



Wright Memorial  
Public Library

**Request for Reconsideration of Library Material**

We are sorry if you have been offended by any material in the library's collection. Wright Memorial Public Library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights as adopted by the American Library Association. This document reads, in part: "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." Everyone's tastes are different and it is the library's responsibility to provide materials on a multitude of subjects and viewpoints, in many styles.

If you think that an item does not belong in the library, we invite you to fill out this form and return it to the front desk. The staff will see that it is given to the library director, who will be in touch with you regarding your request.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 18 July 2020

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Representing:

Self

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Material on which you wish to comment:

Title: Sam is My Sister

Author, artist, or producer: Book Ashley Rhodes-Courter

What brought this work to your attention?

What are your concerns about this work and/or what are your specific objections to it?  
(Use back or additional pages if you wish.)

Displayed at child level dealing with Adult issues

What would you like the library to do with this work?

Re-evaluate it.

Withdraw it from the collection.

Other: Do not display

Is there a work representing your viewpoint that you would like to recommend for the library?

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Wright Memorial  
Public Library

**From:** [Brian Potts](#)  
**To:** [Jacqui Taylor](#); [Kristi Hale](#)  
**Subject:** Request for reconsideration  
**Date:** Sunday, July 18, 2021 3:56:31 PM  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)

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This isn't really a request for reconsideration of a library material, but a patron, objected to the children's book, *Sam Is My Sister*, being displayed on a shelf where it could be easily found by a child, without a parent's knowledge. The book is about a transgender child and he thinks it should be shelved where only parents can find it, so they (not the library) can make the decision whether to share it with their child. I had him complete the form to formalize his complaint and to give us something specific to respond to. He indicated that he has read our collection development policy, which he found vague. He also said that he would be in touch with the board of trustees.

I have put the book and reconsideration form in the YS mailbox.

Brian



**Brian Potts** *Operations Coordinator*  
Wright Memorial Public Library

1776 Far Hills Avenue,  
Oakwood, OH 45419-2531  
T 937 294-7171 | F 937 294-8578  
[potts@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:potts@wrightlibrary.org) | [wrightlibrary.org](http://wrightlibrary.org)

**From:** [Joe](#)  
**To:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Monday, July 19, 2021 1:25:07 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Kristi,  
Thanks for this. It is perfect. You've addressed all his points. Talk to you tonight.  
Joe

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 19, 2021, at 11:51 AM, Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)> wrote:

Hi Joe,

The book is owned by 13 other library systems in SearchOhio, including Washington-Centerville, Dayton Metro, and Greene County, and will likely be added to others (it's newly published). It's based on actual events of one family's journey to understand and embrace their child's identity as transgender. In the back, it provides additional resources for where to find support. I will have the book with me at the board meeting.

This patron submitted a Request for Reconsideration, reiterating that he does not wish it withdrawn from the collection, but only that it not be displayed.

I did some inquiring in youth services, and there was no intent or political advocacy in selecting this book for display. It was one of about 25 new books on the "new book" display. We have had a huge influx of about 300 new children's picture books (our book jobber is finally getting caught up after COVID, and there's been a big backlog that is now coming in). When the display needs replenishing, staff grab a stack and put them out. This was explained to the patron when he visited and inquired.

I can ask that the book get shelved today, but I cannot promise that this book will never be displayed. Nor can I promise that children will not be exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice. Unlike audiovisual materials, books do not come with ratings where the library can block certain types of patrons from checking them out. Libraries do not and cannot act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. If a parent sends their child to the library with a library card, they have full access to all the books in our collection, and library staff do not censure them. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's Code of Ethics. Parents have a choice to not sign their children up for a library card and not let them visit alone.

Let me know if you have a few minutes to discuss further, prior to the meeting.

Thanks,  
Kristi

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**From:** Kristi Hale  
**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 9:13 AM  
**To:** Joe <fulford.joseph@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

Joe,

Thanks for sharing, and I will bring this up under my report.

Kristi

---

**From:** Joe [<mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 18, 2021 8:25 PM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

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Kristi,  
Let's add this to the BOT agenda tomorrow during your Director's comments.  
I'd like to respond in a coordinated way.  
Joe

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:**

**Date:** July 18, 2021 at 4:44:19 PM EDT

**To:** [fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)

**Subject:** Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that " ... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

My concern is that the book is positioned for display upon entering the room to attract the attention of that young child *who is more likely to be confused by than enlightened by the material.*

If one agrees that the subject is not a "children's subject", then what is the objective of purchasing and displaying (prominently directed at children) a book on this topic?

I am concerned that the display of this book is *political advocacy* by a library employee aimed at children. Alternatively, the library is supporting the prominent display of books on transgenderism to young children.

I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Jacqui Taylor](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Monday, July 19, 2021 9:25:00 AM

---

Jacqui,

I have a few more questions. Can you just give me a call or stop by tomorrow when you're back? Meanwhile, I'll check in with Diane or Karen, in prep for the BOT meeting tonight.

Kristi

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**From:** Kristi Hale  
**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 9:13 AM  
**To:** Jacqui Taylor <[Taylor@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:Taylor@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

One more question. The display that I'm aware of was below the window in the tween area. Were books put out for display other places as well?

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**From:** Kristi Hale  
**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 9:12 AM  
**To:** Jacqui Taylor <[Taylor@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:Taylor@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** FW: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

Hi Jacqui,

This is the second complaint that we've received about our display. Just to be sure, this book was put out as part of Pride month, correct?

Thanks,  
Kristi

---

**From:** Joe [<mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 18, 2021 8:25 PM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

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**To:** [fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)

**Subject:** Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

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I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Jacqui Taylor](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Monday, July 19, 2021 11:52:00 AM

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Thanks Jacqui.

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**From:** Jacqui Taylor  
**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 11:48 AM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

If the BOT would like to read the book, they can do so here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-1B0dAxxbI>

The author herself reads the book as a part of a livestream event for the Human Rights Campaign. It's at the very beginning of the video.

HRC created a lesson plan for teachers to pair with the book:

[https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/images/general/WS\\_Lesson\\_Prompt\\_Sam\\_is\\_My\\_Sister.pdf](https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/images/general/WS_Lesson_Prompt_Sam_is_My_Sister.pdf)

HRC has the book on a recommended reading list called *Diverse Picture Books with Transgender,*

*Non-Binary and Gender Expansive Characters.* <https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/welcoming-schools/documents/WS-Diverse-Picture-Books-Transgender-Non-Binary.pdf?mtime=20210501080020&focal=none>

Best,

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Jacqui

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**From:** Kristi Hale  
**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 11:08 AM  
**To:** Jacqui Taylor <[Taylor@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:Taylor@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

I spoke to Diane, and she said we didn't have picture books out on display during pride month. We just had the display below the tween window. Is that accurate? She said this was just out there as part of the new books, and that it wasn't intentionally set out there as part of a theme.

I'm free now, if you'd rather talk than write. I appreciate it. 937-250-6824

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**From:** Jacqui Taylor

**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 11:06 AM

**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

Would a phone call today be good for you? I'm available until 4pm.

I'll get started now on the request for reconsideration.

The book was featured in our Pride display. Before and since then, it may have been placed on display with other New books (the octagonal tables in front of the YS ref desk). New books go out like hot cakes, so I wouldn't be surprised if we displayed it there, too.

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Jacqui

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**From:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>

**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 9:12:00 AM

**To:** Jacqui Taylor <[Taylor@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:Taylor@wrightlibrary.org)>

**Subject:** FW: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

Hi Jacqui,

This is the second complaint that we've received about our display. Just to be sure, this book was put out as part of Pride month, correct?

Thanks,  
Kristi

---

**From:** Joe [<mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Sunday, July 18, 2021 8:25 PM

**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>

**Subject:** Fwd: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

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Kristi,

Let's add this to the BOT agenda tomorrow during your Director's comments. I'd like to respond in a coordinated way.

