

# LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

## ★ ARTICLE 1

Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

## ★ ARTICLE 2

Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

## ★ ARTICLE 3

Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

## ★ ARTICLE 4

Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

## ★ ARTICLE 5

A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

## ★ ARTICLE 6

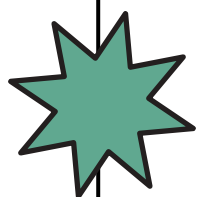
Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

## ★ ARTICLE 7

All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

*Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.  
Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.*

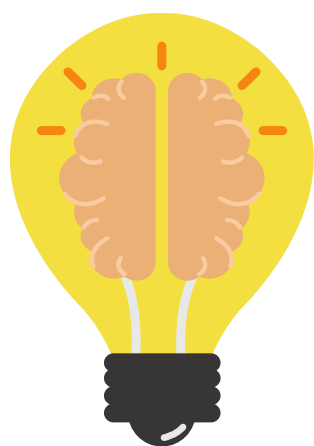
"Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, June 30, 2006.  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill> (Accessed November 2, 2021)



# ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES & SERVICES



The fundamental mission of libraries is to provide access to information, regardless of content or format, to everyone.



## ★ RIGHTS OF USERS

Users' access to digital resources and services should not be restricted or denied for expressing, receiving, creating, or participating in constitutionally protected speech.

## ★ RIGHTS OF USERS

Information retrieved, utilized, or created digitally is constitutionally protected unless determined otherwise by a court of competent jurisdiction. These rights extend to minors as well as adults.<sup>2</sup>



## ★ RIGHTS OF USERS

As libraries increasingly provide access to digital resources through third-party vendors, libraries have a responsibility to hold vendors accountable for protecting patrons' privacy.



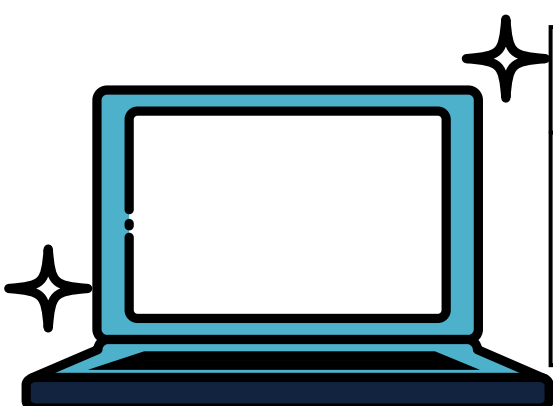
## ★ EQUITY OF ACCESS

Digital resources, services, training, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the library should be readily and equitably accessible to all library users.



## ★ INFORMATION RESOURCES

Libraries, acting within their mission and objectives, should support access to information on all subjects that serve the needs or interests of each user, regardless of the user's age or the content of the material.



## ★ INFORMATION RESOURCES

Libraries and library workers should not deny or limit access to digital resources because of their allegedly controversial content or because of a library worker's personal beliefs or fear of confrontation.



## ★ INFORMATION RESOURCES

Minors also retain the right to access constitutionally protected information and, at a minimum, have the right to ask the library or librarian to provide access to erroneously blocked information in a timely and confidential manner.



*Adopted January 24, 1996 by the ALA Council; amended January 19, 2005; July 15, 2009 under previous name "Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks"; and June 25, 2019. References to cited policies have been updated on November 6, 2018.*

"Access to Digital Resources and Services: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, July 7, 2006.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/digital> (Accessed November 2, 2021)

# ACCESS TO LIBRARY RESOURCES & SERVICES FOR MINORS

The American Library Association supports equal and equitable access to all library resources and services by users of all ages.

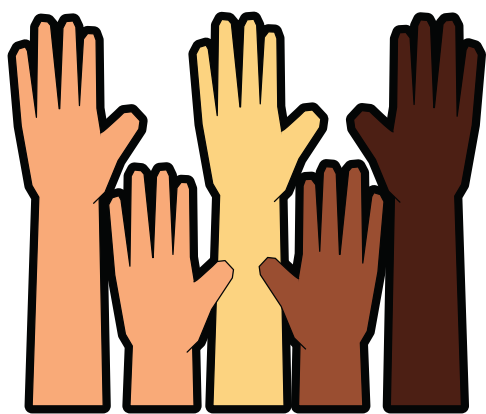


## ★ RIGHTS OF USERS

The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

## ★ RIGHTS OF USERS

Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, emancipatory or other legal status of users violates Article V.



## ★ LIBRARY RESPONSIBILITY

School and public libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and resources to meet the diverse interests and informational needs of the communities they serve.

