

# Effectively Aligning with a District's Vision to Develop Future-Ready Students



## Boise School District develops critical thinking and information literacy with Gale resources

It makes sense to Natasha Rush why her Idaho district chose to implement Gale's suite of resources systemwide, including at Boise High, where she serves as a certified teacher librarian and building technology lead.

"We have a goal at Boise School District to create future-ready students so they can find good information and use critical-thinking skills to be productive members of society," she says. "We found that Gale's resources allow us to do just that."

### Teachers embrace Gale resources

Many of these efforts are driven by student-led research projects and classroom activities. To support the district strategic plan of "giving students choice in their learning," Rush collaborated with every ELA teacher to incorporate Gale resources into the curriculum. Gale resources are also implemented in social studies, science, and multilanguage classrooms—as well as used for AP and SAT prep.

"Once I go into each classroom with Gale for the first time, the teachers say, 'Oh, this is so great!'" recounts Rush. "Every one of Gale's features is such a selling point for our teachers."



Additionally, the curation of Gale resources by subject matter experts and the grade-appropriate content provide peace of mind for faculty, staff, and administrators, who may have concerns about teachers sourcing their own content. "There's value in handing information to kids and knowing that you won't get in trouble for sharing it," says Rush. "Gale resources provide that level of security."

And with 77 percent of teachers nationwide creating their own supplemental materials,<sup>1</sup> district librarian Erin Downey also sees the value. "It's so important to make sure teachers and students have access to a variety of supplemental materials that we know are credible, traceable to a reputable source, vetted by experts, and organized in a way that makes them easy to find."

1. Bay View Analytics, "[Curricula of Many Sources](#)," 2023.

### Fact-checking TikTok

With built-in scaffolding and student-favorite features like citation tools, Google integration, and topic browse searching, Rush finds that **Gale In Context** resources act as "training wheels" for students. Whether they're interested in the mental health of teenagers, the effects of school start times, or what it's like to be a college athlete, this extra support is crucial because the hardest skill for her students is to learn *how* to search.

"It's all about getting students to understand that where they're getting their information is just as important as what information they're getting," says Rush. "Facebook isn't a source. Instagram isn't a source. And if you're thinking about unemployment rates because of what Joe Blow on TikTok told you, we should jump into *Gale In Context* and look up information that has been vetted and checked. This is the first step toward **information literacy**."

### Facilitating civic engagement

Boise High School students used Gale resources to research ongoing legislation and took what they learned to the capitol building located just a block from their school to engage in civic debate.

"My kids are really politically charged," says Natasha, who refers to herself as the fun aunt of the school because of how comfortable students feel coming to her. She explained that her students are passionate about issues that affect them and have a strong desire to be active citizens. But with the rampant spread of mis-, dis-, and mal-information, she makes a point of "helping them find accurate information and properly fact-checked data with Gale."

"Being able to sort information, ask questions about where it comes from, and determine its credibility is a critical-thinking skill that affects not only students' academic performance but also their ability to function in society and be future-ready adults," she said. "The amount of information they have access to is only going to increase, and teaching them how to handle that information responsibly is of the utmost importance."

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