Joe

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:**

**Date:** July 18, 2021 at 4:44:19 PM EDT

**To:** [fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)

**Subject:** Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that "... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

My concern is that the book is positioned for display upon entering the room to attract the attention of that young child *who is more likely to be confused by than enlightened by the material.*

If one agrees that the subject is not a "children's subject", then what is the objective of purchasing and displaying (prominently directed at children) a book on this topic?

I am concerned that the display of this book is *political advocacy* by a library employee aimed at children. Alternatively, the library is supporting the prominent display of books on transgenderism to young children.

I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Joe](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 12:03:00 PM

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Initial thoughts of a response, but still waiting for Jay's response:

Mr.

I was not intending to impute legal authority of the ALA Code of Ethics, only that it provides guiding principles. There are no laws requiring public librarians to censure what children use in the public library, and it would be impossible to do so, given self-checkout and the availability of online digital collections.

The Library is and should be accountable to the local community in what it selects, while being mindful to provide a broad spectrum of subject areas and viewpoints. While you have expressed that you do not feel the topic of transgender children is appropriate, others do not share that opinion. Local patrons have increasingly requested that the library provide books that introduce children to world cultures, holiday celebrations, and diverse families. In addition, local parents have explicitly expressed interest in books for their children who are questioning their gender, or for siblings or friends of children who are questioning their gender. "Sam is my Sister" was selected in response to these requests.

---

**From:** Joe [mailto:[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 11:00 AM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

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Well, I will get out the Trustee manual and draft you another starting point to address below.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:**  
**Date:** July 22, 2021 at 10:37:15 AM EDT  
**To:** Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>  
**Subject: Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material**

Hello Joseph,

Thank you for your reply and attention to my concerns.

I would like to point out that the American Library Association is a private nonprofit that does not have legal authority and should not be used as a primary source for what libraries can and cannot do, or what they should or should not do.

The appropriate source is applicable laws and accountability to the community via

the elected school board who appoint the trustees. This is what Ms. Hale should be bound by, not the position statements of a nonprofit organization, which carry no inherent legal authority. To me, this is a fundamental misunderstanding as to whom Ms. Hale owes a duty to - which is the community via the elected school board, not the private association.

Second, the development policy is exceptionally vague to the degree of providing no actual boundaries on purchases, instead leaving librarian discretion.

I also take indirectly from the reply that the purchase was made by librarian decision and not patron request, and that this material was widely available via inter library loan and need not be added to our collection via taxpayer funds given this wide availability. This wide availability undercuts rather than supports the premise for purchase being agnostic.

I request you consider these reasoned points. I may send an additional message after further thought.

Thank you for your reply,

On July 22, 2021 9:56:39 AM EDT, Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your letter of concern and your support of a library free of censorship.

The development, maintenance, and display of the library's collection is the responsibility of the Library Director, so I consulted with Director Kristi Hale when I received your inquiry. Ms. Hale shared that you submitted a Request for Reconsideration form, asking that the book be removed from display. Together, Ms. Hale and I brought your concerns to the Wright Library Board of Trustees at our July Board meeting Monday night. Myself, our other trustees, and Ms. Hale discussed your email point by point and examined a copy of "Sam is My Sister."

From your letter, you asked for follow up on these points:

1. Provide an explanation for how this and similar books are selected for purchase.
2. Determine whether or not library employees are engaged in political

advocacy in what we select for purchase and display.

3. Take steps to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice.

An evaluation conducted this week by Ms. Hale and her staff concluded that “Sam is My Sister” meets Wright Library’s Collection Development Policy (see attached pdf). It fills a subject area that has interest and appeal to local parents, and it has received positive reviews in numerous library journals and publications (Kirkus Review March 1, 2021, Publisher’s Weekly, May 3, 2021, and School Library Journal, June 1, 2021), as well as professional websites (i.e. Youth Services Book Review). It is owned by 13 other Ohio libraries in the SearchOhio consortium, including Dayton Metro, Washington-Centerville, and Greene County public libraries.

Regarding the second point, “Sam is my Sister” was not displayed with a political intent. Rather, it was one of about 300 new books that recently arrived at the library, and it was placed on a new book display along with about 25 other new books. As patrons deplete the display, it is backfilled from the remaining new books, without regard to their subject matter. It is a random process. Nevertheless, Ms. Hale checked with youth services employees and confirmed there was no underlying intent or political advocacy behind what was displayed. Ms. Hale also confirmed with other team leadership that there has been no surreptitious push for the prominent display of transgenderism books. In summary, Wright Library staff replenished the books randomly and both staff and leadership have no overarching agenda.

Regarding the protection of children, Ms. Hale informed us that libraries cannot and do not act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's [Code of Ethics](#), which states that all members of the librarian profession should be explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom to access information. The responsibility to monitor children’s access and use of library resources must lie solely on parents or guardians. However, Wright Library staff assists parents and children by helping them select age-appropriate materials upon request. Wright Library also offers a Child Library Card, which limits film access to those designated as “family” in accordance with the Motion Picture Association rating system. Unfortunately, there is no similar rating system for books. Saying that, Ms. Hale has shelved the book in question rather than place it back on display at this time.

Again, thank you for your letter of concern. I apologize for the short delay in responding, but Ms. Hale, the Library Board, and I wanted to give this matter our full diligence. I hope you understand.

Warm regards,  
Joe

Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

On Sun, Jul 18, 2021 at 4:44 PM

wrote:

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that "... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

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I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

Sent from my Android device with K-9 Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Joe](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 11:39:00 AM

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Reading this more carefully, is he suggesting that we act as the gatekeepers for what children check out? How would that even be possible, given self-checkout?

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President, Board of Trustees  
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Oakwood OH 45419

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I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

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Sent from my Android device with K-9 Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Joe](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 11:37:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [Bylaws, BOT, June 2015.pdf](#)

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See Article X, 6<sup>th</sup> bullet point. Also in this document, it explains the Director role. However, I feel like the less additional we say, the less he will have to react to.

I am sending this to the OLC Legal Advisor, as I do not think the School Board has any jurisdiction over the library collection – only the appointment of the library trustees.

I think the primary point we need to make is what YS Librarian Karen Mills wrote up below, in the documentation for the Request for Reconsideration.

### 1) Interest and appeal to Wright Memorial Public Library patrons

- a. One of the most important jobs of Youth Services librarians is to purchase books that showcase children, no matter their race, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, so that all children may see themselves represented in, and so that they may relate to, the stories they read. Wright Library patrons have increasingly expressed the desire for library books that introduce children to world cultures, holiday celebrations, diverse families, etc. Diverse picture books help children have a better understanding of themselves and how they fit into their families, communities, and the world.
- b. While it might seem surprising that children are questioning their gender at such a young age, some do. Parents have expressed an interest in these books for their children who are questioning their gender, or for siblings or friends of children who are questioning their gender. By reading a book together, it provides a door to discussing a topic.

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**From:** Joe [mailto:[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 11:00 AM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Well, I will get out the Trustee manual and draft you another starting point to address below.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

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**Date:** July 22, 2021 at 10:37:15 AM EDT  
**To:** Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>

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Hello Joseph,

Thank you for your reply and attention to my concerns.

I would like to point out that the American Library Association is a private nonprofit that does not have legal authority and should not be used as a primary source for what libraries can and cannot do, or what they should or should not do.

The appropriate source is applicable laws and accountability to the community via the elected school board who appoint the trustees. This is what Ms. Hale should be bound by, not the position statements of a nonprofit organization, which carry no inherent legal authority. To me, this is a fundamental misunderstanding as to whom Ms. Hale owes a duty to - which is the community via the elected school board, not the private association.

Second, the development policy is exceptionally vague to the degree of providing no actual boundaries on purchases, instead leaving librarian discretion.

I also take indirectly from the reply that the purchase was made by librarian decision and not patron request, and that this material was widely available via inter library loan and need not be added to our collection via taxpayer funds given this wide availability. This wide availability undercuts rather than supports the premise for purchase being agnostic.

I request you consider these reasoned points. I may send an additional message after further thought.

Thank you for your reply,

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Dear

Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your letter of concern and your support of a library free of censorship.

