

New Prairie Middle School

Internal Library Guidelines

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The Role of the NPMS Library

Mission

Why we exist: The NPMS Library provides materials, cultivates an environment, and facilitates programs that support students with curricular work, research skills, and recreational reading. The school librarian's assistant encourages reading for pleasure and knowledge.

Vision

What we want to become: The NPMS Library plays a crucial role in developing students into effective users of information. Supported by the NPMS Library, students seek out and effectively use fictional and nonfictional media for classwork and personal interest. The NPMS Library empowers students to become lifelong learners and readers.

Core Values

Commitments to how we behave: The culture of the NPMS Library is driven by respect for students, teachers, and learning. The library values intellectual freedom, and the librarian's assistant is guided by a commitment to anti-racism and inclusion. The Library also embodies the [values of NPUSC](#), with a particular emphasis on Core Value #4: "We strive to be known for literacy development that engages students to become college and career ready." We believe that reading—particularly reading that spans a wide range of points of view—is important for success in work, achievement at school, participation in democracy, and personal fulfillment.

Goals

How we will make a difference: The goals of the NPMS Library are:

- To maintain up-to-date, accurate, and engaging collections of information resources that support and enrich the curriculum
- To provide access to high-interest, culturally relevant, diverse, and high-quality books for students' recreational reading
- To develop programs and activities that encourage reading for pleasure and that create positive cultures of reading
- To collaborate with classroom teachers in the development of teaching and learning activities related to information literacy, reading, and research.

Collection Development

“Collection development” refers to the management of fiction and nonfiction information resources, both physical and digital, that are purchased or leased by the school libraries. Collection development may also extend to free digital resources, such as curated lists of websites. It does not apply to classroom libraries, such as books housed permanently in a classroom or materials that can be used only by students enrolled in certain classes. Although classroom libraries are excellent tools for encouraging reading and for supporting learning, they are the responsibility of teachers or academic departments.

Collection Objectives

The purposes of the library’s collection is:

- To provide materials that enrich and support classroom curriculum
- To present multiple viewpoints on debatable topics, giving students the opportunity to develop analytical skills resulting in informed decisions
- To exhibit a diversity of voices and experiences in both literature and nonfiction, allowing students to develop the antiracist attitudes and knowledge needed to participate responsibly in a complex society
- To provide access to books for co-curricular and extra-curricular reading, in order to strengthen a love of reading

Responsibilities for Collection Development

Collection development is the responsibility of the school librarian’s assistant. When necessary, the principal may decide to acquire or weed library material. Final selection and weeding decisions are made by the school librarian’s assistant and/or school principal, except as outlined in the Reconsiderations Policy.

Selection and Weeding Criteria

“Selection” refers to the adding of materials to the library’s collection, and “weeding” refers to the removal of materials from the library’s collection (to be discarded or given away). In order to maintain a collection that meets the collection objectives as successfully as possible, the school librarian’s assistant selects and weeds materials periodically throughout the school year.

Pursuant to the collection objectives, the school librarian’s assistant balances the following considerations, when selecting and weeding materials:

- **Curricular relevance:** Materials that enrich or support curriculum are given preference. Indiana Academic Standards, advice and requests from teachers, and a school librarian’s assistant’s own knowledge of the

instructional activities of the school all play a part in evaluating materials' curricular relevance.

