

Joint Statement on Against Censorship and Intolerance

Book challenges in Connecticut's school and public libraries have risen dramatically in the past 18 months, mirroring the surge the [American Library Association has reported](#) nationwide. Challenges in our communities reflect a national agenda that targets specific members of our communities. Over 90% of these challenges target LGBTQ+ and BIPOC individuals, authors, and issues.

The Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC), The Connecticut Library Association (CLA), and the Connecticut Association of School Librarians CASL) support libraries and library staff in their efforts to ensure free, equal, and open access to information, guaranteed to everyone regardless of age or citizenship status, under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, the Constitution of the State of Connecticut, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as codified in the United States Code. As a group of concerned professionals, we jointly and together oppose censorship and intolerance, uphold the [American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights](#). We also affirm:

- Connecticut librarians are professionals and educators, many of whom have master's degrees in library and information science. They are parents, former students, neighbors, teachers, and contributing members of our communities. They include people who identify as LGBTQ+ and as people of color working for inclusion to ensure all people feel seen and heard.
- Licensed school library teachers match students with age-appropriate materials to foster the love of reading and instill curiosity for academic learning* which is important considering reading ability is linked to [high school graduation rates](#).
- Attacks on members of our communities, targeted at marginalized peoples, are more than book challenges. They are acts of intolerance and exclusion intended to silence diverse voices and views, while holding fast to homogenous viewpoints by historically dominant voices. These acts jeopardize everyone's access to [learn from different perspectives](#) and limit the opportunities available for those isolated in their experience to realize they are not alone.
- We applaud the efforts of the Connecticut General Assembly to improve access to mental, physical and emotional health services for children and provide a continuum of care in the delivery of such services with passage of Senate Bill 2: An Act Concerning the Mental, Physical and Emotional Wellness of Children during the 2023 legislative session. These legislators understand that librarians develop collections that reflect the breadth of the human experience, which is both diverse and interconnected. The bill attempts to ensure that no person or group "prohibit[s] or otherwise limit[s] the availability of any book or related library materials by banning, censoring or challenging such book or related library materials at such library."

Connecticut's reputation is of unity and steadfast belief in freedoms. We are fortunate to be the 'land of steady habits,' unwilling to bend to noisy forces seeking to disrupt the harmony we have worked so hard to earn and the powers of home rule we use to preserve dignity in our communities. As it states in the Connecticut Constitution, "[n]o person shall be denied the equal protection of the law nor be subjected to segregation or discrimination in the exercise or enjoyment of their civil or political rights because of religion, race, color, ancestry, national origin or sex."

Join us in supporting libraries.

About CLA

The Connecticut Library Association (CLA) is a 125+-year-old association of professional and paraprofessional library staff working together for the betterment of the state's people. CLA advises members, presents to municipalities and library-adjacent groups on the operation and maintenance of public, school, academic, and special libraries. Librarians promote cooperation among all types of libraries through self-created, regional library systems, automated resource sharing, and hard work. CLA members work to ensure that all residents of Connecticut, regardless of geographic location, social or economic status, age, level of physical or intellectual ability, cultural background, religious beliefs, size, or citizenship status have access to essential information, technologies, and collections. Learn more at <https://ctlibraryassociation.org/>.

About CLC

The Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC) is a non-profit membership group serving over 970 public, academic, school and special libraries. The CLC leverages the collective power of our members to initiate cost-effective, value-added services to strengthen libraries. We believe the libraries are fundamental to a literate, equitable and just society. Learn more at <https://www.ctlibrarians.org/>.

About CASL

The Connecticut Association of School Librarians (CASL) is the professional association of Connecticut school library media specialists. CASL is committed to excellence in education by ensuring that all students are active readers and effective users of ideas and information to become lifelong learners. The Association provides leadership, professional development, publicity, networking and support to the Connecticut school library community. CASL supports licensed, highly qualified library media specialists and fully funded library programs in all K-12 schools. CASL promotes collaboration between classroom teachers, library media specialists, administrators, and curriculum specialists for the benefit of student achievement especially in information literacy and technology literacy. CASL serves as a cooperative agency bringing together the profession, the State Department of Education, regional associations, national associations, and the general public. Learn more and donate at <https://casl.wildapricot.org>.

[* Library Research Service: School Libraries Impact Studies](#)