The development, maintenance, and display of the library's collection is the responsibility of the Library Director, so I consulted with Director Kristi Hale when I received your inquiry. Ms. Hale shared that you submitted a Request for Reconsideration form, asking that the book be removed from display. Together, Ms. Hale and I brought your concerns to the Wright Library Board of Trustees at our July Board

meeting Monday night. Myself, our other trustees, and Ms. Hale discussed your email point by point and examined a copy of "Sam is My Sister."

From your letter, you asked for follow up on these points:

1. Provide an explanation for how this and similar books are selected for purchase.
2. Determine whether or not library employees are engaged in political advocacy in what we select for purchase and display.
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An evaluation conducted this week by Ms. Hale and her staff concluded that "Sam is My Sister" meets Wright Library's Collection Development Policy (see attached pdf). It fills a subject area that has interest and appeal to local parents, and it has received positive reviews in numerous library journals and publications (Kirkus Review March 1, 2021, Publisher's Weekly, May 3, 2021, and School Library Journal, June 1, 2021), as well as professional websites (i.e. Youth Services Book Review). It is owned by 13 other Ohio libraries in the SearchOhio consortium, including Dayton Metro, Washington-Centerville, and Greene County public libraries.

Regarding the second point, "Sam is my Sister" was not displayed with a political intent. Rather, it was one of about 300 new books that recently arrived at the library, and it was placed on a new book display along with about 25 other new books. As patrons deplete the display, it is backfilled from the remaining new books, without regard to their subject matter. It is a random process. Nevertheless, Ms. Hale checked with youth services employees and confirmed there was no underlying intent or political advocacy behind what was displayed. Ms. Hale also confirmed with other team leadership that there has been no surreptitious push for the prominent display of transgenderism books. In summary, Wright Library staff replenished the books randomly and both staff and leadership have no overarching agenda.

Regarding the protection of children, Ms. Hale informed us that libraries cannot and do not act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's [Code of Ethics](#), which states that all members of the librarian profession should be explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom to access information. The responsibility to

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Again, thank you for your letter of concern. I apologize for the short delay in responding, but Ms. Hale, the Library Board, and I wanted to give this matter our full diligence. I hope you understand.

Warm regards,  
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President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
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Oakwood OH 45419

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Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that " ... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

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# **Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library**

## **Article I. Name and Location**

This organization shall be called the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library. Its mailing address shall be:

Wright Memorial Public Library  
Board of Trustees  
1776 Far Hills Avenue  
Oakwood, OH 45419

## **Article II. Mission**

The Wright Memorial Public Library is a community gathering place that helps fulfill patron needs for information and entertainment materials, meets the learning needs of patrons on topics related to work, school and personal life; and encourages learning and intellectual growth from the earliest ages. The Library provides high levels of efficient, friendly personal service and fosters an atmosphere of intellectual liberty in the American tradition of free ideas.

## **Article III. Membership**

The Wright Memorial Public Library is organized as a School District Library. The library's Board of Trustees consists of seven members who are appointed by the Board of Education of the Oakwood City School District.

### **III Section A. Tenure and Qualifications**

Each library trustee is appointed to a seven-year term. Appointments are staggered such that only one trustee term is scheduled to expire each year.

Appointment to fill an unexpired term of four years or more is considered to be a full term.

Members of the Board of Trustees shall serve no more than two full consecutive terms.

All library trustees serve without compensation. Trustees are guided in the performance of their duties by the most recent edition of the *Ohio Public Library Trustees' Handbook*.



# **Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library**

## **III Section B. Attendance**

The insight and attention of each trustee is a valuable asset to the board and the library. Therefore, regular attendance is expected.

If a trustee has unexcused absences from three *regular* meetings during the calendar year, the board may request that trustee's resignation. Absences may be excused by a vote of the board by approval of the board meeting minutes.

## **III Section C. Filling Vacancies**

Vacancies on the board will be given public notice, with sufficient opportunity for interested citizens to make their interest known to the board.

The nominating committee of the Board of Trustees shall recommend to the full board candidates to fill a vacant trustee position. After review, the board shall by resolution select a candidate for each vacant position and request that the Board of Education of the Oakwood City School District appoint that candidate as a trustee.

## **Article IV. Duties and Powers of the Board**

The Board of Trustees shall have all the powers and duties granted to it by law and detailed in *Ohio Revised Code 3375.40*. The board shall determine and establish in accordance with the law, the basic policies of the library with respect to:

- The appropriation and budgeting of funds.
- The establishment and maintenance of the library and library services.
- The acquisition, improvement, maintenance, insurance, use, and disposition of properties.
- The hiring, compensation, and responsibilities of, and the personnel policies concerning, library employees.
- The selection, collection, lending, and disposition of library materials.
- The acceptance of gifts.

The policies approved by the board shall remain in effect until changed or rescinded by further action of the board. These policies shall be administered by library staff. The director shall maintain a file of all policies established by the board for consultation and distribution as directed by the board and as required by law.



# Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for hiring the library director and hiring and appointing the library fiscal officer, and for ensuring that the director and fiscal officer carry out the policies of the library in an effective, efficient, and lawful manner.

In order to speak with a consistent voice, all news of board actions or statements by the board released to the media shall be made by the board president or library director speaking for the board. No one board member, other than the president, shall speak for the board unless directed to do so by a vote of the board.

All powers of the library board are vested in it as a board, and none at all in its individual members. The individual trustee has no power to act for the board in any way, unless authorized to do so by the board itself. The Wright Memorial Public Library will provide reasonable coverage to indemnify trustees in the performance of their duties.

## Article V. Officers of the Board

At the annual *organization* meeting the board shall elect from its membership a president, vice-president, and secretary, each of whom shall serve a term of one year, commencing immediately upon election and continuing to the election of officers at the next annual *organization* meeting.

No board member shall hold more than one office at a time.

Rotation of terms of office is desirable.

Vacancies in office shall be filled by vote at a *regular* meeting of the board as soon as possible after the vacancy occurs.

Either the president, vice-president, or secretary shall sign, along with the fiscal officer, each check issued by the library. The president and secretary shall sign any conveyance of real property.



# **Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library**

## **V Section A. President**

The president shall preside at all meetings of the board; authorize calls for any special meetings; appoint all committees, with the consent of the board; execute all documents authorized by the board; and perform all other duties generally associated with that office. The president may serve as a non-voting member of all committees.

## **V Section B. Vice President**

If the president is absent or unavailable, or declines to act in the capacity of his or her office, or if the office of president is vacant, the vice-president shall have all the powers and duties of the president except as otherwise provided by law.

## **V Section C. Secretary**

The secretary shall preside at board meetings in the absence of the president and vice-president. The secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, a true and accurate record of meetings of the board.

## **Article VI. Board Meetings**

### **VI Section A. Meeting Types**

The board may hold meetings of several different types as described in the *Ohio Public Library Trustees' Handbook*. The board will hold an *organization* meeting in January of each year to elect officers, appoint a fiscal officer, and perform other administrative tasks. The *organization* meeting may be part of a *regular* board meeting.

### **VI Section B. Public Notice of Board Meetings**

At its *organization* meeting in January, the board shall establish, by rule, the method for notifying the public and the news media of the various board meetings that may be held throughout the year. Members of the public or news media who wish to be notified when a particular subject will be discussed at a meeting should inform the library director of their interest. The director will then make arrangements to give advance notice by e-mail or phone prior to the scheduled



## **Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library**

meeting; members of the public who wish to be notified by postal mail should provide the director with self-addressed, stamped envelopes for that purpose.

### **VI Section C. Agenda**

The *regular* meeting agenda is prepared at least four calendar days before the upcoming *regular* board meeting. The library director prepares the regular meeting agenda in consultation with the fiscal officer and board president.

### **VI Section D. Quorum and Rules of Proceedings**

The quorum necessary for the board to transact business shall be four members. Lack of a quorum will automatically adjourn a board meeting. Meetings of the board will follow parliamentary procedures as outlined in *Roberts Rules of Order*, latest edition, when not inconsistent with these bylaws.