- **Currency:** Materials will be selected or weeded to ensure that collections are relevant to students' interests and up-to-date with the state of knowledge on certain topics.
- **Reading difficulty:** Students' academic abilities vary. At the same time, each school library is intended to serve all students in its school. Therefore, materials will be selected or weeded to ensure a variety of difficulty.
- **Reading appeal:** Because students' reading preferences vary, materials will be selected or weeded to ensure a variety of nonfiction topics, literary genres, and writing styles.
- **Representation of backgrounds, life experiences, topics, and viewpoints:** Materials will be selected and weeded to create and maintain diversity in the collection in terms of characters' and authors' backgrounds, life experiences, and viewpoints. Given limitations on the libraries' size and resources, it is not possible to represent all viewpoints on all topics; therefore, the libraries prioritize representing multiple viewpoints on topics that lack scientific consensus. The New Prairie School District endorses the "Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights." (Appendix B)
- **Local connection:** Local histories, works by local authors, or other connections to the school community all weigh in favor for the selection or retention of certain materials.
- **Popularity:** Demand for a book may be indicated by popularity lists (such as the New York Times Best Sellers List), pre-publication campaigns, or students' requests. For books already in the collection, the school librarian's assistant will examine circulation rates to determine demand. High-demand materials are preferred; low demand materials are subject to weeding.
- **Acclaim:** The following are favored for selection or retention:
 - Books that enjoy "classic" status
 - Award winners (especially winners of American Library Association awards)
 - Items which appear on standard, current core bibliographies (such as H.W. Wilson Collections)
 - Books with favorable reviews from professional review sources (such as *The School Library Journal*)
- **Cost:** All else the same, expensive items should be more strongly considered for retention, while less expensive items should be more strongly considered for selection.
- **Format:** In general, the librarian's assistant should seek to permanently own

materials rather than temporarily subscribe for access to materials. However digital subscriptions may be preferable in some cases, such as when the topic covered changes

rapidly (e.g. current events resources) or when multiple, simultaneous access is called for (e.g. when whole classrooms will be using a single text.) Durable hardcover books are generally preferred over paperbacks. With digital materials, ease of use and user privacy are also considerations.

- **Alternative forms of access:** Many materials can be accessed for free by students. Many audiobooks, ebooks, and digital magazines are available through Libraries 360. Items like these have weaker standing in the libraries' collections.
- **Condition:** Damaged or dirty books are favored for weeding.
- **Quantity:** At times, duplicates may be needed to meet demand, but redundant copies may be weeded.

The criteria above make clear: weeding is not censorship. It is necessary to maintain an evolving library where the books are easy to find, up-to-date, in good condition, and interesting and relevant to students.

Donations and Gifts

The NPMS Library welcomes gifts of books, educational materials, and equipment. However, the accession of gifts to the libraries' collections is subject to the school librarian's assistant's discretion, in light of the selection criteria above. Gifts are irrevocable. Gifts not added to the collection (and gifts which are added and later weeded) may be disposed of by the school librarian's assistant. The school librarian's assistant does not provide book plates or dedication labels. A dated inventory of the gift(s) signed by the school librarian's assistant will be provided if requested by the donor. An appraisal is required to report donations to the School Board. When making this appraisal, the school librarian's assistant will use his judgment and the estimate of the donor, but he will not, in general, conduct research into the current market values of specific titles or provide item-by-item appraisals. The school librarian's assistant will fill out [Form 7230F](#) and submit it to the Business Office, consistent with [School Board policy #7230](#) and [admin policy #7230](#).

Reconsiderations and Book Challenges

The school librarian's assistant respects all concerned people who care about their children and the educational materials of the schools, while also endorsing the principles set forth in the Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A) and its interpretative statements, including "Access to Resources and Services in the School Library"

(Appendix C). Therefore, when complaints or objections are raised against materials in the library's collection, carefully considered judgements are called for. The process described in NPUSC Policies and Administrative Guidelines is intended to assure that such judgments are made in response to criticism or objections. Refer to the following resources:

- [Procedures for Reconsideration of a Learning Resource \(Policy #9130\)](#) •
- [Complaint Committee Review Procedures \(Administrative Guideline #9130\)](#)
- [Request for Review of Materials or Course Content \(Form #9130F2\)](#)

Also of relevance to reconsiderations and book challenges is Indiana's definition of "material harmful to minors," found in Indiana Code 35-49-2-2. Material that fits this definition meets *all* four of these criteria:

- (1) it describes or represents, in any form, nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sado-masochistic abuse;
- (2) considered as a whole, it appeals to the prurient interest in sex of minors;
- (3) it is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable matter for or performance before minors; and
- (4) considered as a whole, it lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.

Circulation

"Circulation" refers to the activities related to the lending of library materials.

