The University School of Nashville Library Collection Policy

This policy covers acquisitions, management, access and deaccessioning of library materials in multiple formats.

Introduction:

University School of Nashville is a non-sectarian, coeducational pre-primary through twelfth grade private school located in the heart of the city’s university area.

Mission statement:

*University School of Nashville models the best educational practices. In an environment that represents the cultural and ethnic composition of Greater Nashville, USN fosters each student’s intellectual, artistic and athletic potential, valuing and inspiring integrity, creative expression, a love of learning, and the pursuit of excellence.*

University School of Nashville Guiding Principles (2001) - From updated strategic plan:

1. Learning should be student-centered, active and in depth, to engender understanding.
2. Collaboration across disciplines and age groups enhances learning.
3. Inclusion of multicultural perspectives broadens and deepens opportunities for learning.
4. Good schooling promotes responsible citizenship and service beyond self.
5. Learning should be sequential and developmental, connecting factual content with cognitive process.
6. Creating connections with the family and community improves learning.
7. Good schooling helps students build a foundation for further study and a passion for learning.

Key elements of a USN’s philosophy of education*:

- Students are encouraged and expected to exercise an increasingly large measure of initiative and self-discipline as they mature.
- Fundamental concern for the student as an individual underlies the school's emphasis upon personalized, individualized attention.
- Students are encouraged to develop their talents to the greatest degree possible so that they may become responsible citizens of the world, find a meaningful life, and be prepared to continue their formal education in the setting of their choice.
- Learning is fostered in an informal relaxed atmosphere of mutual respect based on principles of academic freedom and professional responsibility on the part of the faculty, administration, staff and students.
- The school continuously strives to develop the finest possible program of forward-looking quality education.
- Academic achievement is regarded as extremely important, as are humanistic and social concerns.

*Gleaned from HISTORICAL PREAMBLE (Originally adopted in 1974 and amended in 1976, 1991 and
Student Declaration of Values:
We, members of the University School Community, value intellectual integrity, respect personal rights, and accept the responsibility for our freedom.

To support the philosophy, mission and practices of the University School of Nashville, the library provides a welcoming environment for students, teachers, and parents to:

- Pursue academic and personal interests
- Engage with diverse ideas and information in a variety of formats
- Work collaboratively to solve problems for the greater good
- Develop knowledge and skills necessary for success in the 21st century
- Cultivate a lifelong love of learning and reading

The collection development policy of library is a reflection of its commitment to the mission of the University School of Nashville, the American Library Association Bill of Rights and Code of Ethics, and the American Association of School Librarians’ Standards for the 21st Century Learner.

I. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide developing and maintaining a well-balanced collection of library materials for the University School community, and to inform the community of the principles upon which materials are selected, retained, or withdrawn.

II. Library Collection Policy

This policy covers acquisitions, management, access and deaccessioning of library materials in multiple formats: print, audio, audio-visual, digital/electronic.

The library at the University School exists to serve the educational, informational, and recreational needs of students, parents, faculty, and staff.

III. The Hassenfeld Library

The mission of the library is to support, stimulate, and inspire the educational environment of the school. Personnel, facilities, technology and collections support community members’ growth and the institutional mission.

To this end, the library team:

1. Develops collections and provides resources to support the curriculum, enhance personal development and encourage the pleasure of reading and learning

2. Teaches information literacy and research skills
3: Supports access to technology and multi-media
4: Provides access to global information
5: Offers individual attention to students and faculty
6: Serves as a community resource

IV. Responsibility for Collection Development

Ultimate responsibility for the collection in the library, including selection and weeding of materials, lies with the library director. Library team members and volunteers may assist the library director in processing new or weeded materials. Student, faculty and staff recommendations are also welcome and encouraged. All requests from students, faculty and staff for materials are considered. Faculty are encouraged to continually monitor their professional literature for appropriate library acquisitions, and alert library colleagues about materials most useful for course requirements.

V. Material Selection Guidelines

Collection development decisions are made on the basis of librarians’ judgment and expertise, and by evaluating recommendations in library reviewing journals and other library selection tools.

Materials are selected on their importance to the academic program, and for personal development and recreational value. The libraries must provide resources to facilitate and enrich classroom instruction for each department of the school. The library will also provide a recreational reading collection for the school community.

All types and formats of media for acquisition are considered.

The library team may consult with faculty in specific subject areas when considering purchasing, retaining, or withdrawing materials.

Materials will be collected primarily in the English Language. However, titles in other world languages are also acquired to support academic and leisure reading.

The library provides access to a wealth of online resources, including the Internet and electronic databases. Online databases are selected for their ability to offer students and faculty the best available research tools.

Materials acquired for the libraries collections shall:

i. Enrich and support the curriculum and the school’s educational goals and policies.
ii. Support informational, educational, and recreational reading, viewing, and listening.
iii. Be appropriate for the age, emotional and social development, learning styles, and ability levels of students.
iv. Contribute to a diverse collection that represents a wide variety of cultures, perspectives, experiences, and ideas.
v. Have received favorable reviews from various selection sources or appeal to a variety of users as evidenced by volume of requests, popular media attention, and/or consideration of community-specific areas of interest.
vi. Meet high standards of quality in physical format, treatment of subject, literary style, artistry, production value, organization, accuracy, and currency.
vii. Enhance the existing core collections and make responsible use of the budget.