Except when a larger majority is required by law, an affirmative vote of the majority of Trustees present at a meeting at which a quorum exists shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The president may make or second a proposal before the board, may participate fully in discussions, and may vote upon all proposals. Each board member shall have one vote.

### **VI Section E. Suspension of Rules**

Any rule or resolution of the board, whether contained in these bylaws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with the business at hand by a vote of the board.

### **VI Section F. Executive Session**

The board may enter into executive session for purposes as described in the *Ohio Open Meetings Act [ORC 121.229(G)]*. The motion to hold an executive session shall state the purpose of such a session, and the motion must be approved in open meeting in a roll call vote by a majority of the board. The board may not take action in executive session other than to vote to adjourn or recess the session.



# **Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library**

## **VI Section G. Public Participation**

Persons interested in Library procedure and/or service, seeking information or having suggestions for better or additional service are invited to appear before the Board at its regular meeting, to present such proposals. Suggestions for definite change in Board procedure that would require Board action should be submitted in writing for Board consideration. A maximum of thirty (30) minutes of public participation will be permitted at each meeting, with each person being given five (5) minutes to speak. All visitors are to sign in. Those wishing to speak must indicate that intent on the sign-in sheet. Visitors will be recognized in the order in which they sign in. To speak, a visitor must arrive before the public participation portion of the agenda has been completed. A person may speak only once per meeting. The Trustees will listen and take all comments under advisement. The Secretary will keep track of the time.

## **Article VII. Committees**

The standing committees of the board shall be Facilities Committee, Finance/Audit Committee, Personnel Committee, Policy Committee, Nominating Committee, and Records Commission.

Special, Ad hoc, or temporary committees may be appointed and charged with specific tasks by the board president as required; such committees may include non-Board members; and such committees are automatically dissolved upon completion of the assigned tasks.

Appointments to committees are made by the president with the consent of the board.

Committees serve an advisory role and make recommendations to the board; a committee has no other power, unless, by suitable action of the board, it is granted a specific power to act. All committee actions are subject to approval by a vote of the board. In general, committees will work in conjunction with the director and fiscal officer.



# **Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library**

## **VII Section A. Facilities Committee**

The committee shall advise the board concerning the condition, maintenance, and improvement of the library grounds, building, furniture, fixtures, and equipment.

## **VII Section B. Finance/Audit Committee**

The committee shall advise the board on all matters relating to the library budget, appropriations, funds, investments, finances, receipts, and disbursements. The committee shall also monitor and review the library's accounting and financial reporting practices, legal compliance, financial condition and controls over safeguarding of assets.

## **VII Section C. Personnel Committee**

The committee shall manage the process of hiring and performance appraisal of the Director and Fiscal officer on behalf of the board.

## **VII Section D. Policy Committee**

The Policy Committee shall advise the board on library policies not covered by the other standing committees.

## **VII Section E. Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of officers at the *organization* meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

The Nominating Committee also manages the process of finding, vetting and recommending candidates to fill board vacancies.

## **VII Section F. Records Commission**

The Records Commission shall consist of the Board of Trustees and the fiscal officer. The commission shall meet at least once every twelve months and shall be responsible for overseeing the Library's compliance with the Ohio Records Law as described in Chapter 149 of the *Ohio Revised Code*.



# Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library

## Article VIII. Library Director

The board shall appoint and fix the compensation of the library director. The director shall have full charge of the administration and operations of the library in accordance with the objectives and policies adopted by the board and under the direction and review of the board. The library director has the authority to administer, and is responsible for, the care of all buildings, furnishings, and equipment; for the employment and direction of library staff; for the selection, acquisition, and disposition of library materials; and for maintaining excellent library service.

The director shall serve at the discretion of the board. His or her employment shall be governed by the policies of the Wright Memorial Public Library as adopted by the Board of Trustees.

## Article IX. Fiscal Officer

The board shall appoint and fix the compensation of the fiscal officer. The fiscal officer is the library's chief financial officer and acts as the Board's financial agent in library matters. The fiscal officer shall administer and manage the funds of the library in accordance with law and with the objectives and policies adopted by the board and under the direction and review of the board. The fiscal officer has the authority to administer, and is responsible for, the receipt, deposit, and expenditure of, funds; the internal control of library expenditures; and the documenting and reporting of financial activity.

The fiscal officer shall serve at the discretion of the board and is appointed for a one-year term at the annual *organization* meeting of the Board of Trustees. His or her employment shall be governed by the policies of the Wright Memorial public Library as adopted by the Board of Trustees.

## Article X. Ethics

The Board of Trustees subscribes to the statement of principles promulgated by the American Library Trustee Association as listed below, and is bound by the applicable statutes of the Ohio Ethics Law and the rulings of the Ohio Ethics Commission.



# Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Wright Memorial Public Library

## ETHICS STATEMENT FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEES

- Trustees in the capacity of trust upon them, shall observe ethical standards with absolute truth, integrity and honor.
- Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the institution.
- It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.
  
- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statement between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the board even if they personally disagree.
- A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.
- Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.
- Trustees who accept library board responsibilities are expected to perform all of the functions of library trustees.

### **Article XI. Amending of Bylaws**

The Policy Committee shall review these bylaws annually and recommend changes to the board when necessary, normally at the annual meeting.

These bylaws may be amended at any board meeting by the affirmative vote of a majority of the full membership of the Board of Trustees provided that a notice of the proposed amendment shall have been included in the agenda for the meeting.

### **Article XII. Indemnification**

Members of the Board of Trustees are covered by the library's Directors & Officers Liability Policy (a CNA policy, through Arlington/Roe & Company, Inc.) including their liability resulting from either institutional or individual lawsuits.



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**Subject:** RE: Children's Book on Transgenderism  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 8:58:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [Response to Same is My Sister Reconsideration Request - DRAFT.docx](#)

---

Joe,

I reviewed it one last time and the only change I made was to make all references to me as Ms. Hale (instead of a few saying Kristi). If you are good with it, please send – along with the copy of the Collection Development Policy I sent in an earlier e-mail.

Thank you very, very much for the support on this.

Kristi

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Kristi,

Oh my gosh you made this letter so much better! No changes on my end to version 2.0 and length is just perfect. I'd like to get it out tonight if you see this and approve.

Been out sailing all day with Perry. I think he is in a better place now.  
Joe

On Wed, Jul 21, 2021 at 12:54 PM Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)> wrote:

Joe

I've attached Draft #2. It's long, maybe too long. See what you think. Let's discuss before sending.

Kristi

---

**From:** Joe [mailto:[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 20, 2021 6:56 PM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Children's Book on Transgenderism

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Sounds good. You are an amazing juggler and tomorrow evening is fine.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 20, 2021, at 3:53 PM, Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)> wrote:

Thanks Joe. I have been tied up in meetings all day, and I have more in the morning. I've started on it, and I'll make it my top priority for tomorrow afternoon.

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**Sent:** Tuesday, July 20, 2021 3:19 PM

**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>

**Subject:** Children's Book on Transgenderism

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Kristi,

Here is a first draft. I am happy to make it a dual signature kind of letter if you think that is better. :)

Joe

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

**Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your letter of concern and your support of a library free of censorship.**

**At our July Board meeting last night, myself, our other trustees, and our Director, Kristi Hale, discussed your email point by point and examined a copy of "Sam is My Sister." Ms Hale explained to us that this popular and newly published book is owned by 13 other Ohio libraries (including Dayton Metro, Washington-Centerville, and Greene County libraries) and was one of 300 new children's picture books we recently purchased. This particular picture book made its way out to that display area as one of about 25 on a wide range of topics. She also explained how display books get replenished from our new purchase stack for patrons to peruse. In short, it is a random process. Nevertheless, she checked with our youth services employees and they confirmed there was no underlying intent or political advocacy behind what was displayed. Ms Hale also confirmed with other team leads that there was no surreptitious push for**

**the prominent display of transgenderism books. In summary, Wright Library staff replenished the books randomly and both staff and leadership have no overarching agenda.**

**Regarding the protection of children, Ms Hale informed us that libraries cannot and do not act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's [Code of Ethics](#). And, even though there is a national rating system for movies and video games to help parents, there is no rating system for children's books. Saying that, she has asked the youth services staff to remove this book from prominent display and shelve it. Unfortunately, without some sort of national rating system, libraries just do not have the tools to filter children's books. That is, there may be similar books in the future on display.**

**Again, thank you for your letter of concern. I apologize for the short delay in responding but given that we had the entire Board together last night, and it was a good opportunity to have a roundtable discussion about the points you raised, I hope you understand.**

**Warm regards,  
Joe**

**Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419**

----- Forwarded message -----

From:

Date: Sun, Jul 18, 2021 at 4:44 PM

Subject: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

To: <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that " ... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

My concern is that the book is positioned for display upon entering the room to

attract the attention of that young child *who is more likely to be confused by than enlightened by the material.*

If one agrees that the subject is not a "children's subject", then what is the objective of purchasing and displaying (prominently directed at children) a book on this topic?