Loan periods and renewal of materials

Loan periods and renewal procedures are determined by the school librarian's assistant and described in the student handbook. Although the school librarian's assistant is permitted to set different loan periods and renewal policies for different media types, for different grade levels, and for teachers (as opposed to students), it is not permissible to change loan periods for individual students or teachers.

Number of checkouts

The number of books or other materials that a student may check out is determined by the school librarian's assistant. Although a school librarian's assistant is permitted to set different quantities for different media types, for different grade levels, and for teachers (as opposed to students), it is not permissible to change the number of allowable checkouts for individual students or teachers *except* as a consequence for lost or overdue items. Even in this case, delinquent students or teachers must retain the

right to check out at least one book at a time.

Overdue materials

There are no overdue fines at the NPMS Library. The school librarian's assistant may establish special limits as a consequence for lost or overdue items, but as stated above, teachers and students must retain the right to check out at least one book. The process by which overdue notices are issued is determined by the school librarian's assistant for each school site, while respecting the student privacy considerations detailed in the Intellectual Freedom section below. The school librarian's assistant may choose to send these notifications to the borrower (i.e. the student or teacher), parents, or both, in person, by mail, or by email. Notices may also be posted on message boards, but individual's students names must be anonymized using student ID numbers.

Lost or damaged materials

For a lost or damaged item, students or teachers may be charged a replacement fee. This is consistent with [School Policy 5513](#). Replacement fees equal the item's purchase price. If no purchase price is recorded, the replacement fee is \$5.00. The replacement fee payment is accepted in the form of cash or check. In lieu of the replacement fee, the borrower may supply a replacement item of the same or newer edition, the same format, and good condition. The school librarian's assistant works with the building treasurer to process payments for replacement books. While it is always acceptable to use normal Library Program money to buy replacements, replacement fees cannot be used to purchase books other than those which were lost or damaged. The school librarian's assistant may waive replacement fees when:

- The fee imposes a substantial economic hardship
- The school librarian's assistant does not intend to replace the item
- The student was not at fault for the loss or damage
- The building Treasurer advises the fee to be waived

The school librarian's assistant issues replacement fees in writing, (by electronic message, email, or printed letter.) The school librarian's assistant may choose to send these notifications to the borrower (i.e. the student or teacher), parents, or both, in person, by mail, or by email. A consequence for failing to pay a replacement fee is a reduction in the number of book checkouts (but never below one checkout).

Intellectual Freedom

“Intellectual freedom” refers to people’s ability to read and seek information freely. It is a core value of the library profession and a right in a democratic society. The following policies extend the Collection Development and Circulation Policies to further safeguard intellectual freedom.

Student privacy considerations

As affirmed in “Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights” (Appendix E), fear of opprobrium or fear of surveillance are barriers to intellectual freedom.

Therefore, in general, the school librarian’s assistant regards the identification of students’ names with specific materials to be confidential.

Moreover, a student’s circulation information (the materials that a student has checked out, including overdue, lost, or damaged books) are considered an “educational record,” according to The Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO), a part of the U.S. Department of Education. The disclosure of this information is controlled by The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act 20 U.S.C. §1232g (FERPA). These points follow from FERPA:

- **Sharing Circulation Information with Students**

The school librarian’s assistant will not share a student’s circulation record with other students, without that student’s permission. (This has several implications. For example, the school librarian’s assistant will not talk to students about other students’ checkout history. If a school librarian’s assistant posts notices for overdues and replacement fees, they should be anonymized using student ID numbers. If notices containing circulation information are delivered to librarian’s assistant on a one-by-one basis, they should be folded or put in an envelope so that only the student’s name appears.)

- **Sharing Circulation Information with Other School Staff**

The school librarian’s assistant will not share students’ circulation information with teachers or staff, *except when there is a legitimate educational reason for doing so.* (For example, this proscribes loose talk about student’s checkouts, although a school librarian’s assistant can share information related to an assignment.)

- **Sharing Circulation Information with Parents**

The school librarian’s assistant may send notifications about overdue, or lost materials to parents. Other circulation information may be shared with parents upon request. Before discussing a student’s circulation history with an adult claiming to be a parent, outside the presence of a student, the school librarian’s assistant may ask questions (such as the student’s birthday) or ask their school office staff to verify the parent’s identity.