Any given item in the collection will meet at least two of the above criteria.

VII. Maintaining the Collection

In order to maintain collections which are current, reliable, in good condition, and which relate to the needs and interests of the school community, materials are withdrawn on a systematic and continuing basis. The library professionals continually evaluate existing resources to enforce quality control of the collection’s usefulness. The CREW Method (continual review, evaluation and weeding) developed by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/crew/), is used as a guide for this process

Criteria for withdrawing library material include:
- Outdated/obsolete/inaccurate information
- Poor physical condition
- Unused/seldom used
- No longer within collection priorities

Withdrawn materials are donated, sold, or discarded/recycled.

Criteria for retention include:
- School history
- Local history
- Regional authors
- Content with local settings
- Literary award prize winners

IX. Gifts - Donations

Gifts that enhance the library collection according to the guidelines of "Criteria for Selection" may be accepted and added to holdings.
- Donated materials should be new or gently used, complete, clean, and durable.
- Reference and nonfiction materials will be thoroughly reviewed for accuracy and currency before being added to the collection in order to avoid the transmission of outdated information.
- Fiction materials should be no more than eight years old with the exception of classics and books by well-known and enduringly popular authors.
- Materials that reflect outdated stereotypes of race, gender, or culture, or oversimplify complex or controversial issues will not be accepted.

Not all gifts will be recommended for retention. If a gift is integrated into the collection, the libraries reserve the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, access, and withdrawal of the material. Accepted material may be designated by as special bookplate with an appropriate inscription. Unaccepted material will be managed as other weeded library items.

The librarians will not make any attempt to appraise values of donated materials for tax purposes. [Link to resources]

X. Controversial Materials: Intellectual Freedom

In the interest of protecting the individual's right to have access to materials, the library supports and is guided by the following documents (see appendices for full text):

- The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
- The Library Bill of Rights - by the American Library Association (ALA)
- Intellectual Freedom/Freedom to Read Statement - ALA
- Statement of Labeling - ALA
- Evaluating Library Collections – ALA
- Freedom to View - ALA
- Free Access to Libraries for Minors - ALA
- Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program - ALA
- Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials - ALA

Challenges to library material will be addressed as follows:

A. Informal Request for Reconsideration

If a complaint is made regarding a resource, the librarian will try to resolve the issue informally:

i. The librarian will actively listen to the questioner’s concerns regarding the item in question.

ii. The librarian will share the reason for the item’s place in the collection, drawing upon the curriculum, USN mission and philosophy, and the ideals of freedom of choice. The librarian will emphasize that parents have the right and responsibility to determine what their children may or may not read or check out, but that this right extends only to their own children.

iii. The librarian will provide access to the Collection Development Policy, either in print or digital via the library’s Web site.

iv. If the questioner wishes to file an official challenge, (s)he will be given a copy of the University School of Nashville’s Collection Development Policy and the Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form (See Appendix J).
B. Formal Request for Reconsideration

i. The libraries will keep on hand and make available Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources forms. All formal objections to learning resources must be made on these forms.

ii. Upon receipt of a Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form, the library director will gather supporting material regarding the items inclusion in the collection.

iii. The Library Director will meet with the School Director and the requester to review the item and supporting material. The School Director will determine the outcome of the challenged material in the libraries collection.

XI. Copyright

The libraries respect and adhere to applicable copyright laws of the United States. Unpublished or copied materials in any form will be added to the collection only when copyright compliance has been verified.

XII. Revision of Policy:

This policy will be reviewed as needed.

XII. Appendices

A. U.S. Constitution - First Amendment
B. Library Bill of Rights
C. Intellectual Freedom
D. Statement on Labeling
E. Evaluating Library Collections
F. Freedom to View
G. Free Access to Libraries for Minors
H. Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program
I. Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials
J. Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form

A. U.S. Constitution - First Amendment

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

B. 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.
I. 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.

II. 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.

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

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

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

VI. 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.

Adopted June 18, 1948.


C. Intellectual Freedom

“Intellectual Freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive and disseminate ideas.”—ALA The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We
trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly
strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression. To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life.

Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine.

But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.
It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one. The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.


A Joint Statement by:
American Library Association, Association of American Publishers

D. Statement on Labeling - An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Labeling is the practice of describing or designating materials by affixing a prejudicial label and/or segregating them by a prejudicial system. The American Library Association opposes these means of predisposing people’s attitudes toward library materials for the following reasons:
1. Labeling is an attempt to prejudice attitudes and as such, it is a censor’s tool.

2. Some find it easy and even proper, according to their ethics, to establish criteria for judging publications as objectionable. However, injustice and ignorance rather than justice and enlightenment result from such practices, and the American Library Association opposes the establishment of such criteria.

3. Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library.

