

### **53.1.3**

**At the 2008 ALA Annual Conference, upon recommendation by the Council Intellectual Freedom Committee, the ALA Council adopted the following revision to ALA Policy 53.1.3, Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media:**

**53.1.3** 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. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School library media specialists resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear, or access via electronic means. Adopted 1986, amended 1990, 2000, 2005, 2008.

(See "Current Reference File": Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: revised, 2007-2008 ALA CD#19.3.)

## **Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program**

### **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

The school library media program plays a unique role in promoting intellectual freedom. It serves as a point of voluntary access to information and ideas and as a learning laboratory for students as they acquire critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed in a pluralistic society. Although the educational level and program of the school necessarily shape the resources and services of a school library media program, the principles of the *Library Bill of Rights* apply equally to all libraries, including school library media programs. Under these principles, all students have equitable access to library facilities, resources, and instructional programs.

School library media specialists 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. School library media specialists work closely with teachers to integrate instructional activities in classroom units designed to equip students to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas effectively. Intellectual freedom is fostered by educating students in the use of critical thinking skills to empower them to pursue free inquiry responsibly and independently. Through resources, programming, and educational processes, students and teachers experience the free and robust debate characteristic of a democratic society.

School library media specialists cooperate with other individuals in building collections of resources that meet the needs as well as the developmental and maturity levels of students. These collections provide resources that support the mission of the school district and are consistent with its philosophy, goals, and objectives. Resources in school library media collections are an integral component of the curriculum and represent diverse points of view on both current and historical issues. These resources include materials that support the intellectual growth, personal development, individual interests, and recreational needs of students.

While English is, by history and tradition, the customary language of the United States, the languages in use in any given community may vary. Schools serving communities in which other languages are used make efforts to accommodate the needs of students for whom English is a second language. To support these efforts, and to ensure equitable access to resources and services, the school library media program provides resources that reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community.

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. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School library media specialists resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear, or access via electronic means.

Major barriers between students and resources include but are not limited to imposing age or grade level restrictions on the use of resources; limiting the use of interlibrary loan and access to electronic information; charging fees for information in specific formats; requiring permission from parents or teachers; establishing restricted shelves or closed collections; and labeling. Policies, procedures, and rules related to the use of resources and services support free and open access to information.

The school board adopts policies that guarantee students access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies, developed by persons in the school community, provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. School library media specialists implement district policies and procedures in the school.

2008

Adopted July 2, 1986; amended January 10, 1990; July 12, 2000, by the ALA Council.

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revised by Council  
at the 2005 Midwinter Mtg

## Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program

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While English is, by history and tradition, the customary language of the United States, the languages in use in any given community may vary. Schools serving communities in which other languages are used make efforts to accommodate the needs of students for whom English is a second language. To support these efforts, and to ensure equal access to resources and services, the school library media program provides resources that reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community.

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. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School library media specialists resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear, or access via electronic means.

Major barriers between students and resources include but are not limited to imposing age, grade-level, or reading-level restrictions on the use of resources; limiting the use of interlibrary loan and access to electronic information; charging fees for information in specific formats; requiring permission from parents or teachers; establishing restricted shelves or closed collections; and labeling. Policies, procedures, and rules related to the use of resources and services support free and open access to information.

It is the responsibility of the governing board to adopt policies that guarantee students access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies, developed by persons in the school community, provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. It is the responsibility of school library media specialists to implement district policies and procedures in the school to ensure equitable access to resources and services for all students.

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Adopted July 2, 1986, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 12, 2000; January 19, 2005.

REPORT TO COUNCIL  
POLICY MONITORING COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 2001

In accordance with policy 5.6 of the *ALA Policy Handbook*, the Policy/Handbook Monitoring Committee (PMC) has reviewed all actions taken by the ALA Council during the 2000 Annual Conference for possible incorporation into, addition to, or changes to the *ALA Policy Handbook*. Based on Council action during the aforesaid meeting, the following additions and changes are recommended:

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Item 1. Based on CD#19.4, submitted by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee, approved by the consent of Council, the PMC recommends Policy 53.1.15 (Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Gender or Sexual Orientation) be amended to read:**

The American Library Association stringently and unequivocally maintains that libraries and librarians have an obligation to resist efforts that systematically exclude materials dealing with any subject matter, including gender or sexual orientation. The Association also encourages librarians to proactively support the First Amendment rights of all library users regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Adopted 1993. Revised 2000.

(See "Current Reference File": Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Gender or Sexual Orientation: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 1999-2000 CD#19.4)

**Item 2. Based on CD#19.4, submitted by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee, approved by the consent of Council, the PMC recommends Policy 53.1.3 (Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program) be amended to read:**

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. Students and educators served by the school library media program have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval and which reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community. School library media professionals resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear or access via electronic means. Adopted 1986, revised 1990, 2000.

(See "Current Reference File": Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 1999-2000 CD#19.4)

**Item 3. Based on CD#19.4, submitted by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee, approved by the consent of Council, the PMC recommends Policy 53.1.10 (Library Initiated Programs as a Resource) be amended to read:**

A policy on library initiated programming should set forth the library's commitment to free access to information and ideas for all users. Library staff select programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Libraries servicing multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those for whom English is a second language. Adopted 1982, revised 1990, 2000.

(See "Current Reference File": Library Initiated Programs as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 1999-2000 #CD19.4)

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**Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program**  
**working draft; do not quote for publication**  
An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

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Although the educational level and program of the school necessarily shapes the resources and services of a school library media program, the principles of the *Library Bill of Rights* apply equally to all libraries, including school library media programs.

School library media professionals 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. School library media professionals work closely with teachers to integrate instructional activities in classroom units designed to equip students to locate, evaluate, and use a broad range of ideas [effectively]. Through resources, programming, and educational processes, students and teachers experience the free and robust debate characteristic of a democratic society.

School library media professionals cooperate with other individuals in building collections of resources, appropriate to the development and maturity levels of students. These collections provide resources which support the curriculum and are consistent with the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the school district. Resources in school library media collections represent diverse points of view on current as well as historical issues.

While English is, by history and tradition, the customary language of the United States, the languages in use in any given community may vary. Schools serving communities in which other languages are used make efforts to accommodate the needs of students for whom English is a second language. To support these efforts, and to ensure equal access to resources and services, the school library media program provides resources which reflect the linguistic pluralism of the community.

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Major barriers between students and resources include [but are not limited to]: imposing age or grade level restrictions on the use of resources, limiting the use of interlibrary loan and access to electronic information, charging fees for information in specific formats, requiring permission from parents or teachers, establishing restricted shelves or closed collections, and labeling. Policies, procedures, and rules related to the use of resources and services support free and open access to information.

The school board adopts policies that guarantee students access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies, developed by persons in the school community, provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. School library media professionals implement district policies and procedures in the school.

Adopted July 2, 1986; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES IN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY  
MEDIA PROGRAM

*An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS*

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The school board adopts policies that guarantee student access to a broad range of ideas. These include policies on collection development and procedures for the review of resources about which concerns have been raised. Such policies, developed by persons in the school community, <sup>and the community at large</sup> provide for a timely and fair hearing and assure <sup>freely</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>examined</sup> that procedures are applied equitably to all expressions of concern. School library media professionals implement district policies and procedures in the school.

Adopted June 26, 1986

AASL Directors Board

Approved by the Intellectual Freedom Committee, June 28.

ALSC, ALTA, PLA, YASD, IFRT  
ALACOUNCIL

REVIEWED FOR CONFORMANCE WITH  
GUIDELINES

by Council Resolutions Committee