

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



SALT LAKE CITY, UT — The Utah Educational Library Media Association (UELMA) in partnership with the Utah Library Association (ULA) is promoting **FREADom** to Read Week (Oct 1-7th) as a parallel celebration to the American Library Association’s National Banned Book Week. The intent of **FREADom** to Read Week is to celebrate the Constitutional freedoms of all Utahns to access information and stories without the censorship of ideas or perspectives. UELMA and ULA, as state associations, strongly advocate for the protection of the Constitution and the First Amendment, principles that safeguard the free flow of ideas in school and public libraries and are a foundation of our democracy. Young learners and their families have First Amendment rights of speech and expression; school and public libraries offer equitable access to a wide range of age-appropriate materials and the opportunity for young learners and their families to exercise their intellectual freedoms to inquire, study, and evaluate information and stories through reading.

FREADom to Read Week celebrates the [power of choice and self-selection](#), which allows a young learner and their family to locate and access titles that are a right fit for them. Librarians and their libraries are partners with parents and their children in providing opportunities for learning through imagination by providing access to popular fiction and for learning through information through the reading of high-interest nonfiction.

[Research](#) shows that reading is an essential academic skill, maybe even the most important, because if a young learner can read well, they can learn anything. To support the acquisition of reading competency and to foster the love of reading, a young learner needs a place to practice reading skills outside of the school classroom, just like an athlete may need a field or a gym to practice their sport. School and public libraries offer that space for young learners to practice reading under the guidance of their parents, a place where all young learners have equitable access to the information and stories that represent their family’s lived experiences and support both their academic pursuits and personal interests--school and public libraries help make young learners' hopes and dreams come true.

Join UELMA and ULA in celebrating the **FREADom** to Read during the week of October 1-7, 2023.

Attached are PDFs for use in promoting **FREADom** to Read Week.

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