Prohibited restrictions on library use

The school librarian's assistant may not restrict students' ability to use the library in any of the following ways:

- By imposing age, grade-level, or reading-level restrictions on the use of library materials. However, the school librarian's assistant may help teachers enforce these restrictions in connection with specific class assignments.
- By charging fees for accessing information in specific formats.
- By requiring permission from parents or teachers for granting access to specific books. However, the school librarian's assistant may disallow individual students from checking out specific books (titles) based on parent or teacher requests.

Displays

Book labels and book displays

As affirmed in "[Labeling and Rating Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#)" (Appendix F), "Labeling as an attempt to prejudice attitudes is a censor's tool." Prejudicial labels are based on value judgments about certain resources, declaring those resources as inappropriate for groups of students. An example is a "Books For Boys" shelf which presupposes girls' interests and dissuades girls from reading those books. Prejudicial labels differ from value-neutral directional labels, which are a convenience designed to facilitate access by making it easier for users to locate resources.

The school librarian's assistant is responsible for creating labels, displays, and library layouts that facilitate the discovery of materials and encourage reading. When students, staff, or parents assert that a label, display, or library layout (such as a shelving arrangement) discourages readership, the school librarian's assistant must respond to that complaint in writing. If unsatisfied by the response, the complainant may appeal, in writing, to the building Principal to have the label, display, or library layout to be changed. The Principal's decision is final. (If the building Principal is the complainant, then the appeal is addressed to the Superintendent, whose say is final.) The only basis for a challenge against a label, display, or library layout is that it discourages readership.

Community bulletin board

The purpose of the community bulletin board is:

- To give students and teachers a way to communicate ideas, share events, express needs, present art, and highlight achievements.

- To enrich the community within the school and the lives of students by connecting them with cultural, educational, or employment opportunities.

The lifecycle of posted materials is:

1. Students or teachers submit bulletins to the librarian's assistant for approval.
2. If bulletins are approved, the librarian's assistant will mark them to indicate when they will be removed.
3. Bulletins are pinned up until the end of the month. If they are posted during the last week of the month, they are posted until the end of the following month. The librarian's assistant can grant extensions if there is a demonstrated need.
4. Expired materials will be thrown away.

Acceptable bulletins include:

- Student art that is produced in art class, approved by the art teacher, or a school administrator.
- Positive shout outs to teachers and students
- Notices about items lost or found at school
- Announcements of upcoming school-sponsored approved extracurricular activities and events

Unacceptable bulletins include:

- Social media handles or links
- Personal contact information such as personal phone numbers, addresses, or emails.
- Messages that state or imply the inferiority or superiority of people based on their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, or citizenship
- Politically partisan materials (such as materials related to political parties or individual candidates)
- Commercial, profit-making, fundraising, or "For Sale" notices, except fundraisers for school sponsored activities
- Content that is libelous, defamatory, obscene, sexual, or in any way dangerous to students' health, learning, and welfare.

Certain bulletins require additional approval by the Superintendent, which will be mediated by the librarian's assistant:

- Fundraisers and crowdsourcing materials for school related activities
- Surveys and questionnaires, including for class
- Materials related to outside organizations, including job ads that are not already approved through the guidance department.

For additional rules about the Superintendent's approval criteria, see [School Board Policy 9700](#) and its associated [Administrative Guidelines](#).

Appendix

Appendix A: 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 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Appendix B: Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article II of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights: "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."

Library collections must represent the diversity of people and ideas in our society. There are many complex facets to any issue, and many contexts in which issues may be expressed, discussed, or interpreted. Librarian's assistants have an obligation to select and

support access to content on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs, interests, and abilities of all persons in the community the library serves.

Librarian's assistants have a professional responsibility to be inclusive in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan. Access to all content legally obtainable should be assured to the user, and policies should not unjustly exclude content even if it is offensive to the librarian's assistant or the user. This includes content that reflect a diversity of issues, whether they be, for example, political, economic, religious, social, ethnic, or sexual. A balanced collection reflects a diversity of content, not an equality of numbers.

