

Statement Against Censorship Attempts

The Alabama Library Association (ALLA) has watched with concern the growing number of organized attempts at censorship and suppression in schools and libraries in the State of Alabama and across the country. Many of these attacks are targeting materials and programs that address race, racism, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression. In some instances, challengers have requested the destruction of material they deem contradicts their personal beliefs. Even more concerning, we have noted the increase in public harassment, verbal attacks and threats to library employees and board members.

ALLA categorically rejects all efforts to censor or restrict access to materials from any library, based on content. We strongly affirm our historic professional values of providing free access to books, resources, and services for the interest, information, education, and enlightenment of all people within the communities we serve. We do not exclude materials because of their origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

These efforts have often been fueled by misinformation and misrepresentation of how libraries operate. Library workers are trained to curate collections that are designed to be inclusive. As information service providers, we are guided by the tenets of intellectual freedom, and our ethical responsibilities to uphold the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America. Through careful consideration and rigorous training, librarians and library workers are equipped to make selection decisions that represent a balance of the spectrum of knowledge.

We acknowledge the right and responsibility of parents and guardians to guide the reading choices of their children. Such rights should not in any way inhibit the rights of others to read or view materials of their choosing.

We reject past, current, and future efforts to remove access to materials from consenting readers. Concerted efforts by groups who disavow racial equality, self-determination, and/or gender identity and expression, undermines intellectual freedom. In addition, such efforts inhibit knowledge and place barriers to learning.

ALLA stands alongside all Alabama libraries, community members, government officials, and students as they fight to protect Alabama citizens' right to read freely.