INTELLECTUAL freedom Matters for Librarians & Library Staff

KNOW YOUR POLICIES

- IJJ - Instructional + Library Materials Selection
- IJJ-E - Challenge of Instructional Materials form
- IMB - Teaching About Controversial - Sensitive Topics
- IMBB - Exemption from Required Instruction

Question: Does your policy require the concern to be filed by a resident?

Key Point: Individual staff members do not have the authority to remove a book from the library, classroom, or instructional program because of a complaint.

KNOW YOUR ORGANIZATIONS

The American Library Association (ALA)
The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom
National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC)

Educate Maine
Maine Department of Education (Maine DOE)
Maine Association of Middle Level Educators (MAMLE)
Maine Association of School Libraries (MASL)
Maine Council for English Language Arts (MCELA)
Maine Curriculum Leaders Association (MCLA)
Maine Education Association (MEA)
Maine Principals’ Association (MPA)
Maine School Boards Association (MSBA)
Maine School Superintendent Association (MSSA)
University of Maine College of Education and Human Development (UMCOEHD)

KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

NEED MORE SUPPORT?

Joint Statement of Commitment and Support of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Maine Schools (Maine DOE) - https://tinyurl.com/vzmwutnc
Intellectual Freedom: Book Challenges (MASL) - https://tinyurl.com/mtjsxjhe
MASL Supports School Libraries in their Efforts to Provide Diverse Reading Choices for all Students - https://tinyurl.com/2ncnju25
Freedom to Read Statement (ALA): https://tinyurl.com/279rm86z
Teachers are being silenced. What can be done about it? (Jennifer Gonzalez): https://tinyurl.com/2p88v7ch
Why Penny Kittle Won’t Censor Books (NCTE): https://tinyurl.com/54t23p9n

START WITH THE MAINE LEARNING RESULTS
Maine law since 1947, revised in 2011
https://tinyurl.com/mt3h4j5y

“...The FINAL AUTHORITY as to what materials an individual student will be exposed to rests with THAT STUDENT’S PARENTS OR GUARDIANS.”
From Policy IJJ

“... AT NO TIME will the wishes of one child’s parents INFRINGE on OTHER PARENTS’ RIGHTS to permit their children to read or view the same material.”

https://tinyurl.com/mt3h4j5y
“Many expressions of concern end after the individual has had an opportunity to express personal feelings about a library resource. The person only wanted to be heard and have his opinions acknowledged. No further action is needed. If this is the case, thank the person for their interest, make notes about the conversation, and file them for future reference.”
American Library Association, https://tinyurl.com/yuat7t9y

“Listen and ask questions. Asking questions allows you to better understand where people are coming from, show you’re listening and potentially de-escalate and change the tone of the conversation.”
Education Minnesota, https://tinyurl.com/2p8bnrhf

“Have you read the book?”
Claudette Brassil, retired Maine English Teacher and winner of the National Council of Teachers of English Intellectual Freedom Award

“We want to make clear that we support equity for all students when it comes to their opportunity to learn. Equity of opportunity is defined as what is needed for students – based on the task or situation at hand. The push for equity of opportunity for all students should not be mislabeled as Critical Race Theory (CRT) – a term dating back to the 1970’s and one that is no longer used in public education.”
Five Town CSD/ MSAD28, https://tinyurl.com/ycknhra8

“No matter our color, background, or ZIP code, we want our children to have an education that teaches honestly about who we are, integrity in how we treat others, and courage to do what’s right.”
Education Minnesota, https://tinyurl.com/2p8bnrhf

“Listen courteously and refer complainants to the teacher involved who can address any concerns about sensitive material. Teachers can best explain the educational purpose of the contested material and its appropriateness to students’ intellectual maturity. If the complainant is not satisfied, invite them to initiate the formal reconsideration process by submitting a written request.”
National Coalition Against Censorship, https://tinyurl.com/2d37fmn2

“As teachers and librarians, we have a responsibility to serve all of the kids who come to us. We have a responsibility to offer literature choices that speak to all of them and meet all of their diverse needs.”
Kate Messner, https://tinyurl.com/yc2preh9

“When children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read, or when the images they see are distorted, negative, or laughable, they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society of which they are a part.”
Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop

“If you object to books about hunting for your own child (let’s say you’re an animal rights activist), you have every right to be in contact with the librarian and your child’s teacher to express that preference and ask for alternatives for your child. But for a kid who hunts, these books about families who hunt, and books about hunting, tracking, or butchering game, are relevant and reflect their lived experience. Readers of all ages deserve to find that in their libraries. No parent should have the right to dictate what another parent’s child can read, view or listen to.”
Iris Eichenlaub, Librarian and 2017 Knox County Teacher of the Year