A variety of private organizations promulgate rating systems and/or review materials as a means of advising either their members or the general public concerning their opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, or other materials. For the library to adopt or enforce any of these private systems, to attach such ratings to library materials, to include them in bibliographic records, library catalogs, or other finding aids, or otherwise to endorse them would violate the Library Bill of Rights.

While some attempts have been made to adopt these systems into law, the constitutionality of such measures is extremely questionable. If such legislation is passed which applies within a library’s jurisdiction, the library should seek competent legal advice concerning its applicability to library operations.

Publishers, industry groups, and distributors sometimes add ratings to material or include them as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse such practices. However, removing or obliterating such ratings—if placed there by or with permission of the copyright holder—could constitute expurgation, which is also unacceptable.

The American Library Association opposes efforts which aim at closing any path to knowledge. This statement, however, does not exclude the adoption of organizational schemes designed as directional aids or to facilitate access to materials.


E. Evaluating Library Collections - An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The continuous review of library materials is necessary as a means of maintaining active library collection of current interest to users. In the process, materials may be added and physically deteriorated or obsolete materials may be replaced or removed in accordance with the collection maintenance policy of a given library and the needs of the community it serves. Continued evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of all libraries and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or disapproved of by segments of the community. Such abuse of the evaluation function violates the principles of intellectual freedom and is in opposition to the Preamble and Articles I and II of the Library Bill of Rights, which state: The
American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. 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.

II. 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. The American Library Association opposes such “silent censorship” and strongly urges that libraries adopt guidelines setting forth the positive purposes and principles of evaluation of materials in library collections.


F. Freedom to View Statement

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

G. Free Access to Libraries for Minors - An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all
library resources and services available to other users violate the Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation. Equitable access to all library resources and services shall not be abridged through restrictive scheduling or use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community, and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, nonprint, or digital format. Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them. Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether material is not constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As Libraries: An American Value states, “We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services.” Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain 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. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children.
Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

See also Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program and Access to Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials.

1. See Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville, 422 U.S. 205 (1975) "Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors." See also Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist., 393 U.S.503 (1969); West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624 (1943); AAMA v. Kendrick,, 244 F.3d 572 (7th Cir. 2001).


H. 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, 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.


I. Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials - An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Library collections of nonprint materials raise a number of intellectual freedom issues, especially regarding minors. Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views."

The American Library Association's principles protect minors' access to sound, images, data, games, software, and other content in all formats such as tapes, CDs, DVDs, music CDs, computer games, software, databases, and other emerging technologies. ALA's Free Access to
Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights states:

. . . The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

. . . [P]arents—and only parents—have the right and responsibility to restrict access of their children—and only their children—to library resources. Parents who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children. Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child.

Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

Policies that set minimum age limits for access to any nonprint materials or information technology, with or without parental permission, abridge library use for minors. Age limits based on the cost of the materials are also unacceptable. Librarians, when dealing with minors, should apply the same standards to circulation of nonprint materials as are applied to books and other print materials except when directly and specifically prohibited by law.

Recognizing that librarians cannot act in loco parentis, ALA acknowledges and supports the exercise by parents of their responsibility to guide their own children's reading and viewing. Libraries should provide published reviews and/or reference works that contain information about the content, subject matter, and recommended audiences for nonprint materials. These resources will assist parents in guiding their children without implicating the library in censorship.

In some cases, commercial content ratings, such as the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) movie ratings, might appear on the packaging or promotional materials provided by producers or distributors. However, marking out or removing this information from materials or packaging constitutes expurgation or censorship.

MPAA movie ratings, Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) game ratings, and other rating services are private advisory codes and have no legal standing (Expurgation of Library Materials). For the library to add ratings to nonprint materials if they are not already there is unacceptable. It is also unacceptable to post a list of such ratings with a collection or to use them in circulation policies or other procedures. These uses constitute labeling, "an attempt to prejudice attitudes" (Labels and Rating Systems), and are forms of censorship. The application of locally generated ratings schemes intended to provide content warnings to library users is also inconsistent with the Library Bill of Rights.
The interests of young people, like those of adults, are not limited by subject, theme, or level of sophistication. Librarians have a responsibility to ensure young people's access to materials and services that reflect diversity of content and format sufficient to meet their needs.

USN: Request for Consideration of Library Resources Form

The Director of the University School of Nashville has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library/educational resources to the Library Director, who has established a reconsideration procedure to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in the procedure. If you wish to request reconsideration of library resources, please return the completed form to the Library Director, Hassenfeld Library, The University School of Nashville, 2000 Edgehill Ave., Nashville, TN 37212

Name ___________________________________________ Date __________

Address __________________________________________________________________________ City __________

State ______ Zip _____________ Phone __________________________

Do you represent self? ____ Organization? ____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:
   ___ Book ___ Textbook ___ Video ___ Display ___ Magazine ___ Library
   Program
   ___ Audio Recording ___ Newspaper ___ Electronic information/network (please
   specify)
   ___ Other ____________________________

   Title ____________________________

   Author/Producer ____________________________

2. What brought this resource to your attention?
3. Have you examined the entire resource?
4. What concerns you about the resource? (use other side or additional pages if necessary.)

5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

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