...Content should represent the languages commonly used in the library's service community and should include formats that meet the needs of users with disabilities. Collection development and the selection of content should be done according to professional standards and established selection and review procedures. Failure to select resources merely because they may be potentially controversial is censorship, as is withdrawing resources for the same reason.

Over time, individuals, groups, and entities have sought to limit the diversity of library collections. They cite a variety of reasons that include prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, sexual content and expression, and other potentially controversial topics. Librarian's assistant have a professional responsibility to be fair, just, and equitable and to give all library users equal protection in guarding against violation of the library patron's right to read, view, or listen to content protected by the First Amendment, no matter what the viewpoint of the author, creator, or selector. Librarian's assistants have an obligation to protect library collections from removal of content based on personal bias or prejudice.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Librarian's assistants must not permit their personal beliefs to influence collection development decisions.

Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; and July 1, 2014.

Appendix C: Access to Resources and Services in the School Library: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The school library plays a unique role in promoting, protecting, and educating about 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, the principles of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights apply equally to all libraries, including

school libraries. Under these principles, all students have equitable access to library facilities, resources, and instructional programs.

School librarians 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 librarians 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 librarian's assistants 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 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 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 have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School librarian's assistants resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear, or access regardless of technology, formats or method of delivery.

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 librarian's assistants to implement district policies and procedures in the school to ensure equitable access to resources and services for all students.

Adopted July 2, 1986, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 12, 2000; January 19, 2005; July 2, 2008; and July 1, 2014.

Appendix D: Standard Letter Response to a Complaint Against Materials

Dear [Name of person who is making a complaint against materials in the library's collection]: We respect your concern for our children and the educational materials in our school library.

The New Prairie United School Corporation and has a policy for selecting library materials. To help you understand the selection process, we are sending you a copy of our Collection Development Policy, which includes:

- The goals and objectives of our library collection
- The criteria by which we decide what to include in our collection
- The procedure for handling requests to reconsider materials in our collection.

We realize that not everyone will agree with every selection. Library media which are sensitive or mature in nature may not be appropriate for individual readers in a school but should remain part of the collection if they support the mission of the NPMS Library and if they meet the selection criteria outlined in the Collection Development Policy. If you are still concerned after you review the Collection Development Policy, please complete the Request for Reconsideration of Material Form. By filling out this form, you'll give us the information we need in order to thoroughly understand your request.

Sincerely,
[Name of school librarian]

Appendix E: Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Introduction

Privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association. The courts have established a First Amendment right to receive information in a publicly funded library. Further, the courts have upheld the right to privacy based on the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution Many states provide guarantees of privacy in their constitutions and statute law. Numerous decisions in case law have defined and extended rights to privacy.

In a library (physical or virtual), the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without

having the subject of one's interest examined or scrutinized by others. Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf. Confidentiality extends to "information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted" (*ALA Code of Ethics*), including, but not limited to: database search records, reference questions and interviews, circulation records, interlibrary loan records, information about materials downloaded or placed on "hold" or "reserve," and other personally identifiable information about uses of library materials, programs, facilities, or services.

Protecting user privacy and confidentiality has long been an integral part of the mission of libraries. The ALA has affirmed a right to privacy since 1939. Existing ALA policies affirm that confidentiality is crucial to freedom of inquiry. Rights to privacy and confidentiality also are implicit in the Library Bill of Rights' guarantee of free access to library resources for all users.

Rights of Library Users

The Library Bill of Rights affirms the ethical imperative to provide unrestricted access to information and to guard against impediments to open inquiry. Article IV states: "Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas." When users recognize or fear that their privacy or confidentiality is compromised, true freedom of inquiry no longer exists.

In all areas of librarianship, best practice leaves the user in control of as many choices as possible. These include decisions about the selection of, access to, and use of information. Lack of privacy and confidentiality has a chilling effect on users' choices. All users have a right to be free from any unreasonable intrusion into or surveillance of their lawful library use. Users have the right to be informed what policies and procedures govern the amount and retention of personally identifiable information, why that information is necessary for the library, and what the user can do to maintain his or her privacy. Library users expect and in many places have a legal right to have their information protected and kept private and confidential by anyone with direct or indirect access to that information. In addition, 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." This article precludes the use of profiling as a basis for any breach of privacy rights. Users have the right to use a library without any abridgement of privacy that may result from equating the subject of their inquiry with behavior.