I am concerned that the display of this book is *political advocacy* by a library employee aimed at children. Alternatively, the library is supporting the prominent display of books on transgenderism to young children.

I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

The book is owned by 13 other library systems in SearchOhio, including Washington-Centerville, Dayton Metro, and Greene County, and will likely be added to others (it's newly published). It's based on actual events of one family's journey to understand and embrace their child's identity as transgender. In the back, it provides additional resources for where to find support. I will have the book with me at the board meeting.

This patron submitted a Request for Reconsideration, reiterating that he does not wish it withdrawn from the collection, but only that it not be displayed.

I did some inquiring in youth services, and there was no intent or political advocacy in selecting this book for display. It was one of about 25 new books on the "new book" display. We have had a huge influx of about 300 new children's picture books (our book jobber is finally getting caught up after COVID, and there's been a big backlog that is now coming in). When the display needs replenishing, staff grab a stack and put them out. This was explained to the patron when he visited and inquired.

I can ask that the book get shelved today, but I cannot promise that

this book will never be displayed. Nor can I promise that children will not be exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice. Unlike audiovisual materials, books do not come with ratings where the library can block certain types of patrons from checking them out. Libraries do not and cannot act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. If a parent sends their child to the library with a library card, they have full access to all the books in our collection, and library staff do not censure them. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's Code of Ethics. Parents have a choice to not sign their children up for a library card and not let them visit alone.

## “Sam Is My Sister” Selection Criteria Analysis

### 1) Reviews in library journals and other publications

#### a. Professional print publications

- i. Kirkus Reviews March 1, 2021: Sam’s brother wonders if they can still play the same games now that Sam has come out as transgender. “Brothers to the moon!” Evan proclaims as he leads his two siblings on an imaginary space journey. The only problem is that Sam isn’t his brother—she’s his sister. Evan is hurt that Sam doesn’t want to be like her brothers anymore; Sam wants long hair, bows, and princess books. With the help of supportive parents, Evan comes to understand and accept Sam’s choices and her autonomy, and he learns that even princesses can go to the moon. The simple, full-page illustrations portraying the White family are cute but feel aesthetically and emotionally stiff. Like most trans girls in fiction, Sam has stereotypically girly interests and many pink outfits, but Rhodes-Courter does point out that clothes, books, and hobbies are for everyone, regardless of gender. The text is a little more instructional than it is entertaining, but it successfully explains being transgender in a clear and age-appropriate way while demonstrating the value of a loving family. Though it falls into the unfortunate trap of centering the experience of cisgender family members, it does have a worthwhile lesson: Transitioning does not change who someone is in their heart. A satisfactory trans picture book that can support discussion at home or school. (author’s note, resources) (Picture book. 4-7)
- ii. Publishers Weekly May 3, 2021: Based on her own children, Rhodes-Courter writes this narrative following Sam, a blond, freckled transgender girl, and her pale, brown-haired brothers Evan and Finn, who notice that Sam is starting to prefer typically female-gendered things including “glittery” princess books, longer hair, and dresses. With the support of understanding parents, Sam begins to affirm her gender identity, and Evan and Finn begin to learn what being transgender means and how for Sam and some other people, “the way they think and feel inside doesn’t match what they look like on the outside.” Haley contributes simple dot-eyed digital portrayals, enriched with fabric textures. While the book centers the perspectives of Sam’s family instead of Sam herself, its clear narrative arc, slightly didactic prose, and expressive art cohere into a picture book that is a solid jumping-off point for guardian- or educator-led discussions. Includes an author’s note and resources. Ages 4–8. (Mar.)
- iii. School Library Journal June 1, 2021: K-Gr 2—Evan, Sam, and Finn are best friends and brothers who dream of going to the moon together. As summer turns to fall, and the brothers begin to get ready for school, Evan notices that Sam is beginning to change. Sam no longer wants to have his hair cut short; Sam wants to check out sparkly princess books, in addition to space books, at the library; Sam wants to wear a dress on the first day of school. Evan begins to question Sam’s decisions, but their parents tell Evan that Sam is more comfortable with these things. Evan asks Sam why he wants to look like a girl. Sam asks Evan to write with his left hand and Evan says it is uncomfortable. Sam tells Evan this is how he feels as a boy. Their parents tell them that Sam is transgender. Finn and Evan accept this well, but it does not go as smoothly at school. Based on a true story, the narration demonstrates both gentleness and strength. Rhodes-Courter shows both good (Sam’s family) and challenging (non-accepting peers) aspects, but emphasizes the importance of honesty and acceptance. Haley slowly shifts Sam’s appearance in the artwork, working in step with the events of the story. The pictures are bright, upbeat, and playful. VERDICT Recommended for public and elementary school libraries everywhere; transgender children need stories like this as it models both peer and self-acceptance in a logical, accessible, and loving way.—Lia Carruthers, Gill St. Bernard’s Sch., Gladstone, NJ

#### b. Professional websites

- i. Youth Services Book Review: <https://ysbookreviews.wordpress.com/2021/01/02/sam-is-my-sister-by-ashley-rhodes-courter-illustrations-by-mackenzie-haley/>  
“What did you like about the book? I absolutely loved this story—even more so when I read that it is the author’s own personal story of her family. [...] The story ends with the two brothers, and

one sister, deciding that they are still people no matter their gender and they will always be there for each other.

What I really loved about this book was the support that was shown by the parents and teacher for Sam. The parents allowed Sam to express herself and the reader could see Sam getting happier each time this happened. The story did show how other children will be less understanding [...] There is also some additional information in the back of the book about the author's personal experience which prompted the writing of this book.

*"Who should buy this book?* Public and elementary school libraries, school guidance offices, anyone who works with children between the ages of five and ten years old.

*"Where would you shelve it?* Picture [Books].

*"Reviewer's Name, Library (or school), City:* Kristin Guay, former youth services librarian."

- ii. Watermark (Florida LGBTQ newspaper): <https://watermarkonline.com/2021/04/08/sam-is-my-sister-educates-and-entertains-all-ages/>

"Seeing herself represented in another picture book helped [my daughter's coming out] process.' Among the family's LGBTQ-inclusive library was 'I Am Jazz' co-written by transgender activist Jazz Jennings, which immediately spoke to Sam.

"I had never seen Sam's face light up in the way that it did," Rhodes-Courter recalls. 'Sam just turned to me and said, 'Mommy, that's me. That's me. I'm transgender!' It was a total game changer and we stared exploring what that meant.'

"[The picture book format is] an amazing opportunity to approach what can be a difficult conversation [...] This book describes a very complex situation in really accessible language,' the author explains. 'The lens of a children's book can provide people like teachers with the language, skills and tools to understand how to create safer spaces for trans kids.'"

