the district is using, with all the charters of various types. We also do not know yet for this new school year how many schools have designated library staff of any kind. As 2025-26 ended, we counted 22 certified staff, leaving 91 with some indication from campus office staff that a person is named as assigned to the library. However, that assignment does not necessarily mean they are doing library functions. It's a sad state of affairs.



They

FOHL is already working to support the remaining HISD libraries. They are working with HASL (Houston Association of School Librarians) to plan the best supports for HISD library staff for the 2026-27 school year.

Follow <https://www.friendsofhisdlibraries.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/HISDFriends/>



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CVPE Candidate Endorsements (August 11, 2026)

Clearly, the ballot is much longer, but these are the strategic selected candidates endorsed by CVPE because each of them supports the end of the HISD takeover and takeovers more. I attended this meeting and membership vote because it is another way to support the voting process.

- *Gina Hinojosa for Governor*
- *Vikki Goodwin for Lt. Governor*
- *Letitia Plummer for Harris County Judge*
- *Dr. Coretta Mallet-Fontenot for SBOE District 4.*
[Stacy Childs resigned this SBOE seat to run for Alma Allen's seat in TX House District 131.]
- *Michelle Palmer for State Board of Education, District 6*
- *Tiffany Perkinz for State Board of Education, District 7*
- *Michelle Williams for Texas House of Representatives, District 127*
- *Josh Wallenstein for Texas House of Representatives, District 133*

CVPE continues to support and endorse elected officials [they] have previously voted to endorse including State Senator Molly Cook, State Representative Lauren Simmons, State Representative Christina Morales, HISD Trustee Maria Benzon, HISD Trustee Myrna Guidry, HISD Trustee Michael McDonough, and HISD Trustee Felicity Pereyra.

Please be active in this election!

Borrowing from Melissa McDonough's newsletter (TX CD38, [Aug 17, 2027](#), p.2): *"Voting isn't just about the h profile top of the ticket." You'll have local judges, county commissioners, and smaller state-wide races like the new 15th Court of Appeals. "Every single one of these choices directly impacts your local infrastructure, taxation, public safety and daily life. Leaving half of your ballot blank hands your voice over to someone else. ... "Every line [on every ballot] matters." Do your homework. Use your voting voice.*

CVPE's Blog

This

CVPE blog: [A Higher Rating Means Little if Students are Learning Less](#) by Ruth Kravetz (Aug. 14, 2026) can help you to be better informed.

A longtime principal friend said if you do something that helps kids and helps the school ratings, do that thing.

But if it helps the ratings and harms kids, do not do that thing.

But HISD keeps doing that thing that is not best for students. Read the whole blog.

And now, back to LIBRARIES! We'll start with censorship and understanding the First Amendment.

This



bans

understand what it means.

[James and the Giant Ban](#) (ACLU, [Know Your Rights University](#))

video series is perfect to explain the First Amendment to middle grade students – and even adults. *James and the Giant Ban* is 6 minutes focus specifically on book bans, but the series offers a broad introduction in sh cleverly presented clips. Share these with your kids and neighbors! Boo and censorship are in the news. Students - and their adults - need to

True



and

books from public schools. But Texas has also promulgated a list of texts that every student has to read, including Ray Bradbury's [Fahrenheit 451](#)."

[Texas is right. Everyone should read 'Fahrenheit 451'](#) by Jonathan Zimmerman.

(*Chicago Tribune*, July 23, 2026; this should be a gift link)

story: The state that has led the nation in book bans is requiring all high school students to read the most famous literary attack on book banning. It's stranger tha fiction. I'm talking about Texas, where state laws barring "indecent or profane cont diversity, equity and inclusion programming have led to the purging of over 1,700

Moving on, **why do LIBRARIES MATTER?** Access to a wide variety of resources builds literacy skills, fluency and curiosity!

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[Finding the Right Book is Not Enough](#) (Madison's Library, 27, 2026)

don't believe finding the right book is the only key. not enough and it's not the magic bullet we hope it

is. So, I've started to adjust my saying. Because this saying silences the perspective of all those out there that really struggle to read. That struggle to keep the lines still on the page, to decode sounds, to use word recognition to turn letters into pictures inside their heads. Because, yes, the right book helps, but if you can't read or read well, the perfect book is still unreadable.

...

