

NYLA Position Statement on the Defense of Intellectual Freedom

The New York Library Association (NYLA) reaffirms its commitment to protecting and upholding intellectual freedom and the freedom to read. We advocate for the rights of all patrons to access information on a variety of topics and viewpoints without restrictions, which is a fundamental act of participation in a democracy.

With the increasing number of challenges, especially for books regarding race and LGBTQ+ communities, New York's school libraries and librarians are being pressured to censor and restrict access to information. Parents have the right to set restrictions for their own children, but no person or group has the right to deny access to all readers. This principle applies equally to the free access of information in other types of libraries as well.

Libraries are unique institutions of education and knowledge that provide information with impartiality and balance. Library materials are carefully selected by professionally trained librarians to represent a broad range of ideas and opinions and appeal to the needs and interests of all members of their communities. In a democratic society, partisan disagreements cannot dictate the decision to remove such materials.

Therefore, the New York Library Association stands firmly opposed to the restriction, removal, and/or censorship of books and other library materials in an attempt to limit the freedom to read or obstruct intellectual freedom.

*Adopted by NYLA Council
November 18, 2021*

Adopted December 20, 2021

