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The Washington Library Association (WLA) as a chapter of the American Library Association (ALA) upholds the values of intellectual freedom, [the freedom to read](#), and [freedom from censorship](#) as protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. WLA is opposed to efforts that restrict, ban, remove, and/or censor books and other materials in an attempt to limit the freedom to read or obstruct intellectual freedom.

WLA is alarmed at the rise in formal and informal complaints regarding materials in Washington school and public library collections. Nationally, libraries and communities are having similar experiences, as seen on the [ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom \(OIF\) Blog](#) site, which weekly outlines challenges across the United States. Since June 1, 2021, OIF has tracked 155 unique censorship incidents.

WLA stands with ALA in strongly condemning acts of censorship and intimidation. We are committed to protecting library professionals' provision of materials and information that represent all points of view, current and historical. Library professionals should challenge censorship, as books and resources are provided to all people for their interest, information, and enlightenment.

WLA recognizes that not every book is right for every reader. We maintain that parents have the right to set reading parameters for their own children; however, no one person or group has the right to determine what is best for any other child, and every child should have access to books they want to read. Access to a wide variety of reading materials increase the chances that children will become lifelong learners who choose to read.

Washington state public librarians and teacher-librarians are professionals trained to select materials to meet the needs of a broad and diverse community. The selection of materials is guided by collection development policies and guidelines from ALA. In addition, public libraries and school districts have reconsideration policies and procedures for constituents wishing to request review of specific materials. These procedures should be followed each and every time a request to review or remove materials are made.

WLA stands in full support of our members and affirms their professional expertise in selecting materials.



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## Resources

ALA Freedom to Read Statement:

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

Texas Library Association Freedom to Read Statement

<https://txla.org/news/the-freedom-to-read-is-a-right-and-must-be-protected/>

New York Library Association

<https://www.nyla.org/nyla-position-statement-on-the-defense-of-intellectual-freedom/?menukey=nyla>

Georgia Library Association - Utilizing Engage

<https://twitter.com/GLALibrary/status/1466069257737879564>

Tennessee Library Association

<https://www.tnla.org/news/584210/Position-Statement-on-the-Censorship-of-Books-in-School-Libraries-in-Tennessee.htm>