- iii. Human Rights Campaign Foundation (3 links):

Lesson plan for "Sam Is My Sister": [https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/images/general/WS\\_Lesson\\_Prompt\\_Sam\\_is\\_My\\_Sister.pdf](https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/images/general/WS_Lesson_Prompt_Sam_is_My_Sister.pdf)

Recommends "Sam Is My Sister" on its list "Top Recommended Books for a Welcoming School"

<https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/welcoming-schools/documents/WS-Top-Recommended-Books-for-a-Welcoming-School.pdf?mtime=20210501080037&focal=none>

Recommends "Sam Is My Sister" on its list "Diverse Picture Books with Transgender, Non-Binary and Gender Expansive Characters"

<https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/welcoming-schools/documents/WS-Diverse-Picture-Books-Transgender-Non-Binary.pdf?mtime=20210501080020&focal=none>

## 2) Information from publishers' catalogs and promotions

- a. "Evan loves being big brother to Sam and Finn. They do everything together—go fishing, climb trees, and play astronauts. But lately, Evan notices that he and Sam don't look like brothers anymore. Sam wants to have long hair, and even asks to wear a dress on the first day of school. As time goes by, Evan comes to understand why Sam wants to look like a girl—because Sam is a girl. Sam is transgender. And just like always, Sam loves to dream with Evan and Finn about going to the moon together. Based on one family's real-life experiences, this heartwarming story of a girl named Sam and the brothers who love and support her will resonate with readers everywhere."

<https://www.albertwhitman.com/book/sam-is-my-sister/>

## 3) Examination copies

- a. N/A

## 4) Patron recommendations

- a. N/A

## 5) Popular demand

- a. The print version of “Sam Is My Sister” has not yet circulated since it was added to the library’s collection on July 9. The ebook version of “Sam Is My Sister” has checked out twice since it was added to the collection on April 9.

## 6) Availability and cost

- a. “Sam Is My Sister” is available at Amazon (\$11.29 print, \$9.99 Kindle), Barnes & Noble (\$16.99 print, \$9.99 Nook), Target (\$11.29), Baker & Taylor (\$13.51), Booksamillion (\$16.99), and other retailers who carry books from publisher Albert Whitman & Company.

## 7) Interest and appeal to Wright Memorial Public Library patrons

- a. One of the most important jobs of Youth Services librarians is to purchase books that showcase children, no matter their race, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, so that all children may see themselves represented in, and so that they may relate to, the stories they read. Wright Library patrons have increasingly expressed the desire for library books that introduce children to world cultures, holiday celebrations, diverse families, etc. Diverse picture books help children have a better understanding of themselves and how they fit into their families, communities, and the world.
- b. While it might seem surprising that children are questioning their gender at such a young age, some do. Local parents have expressed an interest in these books for their children who are questioning their gender, or for siblings or friends of children who are questioning their gender. By reading a book together, it provides a door to discussing a topic.

## 8) Professional judgment based on education, training, and experience

- a. In all reference services, but especially with topics of a sensitive nature, Youth Services librarians strive to strike the right balance for the patrons’ information needs. We ask careful questions to discern which book may be best for sensitive topics, and also trust professional reviews from sources like School Library Journal, Publisher’s Weekly, and Kirkus Reviews when making a decision to purchase a book for Wright Library, or when recommending a book to a child and/or caregiver. Sam is My Sister received excellent reviews from all three review sources, as shown above in section 1.
- b. Sam is My Sister is a developmentally appropriate picture book, written in simple language, supported by the colorful illustrations that help to tell the story.
- c. Sam is My Sister is owned by neighboring libraries, including Dayton Metro Library, Washington-Centerville Public Library, and Greene County Public Library. It is also owned by libraries throughout the state of Ohio who participate in the Search Ohio Interlibrary Loan System.

**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Joseph Fulford](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book on Transgenderism  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 8:55:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [Collection Development Policy.pdf](#)

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Yes, on p. 27 of the policy manual. Also, this patron has been given a copy of it in the past, but we can attach it to the letter also.

---

**From:** Joseph Fulford [mailto:[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 21, 2021 9:23 PM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: Children's Book on Transgenderism

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Is Wright Library's Collection Development Policy available on line?

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President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
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# Collection Development

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## Collection Development Policy

### I. Introduction

It is the policy of the Wright Memorial Public Library Board of Trustees to recognize the diverse library needs of all citizens, regardless of age, race, national origin, religious, social, or political views.

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to guide staff in effectively using the library's financial resources to meet the needs of the community by:

- 1) Broadly defining the purposes and scope of the collection.
- 2) Designating the authority and responsibility for collection development.
- 3) Describing the selection criteria to be used.
- 4) Stating the policies on accepting gifts, withdrawal of materials, replacing lost and damaged items, and patron objections to materials in the collection.
- 5) Affirming support for the intellectual freedom statements of the American Library Association.

### II. Purpose of the Library's Collection

The purpose of the collection of Wright Memorial Public Library is to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals accepted by the Board of Trustees:

#### Mission

*The Wright Memorial Public Library is a community focal point that helps fulfill patron needs for information and entertainment materials; meets the learning needs of patrons on topics related to work, school, and personal life; and encourages learning and intellectual growth from the earliest ages. The library provides high levels of efficient, friendly, personal service; and fosters an atmosphere of intellectual liberty in the American tradition of free ideas.*

#### Vision

Wright Memorial Public Library has a distinctive role in the community as an institution that fuels the intellect and imagination of people of all ages. Wright Memorial Public Library recognizes that libraries are no longer just physical places containing inventories of books, but have become channels through which knowledge flows to patrons from many sources. The Library strives to serve all patrons, whether on-site or virtual, by providing the resources they seek promptly, completely, accurately, and in a comfortable environment. The Library partners with other organizations to project its reach in the community and strives to expand physical and virtual access to its resources. Wright Memorial Public Library seeks to play an active role in preparing preschoolers to learn, helping students succeed in school, and supporting lifelong learners by providing a broad range of viewpoints, formats, and programs. Wright Memorial Public Library actively works to connect patrons with resources that will enrich their lives.

## Goals

- 1) **Stimulate Imagination:** Reading, viewing and listening for pleasure.  
Library patrons will have materials and programs that excite their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing and listening experiences.
- 2) **Help Students Succeed in School:** Homework help.  
Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.
- 3) **Create Young Readers:** Early literacy.  
Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.
- 4) **Satisfy Curiosity:** Lifelong learning and life choices.  
Patrons will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives. Patrons will have the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.
- 5) **Provide a Comfortable Place to Visit:** Physical and virtual spaces.  
Patrons will have a safe and welcoming physical place to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.
- 6) **Connect Patrons to the Online World:** Public Internet access.  
Patrons will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

## III. Scope

The collection is intended to meet most needs of a suburban population, preschool age through senior adults. It is not intended to provide complete coverage of any given subject area, but rather a balanced selection of materials currently available. The collection is not archival and is reviewed and revised continuously to meet current needs.

Wright Memorial Public Library intends to offer choices of format, treatment, and level of difficulty so that most individuals' needs can be met without needlessly duplicating the resources available in other area libraries.

Both circulating and reference materials will usually be collected at the Basic Information Level for all subject areas, as defined by the American Library Association's *Guide for Written Collection Policy Statements*. Collecting at this level means that the library will usually purchase materials that serve "to introduce and define a subject and to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere." Emphasis is on works of general interest for the non-specialized user. The library uses interlibrary loan services to offer more specialized materials for patrons who request them.

An exception to the "basic level" of collecting is Oakwood local history materials, which are acquired as comprehensively as possible.

#### **IV. Authority and Responsibility for Collection Development**

Collection Development is and shall be vested in the Library Director by the Board of Trustees. Under the Library Director's direction, collection development may be delegated to members of the professional staff who are qualified for these duties by reason of education, training, and experience. Any material so selected for the collection shall be considered to have been selected by the Board of Trustees.

#### **V. Selection Criteria**

The selection of any material for the library does not constitute an endorsement of its content.