Responsibilities in Libraries

The library profession has a long-standing commitment to an ethic of facilitating, not monitoring, access to information. This commitment is implemented locally through the adoption of and adherence to library privacy policies that are consistent with applicable federal, state, and local law.

Everyone (paid or unpaid) who provides governance, administration or service in libraries has a responsibility to maintain an environment respectful and protective of the privacy of all users. Users have the responsibility to respect each others' privacy.

For administrative purposes, librarian's assistants may establish appropriate time,

place, and manner restrictions on the use of library resources. In keeping with this principle, the collection of personally identifiable information should only be a matter of routine or policy when necessary for the fulfillment of the mission of the library. Regardless of the technology used, everyone who collects or accesses personally identifiable information in any format has a legal and ethical obligation to protect confidentiality.

Libraries should not share personally identifiable user information with third parties or with vendors that provide resources and library services unless the library has obtained the permission of the user or has entered into a legal agreement with the vendor. Such agreements should stipulate that the library retains control of the information, that the information is confidential, and that it may not be used or shared except with the permission of the library.

Law enforcement agencies and officers may occasionally believe that library records contain information that would be helpful to the investigation of criminal activity. The American judicial system provides a mechanism for seeking release of such confidential records: a court order issued following a showing of good cause based on specific facts by a court of competent jurisdiction. Libraries should make such records available only in response to properly executed orders.

Conclusion

The American Library Association affirms that rights of privacy are necessary for intellectual freedom and are fundamental to the ethics and practice of librarianship.

Adopted June 19, 2002, by the ALA Council; amended on July 1, 2014.

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Appendix F: Labeling and Rating Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections or in resources accessible through the library. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library. Likewise, providing access to digital information does not indicate endorsement or approval of that information by the library. Labeling and rating systems present distinct challenges to these intellectual freedom principles.

Many organizations use or devise rating systems as a means of advising either their members or the general public regarding the organization's opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, websites, games, or other materials. The adoption, enforcement, or endorsement of any of these rating systems by a library violates the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and may be unconstitutional. If enforcement of labeling or rating systems is mandated by law, the library should seek legal advice regarding the law's applicability to library operations.

Viewpoint-neutral directional labels are a convenience designed to save time. These are different in intent from attempts to prejudice or discourage users or restrict their access to resources. Labeling as an attempt to prejudice attitudes is a censor's tool. The American Library Association opposes labeling as a means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library resources.

Prejudicial labels are designed to restrict access, based on a value judgment that the content, language, or themes of the resource, or the background or views of the creator(s) of the resource, render it inappropriate or offensive for all or certain groups of users. The prejudicial label is used to warn, discourage, or prohibit users or certain groups of users from accessing the resource. Such labels sometimes are used to place materials in restricted locations where access depends on staff intervention.

Viewpoint-neutral directional aids facilitate access by making it easier for users to locate resources. Users may choose to consult or ignore the directional aids at their own discretion. Directional aids can have the effect of prejudicial labels when their implementation becomes proscriptive rather than descriptive. When directional aids are used to forbid access or to suggest moral or doctrinal endorsement, the effect is the same as prejudicial labeling.

Libraries sometimes acquire resources that include ratings as part of their packaging. Librarian's assistants should not endorse the inclusion of such rating systems; however, removing or destroying the ratings—if placed there by, or with permission of, the copyright holder—could constitute expurgation (see "Expurgation of Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights"). In addition, the inclusion of ratings on bibliographic records in library catalogs is a violation of the Library Bill of Rights.

Prejudicial labeling and ratings presuppose the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is appropriate or inappropriate for others. They presuppose that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. The fact that libraries do not advocate or use proscriptive labels and rating systems does not preclude them from answering questions about them. The American Library Association affirms the rights of individuals to form their own opinions about resources they choose to read or view.

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