...to help take some of that pressure off, to start to make visible and recognize those struggles, ... I also suggest they may not have found the right format (ebooks, audiobooks, books with coloured pages and dyslexia font, graphic novels, poetry), and they may face challenges that make reading hard and might need extra help, or they may need to work through some of the things they've been told that are not true (like they are not a good reader, or that they shouldn't read audiobooks).

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NOTE: I [DH] posted this KQ piece to the [SNL FB page \(July 1, 2026\)](#) with this explanation: "Why Student Choice Matters in School Libraries" may be the sub the [next] post, but it is the bit that held my attention **as we Texans realize little choice students will have about their reading in school now that we be held to a statewide curriculum.**

Every student has the capacity to become a reader when they are given access, choice, and permission to find what speaks to them.

If only the TX SBOE understood that. Or the state legislature that could (in a more perfect world) mandate school librarians for every campus! Please read up on the Bluebonnet curriculum and the new mandated req

[You](#)

and



the experience.

[Don't Have to Love Every Book: Why Student Choice Matters](#) by Nicole Hogan. (AASL KQ, June 4, 2026)

Reading is not only about decoding words on a pag

connection. When students have ownership over w invested in

Student choice helps students:

- *feel more confident in their reading lives*
- *build stronger reading habits*
- *develop curiosity*
- *see reading as something they can enjoy, not just something they are required to do*
- *begin to understand who they are as readers*

...

The reality is, there is not one perfect book for every student.

But there is a book, format, topic, character, series, or story that can help each student feel like reading might be for them after all.

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According to research, curiosity may not be what we thought it was. It's not just a basic human drive for knowledge that we can assume is pre-installed and active in every human being big and small. It's something that needs to be switched on.

So what switches curiosity on?

Doubt.

Doubt arises when we realize we don't know as much as we think we do.

Curious Thing About Doubt: How to Switch On a Love of Learning by Andy J. Pizza (AASL KQ, June 15, 2026)

HISD kids NEED curiosity to be successful learners and s
"not knowing" is what unlocked my [author Andy Pizza]
curiosity when I read that pop-quantum physics article th
friend gave me. It wasn't discovering the wild stuff we
knew, it was being introduced to the
paradoxical nature of knowledge itself—and how "the mo
know, the more we realize we don't know."



And we must mention AI – it is everywhere. And each of these links underlines the need for every K-12 student to have a fully stocked school library and a certified school librarian to teach them how to navigate research with the right questions.



[The Conversation Shapes the Answer](#) by Elissa Malespina.

(The AI School Librarians Newsletter, July 7, 2026) Part 1 of 6 in the series *The AI Conversation Check*.

Students [and their adults] aren't simply using artificial intelligence to find information anymore. They're participating in conversations that help shape the information AI gives back to them.

When students search a library catalog, read a book, explore a database, or evaluate a website, the information already exists. Their job is to determine whether it is accurate, credible, relevant, and complete. The questions they ask help them discover information, but they don't change the source itself.

Generative AI works differently.

Every prompt, every follow-up question, every clarification, and every assumption becomes part of an ongoing conversation. That conversation influences the response students receive. The answer isn't simply retrieved. It's generated within the context of the interaction. In other words, students aren't just consuming information. They're helping shape it.

Ms. Malespina offers this handy framework to help us all. You can download it from the post. *The framework isn't designed to tell students whether they should trust or distrust AI. Instead, it encourages them to pause before accepting the first answer they receive and reflect on the conversation that shaped it.*



"The internet cannot report. It can only repeat. And as AI (or rather "AI") enters the picture, it will not even repeat what people once reported – it will invent what people want to hear."

Thank you, Timothy Snyder. (*On Freedom*, p. 186. Crown, 2024)



When the White House Rewrites Jan 6: Why librarians no longer treat official timelines as historical fact
Elissa Malespina. (AI School Librarian, Jan 8, 2026 [revisited on Aug 10, 2026](#))

"How do we teach students to evaluate information when even official sources require verification?"

Information literacy is no longer just about finding reliable

recognizing framing, comparing evidence, and teaching students that trust should be earned through verification, not assumed because of where information is published."

BACK

Summer's over – well, except the heat. This issue offers six themes to

Students Need Libraries in HISD Newsletter, August 2026

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- The Impacts of the HISD Takeover
- Censorship
- Why school libraries matter
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It's a lot – but our kids are worth it! We, their adults, have to do our best to stay on top of the issues to return strong schools and strong school libraries to Houston ISD.