These are selection criteria to be used by collection development staff:

For all materials:

- 1) Reviews in library journals and other publications (though lack of a review or lack of a favorable review shall not be the sole criteria for rejection of a title for which there is popular demand)
- 2) Information from publishers' catalogs and promotions
- 3) Examination copies
- 4) Patron recommendations
- 5) Popular demand
- 6) Availability and cost
- 7) Interest and appeal to Wright Memorial Public Library patrons
- 8) Professional judgment based on education, training, and experience

Additional criteria for nonfiction:

- 1) Qualification or reputation of the author in the subject field
- 2) Scope of the subject matter
- 3) Quality of the writing
- 4) Needs of the community
- 5) Timeliness of the information
- 6) Reputation of the publisher
- 7) Organization of content (such as inclusion of indices and bibliographies)
- 8) Relationship to the existing collection
- 9) Weakness of the collection in a particular area
- 10) Physical qualities (binding, print size, illustrations)

Additional criteria for audiovisual items:

- 1) Reputation of an author, publisher, producer, director, artist, and/or performer
- 2) Quality of production and sound

#### **VI. Gifts and Donations**

Wright Memorial Public Library welcomes and encourages monetary gifts to supplement the materials budget. All acquisitions made with donated funds are made in accordance with this collection development policy. The library may not be able to fulfill requests regarding subject matter or specific titles. Due to space and use constraints, we cannot guarantee that any gift will remain permanently part of the collection.

The library also accepts donations of books and other library media. These are evaluated using the same criteria as is used for selection of all library materials.

The library retains unconditional ownership of gifts and decides if items will be added to the collection, offered in a book sale, or discarded. The library reserves the right to refuse donations.

The library does not provide monetary appraisal of any gift for income tax or other purposes, but may provide a receipt for the number of items donated.

### **VII. Withdrawal of Materials**

The library's objective is to maintain a collection of materials that are in demand by our patrons. Materials not in demand will be weeded and discarded. Weeding will be done continuously. Discarded materials may be made available in the library's book sale.

These are factors collection development staff will consider as favorable to weeding and discarding:

1. Poor physical condition
2. Content no longer considered accurate or factual and material not needed to represent a historical viewpoint
3. Little or no recent use
4. Excessive number of copies
5. Superseded editions
6. Availability of newer, better, more up-to-date editions or releases

### **VIII. Replacement of Lost or Damaged Items**

Materials missing, lost, destroyed, long overdue, or damaged will not automatically be replaced. The library only buys replacement copies of materials if usage warrants. Factors to be considered by staff in deciding on replacement include:

- 1) Is there a comparable, more recent title on the same subject?
- 2) Is there already adequate coverage in the subject area without replacing the title?
- 3) Is there demand for that specific title?
- 4) Is the title an essential work in the literature of the subject field or of a particular author?

### **IX. Patron Objections to Materials in the Collection**

Library patrons may address questions and concerns about materials selected, or about the collection policy, to the Director. Such patrons will be provided with a copy of this policy and a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Material" form. A patron who is not satisfied with the Director's response may choose to make arrangements to address the Board of Trustees at one of its regular meetings.

### **X. Intellectual Freedom**

The library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some users. Selection decisions are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the work in relation to the overall development of the collection and the necessity of meeting the needs of many individuals with a broad range of interests and viewpoints. No material shall be excluded because of race, nationality, political, religious or social views of the originator.

Responsibility for children's use of the library rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection is not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to children. Library materials are not



marked to show approval or disapproval of their contents, nor are they sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

**The Library Board vigorously supports the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and its interpretive documents. (See following sections)**

**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.

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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.
- 3) Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- 4) Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- 5) A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- 6) 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, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

**The Library Board vigorously supports intellectual freedom as articulated in the following position papers adopted by the American Library Association Council.**

**The Freedom to View**

The Freedom to View, along with 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, we affirm these principles:

- 1) It is in the public interest to provide the broadest possible access to films and other audiovisual materials because they have proven to be among the most effective means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to ensure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.



- 2) It is in the public interest to provide for our audiences films 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.
- 3) It is our professional responsibility to resist the constraint of labeling or prejudging a film on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
- 4) It is our professional responsibility to contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Education Film Library Association's Freedom to View Committee, and adopted by the EFLA Board of Directors in February, 1979. Endorsed by the ALA January 10, 1990. Educational Film Library Association, 43 W. 61 Street, New York, NY

### **Free Access to Libraries for Minors**

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, non-print, 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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.

<sup>1</sup> 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).

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Ohio law (*Ohio Revised Code* 149.432) allows a minor child’s parent, guardian, or legal custodian to have access to library records or patron information pertaining to that minor child. Library Board policy allows a minor child’s parent, guardian, or legal custodian to choose not to allow that child the ability to use his/her library card to borrow audiovisual materials.

### **Libraries: An American Value**

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America’s libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed.



To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- 1) We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the library's resources and services;
- 2) We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;
- 3) 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;
- 4) We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the library's resources;
- 5) We protect each individual's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services;
- 6) We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services;
- 7) We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners - informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.

By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

Adopted February 3, 1999, by the Council of the American Library Association

**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Joseph Fulford](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 4:40:00 PM

---

I know. And I want to avoid that if at all possible. If we address his comment about answering to the school board, perhaps just a statement like, "While the local school board is the appointing authority for the library board, the library's governance rests with the library's board of trustees."

---

**From:** Joseph Fulford [mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 3:59 PM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <hale@wrightlibrary.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Kristi,  
This is starting to look like something that Tipp City just went through.  
Joe

Sent from my iPad

On Jul 22, 2021, at 12:11 PM, Jay Smith <[jsmith@olc.org](mailto:jsmith@olc.org)> wrote:

Hi Kristi,

ORC 3375.15 <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3375.15> places sole discretion with your board of trustees "such library shall be under the control and management of a board of library trustees". The school board is merely the board's appointing authority.

Let me know if you need additional clarification.

Best,  
Jay

On Thu, Jul 22, 2021 at 11:33 AM Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)> wrote:

Jay,

We are getting push back from a community member about a Children's Picture Book entitled "Sam is My Sister." The book is based on a true story and deals with a family's effort to support and understand a transgender child.

The patron responded to our response about the book as stated below. I'd like your take on the following statement: The appropriate source is applicable laws and accountability to the community via the elected school board who appoint the trustees. This is what Ms. Hale should be bound by, not the position statements of a nonprofit organization, which carry no inherent legal authority. To me, this is a fundamental misunderstanding as to whom Ms. Hale owes a duty to - which is the community via the elected school board, not the private association.

The patron is alleging that the School Board is the governing authority over the library's collection. Are there any Ohio laws that give the library discretion over our collection?

Thank you,

Kristi

Begin forwarded message:

**From:**  
**Date:** July 22, 2021 at 10:37:15 AM EDT  
**To:** Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>  
**Subject: Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material**

Hello Joseph,

Thank you for your reply and attention to my concerns.

I would like to point out that the American Library Association is a private nonprofit that does not have legal authority and should not be used as a primary source for what libraries can and cannot do, or what they should or should not do.

The appropriate source is applicable laws and accountability to the community via the elected school board who appoint the trustees. This is what Ms. Hale should be bound by, not the position statements of a nonprofit organization, which carry no inherent legal authority. To me, this is a fundamental misunderstanding as to whom Ms. Hale owes a duty to - which is the community via the elected school board, not the private association.

Second, the development policy is exceptionally vague to the degree of providing no actual boundaries on purchases, instead leaving librarian discretion.

I also take indirectly from the reply that the purchase was made by librarian decision and not patron request, and that this material was widely available via inter library loan and need not be added to our collection via taxpayer funds given this wide availability. This wide availability undercuts rather than supports the premise for

purchase being agnostic.

I request you consider these reasoned points. I may send an additional message after further thought.

Thank you for your reply,

On July 22, 2021 9:56:39 AM EDT, Joseph Fulford  
<[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your letter of concern and your support of a library free of censorship.

The development, maintenance, and display of the library's collection is the responsibility of the Library Director, so I consulted with Director Kristi Hale when I received your inquiry. Ms. Hale shared that you submitted a Request for Reconsideration form, asking that the book be removed from display. Together, Ms. Hale and I brought your concerns to the Wright Library Board of Trustees at our July Board meeting Monday night. Myself, our other trustees, and Ms. Hale discussed your email point by point and examined a copy of "Sam is My Sister."