## ★ LIBRARY RESPONSIBILITY

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them.



## ★ LIBRARY RESPONSIBILITY

A library's failure to acquire materials on the grounds that minors may be able to access those materials diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

## ★ INFORMATION ACCESS

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, social media, online applications, games, technologies, programming, and other formats.



## ★ PARENT RIGHTS

Libraries and their governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies shall ensure that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children's—and only their children's—access to library resources.

*Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 under previous name "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; July 1, 2014; and June 25, 2019.*

"Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, July 26, 2006.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/minors> (Accessed November 2, 2021)

# ACCESS TO RESOURCES & SERVICES IN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

The school library plays a unique role in promoting, protecting, and educating about intellectual freedom.



## ★ ROLE OF SCHOOL LIBRARIAN

School librarians assume a leadership role in promoting the principles of intellectual freedom within the school by providing resources and services that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry.

## ★ INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

Intellectual freedom is fostered by educating students in the use of critical thinking skills to empower them to pursue free inquiry responsibly and independently.



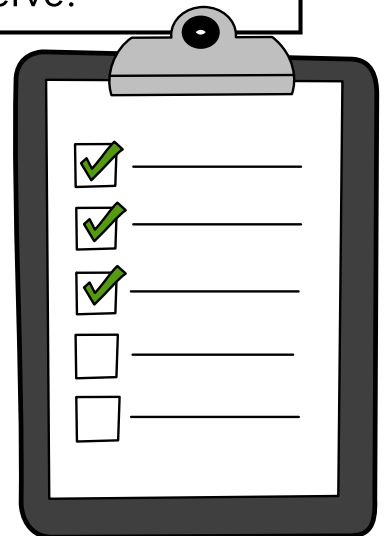
## ★ COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

School and public libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and resources to meet the diverse interests and informational needs of the communities they serve.



## ★ COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

These collections provide resources that support the mission of the school district and are consistent with its philosophy, goals, and objectives.



## ★ COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Resources in school library collections are an integral component of the curriculum and represent diverse points of view on both current and historical issues.



## ★ COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Members of the school community involved in the collection development process employ educational criteria to select resources unfettered by their personal, political, social, or religious views.



## ★ STUDENT RIGHTS

School librarians resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear, or access regardless of technology, formats or method of delivery.



*Adopted July 2, 1986, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 12, 2000; January 19, 2005; July 2, 2008; and July 1, 2014.*

"Access to Resources and Services in the School Library: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, May 29, 2007.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/accessresources> (Accessed November 2, 2021)



# DIVERSE COLLECTIONS

A diverse collection should contain content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically reflect a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences.

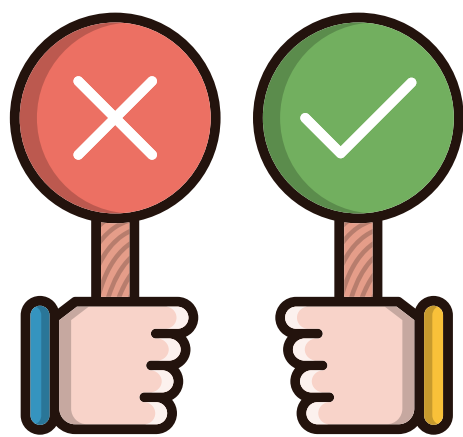


## ★ LIBRARY RESPONSIBILITY

Library workers have an obligation to select, maintain, and support access to content on subjects by diverse authors and creators that meets—as closely as possible—the needs, interests, and abilities of all the people the library serves.

## ★ ETHICS

Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be proactively inclusive in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan where offered.

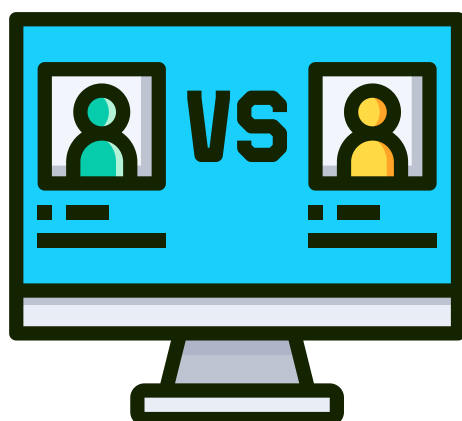


## ★ COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

A well-balanced collection does not require a one-to-one equivalence for each viewpoint but should strive for equity in content and ideas that takes both structural inequalities and the availability of timely, accurate materials into account.

