

# Jennifer Steil

*Bethlehem Central School District  
Delmar, NY*



Jennifer Steil is a middle school English teacher at Bethlehem Central School District in Delmar, NY, with 28 years of experience in education. She brings a deep passion for literacy to her classroom, where she works hard to inspire students to see themselves as readers and writers. Jennifer is completing a Certificate of Advanced Study in Literacy at the University at Albany, where she also teaches graduate literacy courses and mentors future educators. She is actively involved in literacy leadership, currently serving as Treasurer of the Albany City Area Reading Council, and contributes to professional scholarship, including publishing a book review in *Language and Literacy Spectrum* and a chapter in *Critical Literacy/Critical Teaching* (Dozier,

Johnston, & Rogers, 2006).

Jennifer believes that creating a reading culture in the classroom isn't just about making books available—it's about building a space where books are shared and enjoyed. She works to develop a literacy-rich environment that offers engaging, relevant titles for all students. Her goal is for students to see their own experiences and identities reflected on the shelves, while also showing them new perspectives. When reading is celebrated as an act of joy rather than a task to complete, students are more likely to want to read. Jennifer also feels strongly about the value of family involvement and runs a book club for the grownups of her students, reading and discussing middle grade books trending in her classroom. The Book Love Foundation grant is supporting Jennifer's ongoing efforts to develop a joyful, inclusive reading culture by expanding her high-interest classroom library and centering equity in her literacy instruction.