## ★ COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Developing a diverse collection requires: selecting content in multiple formats; considering resources from self-published, independent, small, and local producers; seeking content created by and representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups; evaluating how diverse collection resources are cataloged, labeled, and displayed; including content in all of the languages used in the community that the library serves, when possible; and providing resources in formats that meet the needs of users with disabilities.



## ★ COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Best practices in collection development assert that materials should not be excluded from a collection solely because the content or its creator may be considered offensive or controversial.

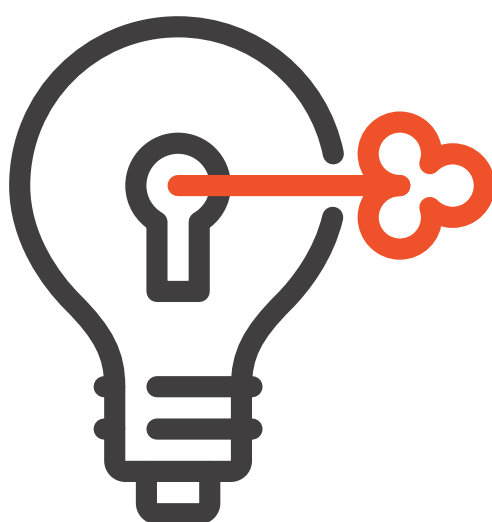
## ★ DEFEND AGAINST CHALLENGES

Libraries have a responsibility to defend against challenges that limit a collection's diversity of content.



## ★ INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

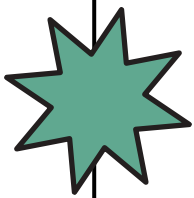
Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to varying expressions of ideas through which a question, cause, or movement may be explored.



*Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014 under previous name "Diversity in Collection Development"; and June 24, 2019.*

"Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, July 26, 2006.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/diversecollections> (Accessed November 2, 2021)



# CHALLENGED RESOURCES



The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined written policy for collection development that includes a procedure for review of challenged resources.



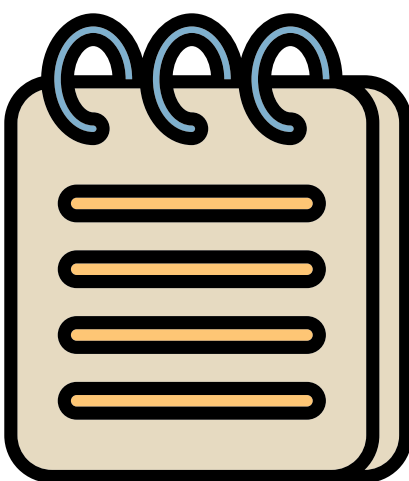
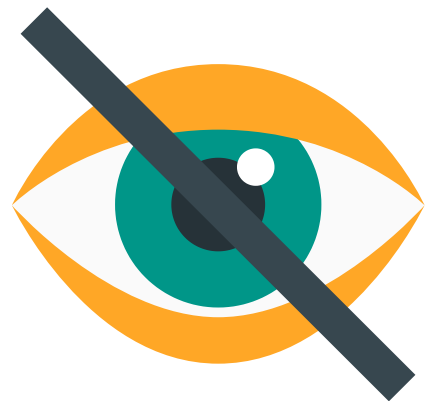
## LEGALITY OF CHALLENGES

Freedom of expression, although it can be offensive to some, is protected by the Constitution of the United States.



## RECONSIDERATION

The Supreme Court has held that the Constitution requires a procedure designed to critically examine all challenged expression before it can be suppressed.



## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

This procedure should be open, transparent, and conform to all applicable open meeting and public records laws. Challenged resources should remain in the collection, and access to the resources remain unrestricted during the review process.



## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

These collections provide resources that support the mission of the school district and are consistent with its philosophy, goals, and objectives.



## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Resources that meet the criteria for selection and inclusion within the collection as outlined in the institution's collections policy should not be removed.



## STUDENT RIGHTS

Attempts to remove or suppress materials by library staff or members of the library's governing body that are not regulated or sanctioned by law are considered "extralegal."



## STUDENT RIGHTS

Procedures to review challenges to library resources should not be used to suppress constitutionally protected expression.

*The quoted language in this interpretation from "Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights" (adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014 under previous name "Diversity in Collection Development"; and June 25, 2019) was updated to reflect the June 2019 revision. This change was voted on by the Intellectual Freedom Committee.*

"Challenged Resources: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights", American Library Association, July 26, 2006. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/challenged-resources> (Accessed November 4, 2021)