From your letter, you asked for follow up on these points:

1. Provide an explanation for how this and similar books are selected for purchase.
2. Determine whether or not library employees are engaged in political advocacy in what we select for purchase and display.
3. Take steps to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice.

An evaluation conducted this week by Ms. Hale and her staff concluded that "Sam is My Sister" meets Wright Library's Collection Development Policy (see attached pdf). It fills a subject area that has interest and appeal to

local parents, and it has received positive reviews in numerous library journals and publications (Kirkus Review March 1, 2021, Publisher's Weekly, May 3, 2021, and School Library Journal, June 1, 2021), as well as professional websites (i.e. Youth Services Book Review). It is owned by 13 other Ohio libraries in the SearchOhio consortium, including Dayton Metro, Washington-Centerville, and Greene County public libraries.

Regarding the second point, "Sam is my Sister" was not displayed with a political intent. Rather, it was one of about 300 new books that recently arrived at the library, and it was placed on a new book display along with about 25 other new books. As patrons deplete the display, it is backfilled from the remaining new books, without regard to their subject matter. It is a random process.

Nevertheless, Ms. Hale checked with youth services employees and confirmed there was no underlying intent or political advocacy behind what was displayed. Ms. Hale also confirmed with other team leadership that there has been no surreptitious push for the prominent display of transgenderism books. In summary, Wright Library staff replenished the books randomly and both staff and leadership have no overarching agenda.

Regarding the protection of children, Ms. Hale informed us that libraries cannot and do not act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's [Code of Ethics](#), which states that all members of the librarian profession should be explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom to access information. The responsibility to monitor children's access and use of library resources must lie solely on parents or guardians. However, Wright Library staff assists parents and children by helping them select age-appropriate materials upon request. Wright Library also offers a Child Library Card, which limits film access to those designated as "family" in accordance with the Motion Picture Association rating system. Unfortunately, there is no similar rating system for books. Saying that, Ms. Hale has shelved the book in question rather than

place it back on display at this time.

Again, thank you for your letter of concern. I apologize for the short delay in responding, but Ms. Hale, the Library Board, and I wanted to give this matter our full diligence. I hope you understand.

Warm regards,  
Joe

Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

On Sun, Jul 18, 2021 at 4:44 PM  
wrote:

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that " ... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

My concern is that the book is positioned for display upon entering the room to attract the attention of that young child *who is more likely to be confused by than enlightened by the material.*

If one agrees that the subject is not a "children's subject", then what is the objective of purchasing and displaying (prominently directed at children) a book on this topic?

I am concerned that the display of this book is *political advocacy* by a library employee aimed at children.

Alternatively, the library is supporting the prominent display of books on transgenderism to young children.

I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

--

Sent from my Android device with K-9 Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

--

**Jay Smith**

Director of Government and Legal Services

Ohio Library Council

Phone: (614) 410-8092 x103

Cell: (614) 619-0844

Email: [jsmith@olc.org](mailto:jsmith@olc.org)



**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Joe](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 12:03:00 PM

---

Initial thoughts of a response, but still waiting for Jay's response:

Mr. ,

I was not intending to impute legal authority of the ALA Code of Ethics, only that it provides guiding principles. There are no laws requiring public librarians to censure what children use in the public library, and it would be impossible to do so, given self-checkout and the availability of online digital collections.

The Library is and should be accountable to the local community in what it selects, while being mindful to provide a broad spectrum of subject areas and viewpoints. While you have expressed that you do not feel the topic of transgender children is appropriate, others do not share that opinion. Local patrons have increasingly requested that the library provide books that introduce children to world cultures, holiday celebrations, and diverse families. In addition, local parents have explicitly expressed interest in books for their children who are questioning their gender, or for siblings or friends of children who are questioning their gender. "Sam is my Sister" was selected in response to these requests.

---

**From:** Joe [mailto:[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 11:00 AM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

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Well, I will get out the Trustee manual and draft you another starting point to address below.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:**  
**Date:** July 22, 2021 at 10:37:15 AM EDT  
**To:** Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>  
**Subject: Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material**

Hello Joseph,

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The appropriate source is applicable laws and accountability to the community via

the elected school board who appoint the trustees. This is what Ms. Hale should be bound by, not the position statements of a nonprofit organization, which carry no inherent legal authority. To me, this is a fundamental misunderstanding as to whom Ms. Hale owes a duty to - which is the community via the elected school board, not the private association.

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I also take indirectly from the reply that the purchase was made by librarian decision and not patron request, and that this material was widely available via inter library loan and need not be added to our collection via taxpayer funds given this wide availability. This wide availability undercuts rather than supports the premise for purchase being agnostic.

I request you consider these reasoned points. I may send an additional message after further thought.

Thank you for your reply,

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I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

--

Sent from my Android device with K-9 Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Jay Smith](#)  
**Cc:** [fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** RE: FW: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 12:46:00 PM

---

Thank you for this important information, Jay.

---

**From:** Jay Smith [mailto:[jsmith@olc.org](mailto:jsmith@olc.org)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 12:12 PM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Cc:** [fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Re: FW: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

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Hi Kristi,

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The patron is alleging that the School Board is the governing authority over the library's collection. Are there any Ohio laws that give the library discretion over our collection?

Thank you,

Kristi

Begin forwarded message:

**From:**

**Date:** July 22, 2021 at 10:37:15 AM EDT

**To:** Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

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Dear

Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your letter of concern and your support of a library free of censorship.

The development, maintenance, and display of the library's collection is the responsibility of the Library Director, so I consulted with Director Kristi Hale when I received your inquiry. Ms. Hale shared that you submitted a Request for Reconsideration form, asking that the book be removed from display. Together, Ms. Hale and I brought your concerns to the Wright Library Board of Trustees at our July Board meeting Monday night. Myself, our other trustees, and Ms. Hale discussed your email point by point and examined a copy of "Sam is My Sister."

From your letter, you asked for follow up on these points:

1. Provide an explanation for how this and similar books are selected for purchase.
2. Determine whether or not library employees are engaged in political advocacy in what we select for purchase and display.
3. Take steps to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice.

An evaluation conducted this week by Ms. Hale and her staff concluded that "Sam is My Sister" meets Wright Library's Collection Development Policy (see attached pdf). It fills a subject area that has interest and appeal to local parents, and it has received positive reviews in numerous library journals and publications (Kirkus Review March 1, 2021, Publisher's Weekly, May 3, 2021, and School Library Journal, June 1, 2021), as well as professional websites (i.e. Youth Services Book Review). It is owned by 13 other Ohio libraries in the SearchOhio consortium, including Dayton Metro, Washington-Centerville, and Greene County public libraries.

Regarding the second point, "Sam is my Sister" was not displayed with a political intent. Rather, it was one of about 300 new books that recently arrived at the library, and it was placed on a new book display along with about 25 other new books. As patrons deplete the display, it is backfilled from the remaining new books, without regard to their subject matter. It is a random process. Nevertheless, Ms. Hale checked with youth services employees and confirmed there was no underlying intent or political advocacy behind what was displayed. Ms. Hale also confirmed with other team leadership that there has been no surreptitious push for the prominent display of transgenderism books. In summary, Wright Library staff replenished the books randomly and both staff and leadership have

no overarching agenda.

Regarding the protection of children, Ms. Hale informed us that libraries cannot and do not act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's [Code of Ethics](#), which states that all members of the librarian profession should be explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom to access information. The responsibility to monitor children's access and use of library resources must lie solely on parents or guardians. However, Wright Library staff assists parents and children by helping them select age-appropriate materials upon request. Wright Library also offers a Child Library Card, which limits film access to those designated as "family" in accordance with the Motion Picture Association rating system. Unfortunately, there is no similar rating system for books. Saying that, Ms. Hale has shelved the book in question rather than place it back on display at this time.

Again, thank you for your letter of concern. I apologize for the short delay in responding, but Ms. Hale, the Library Board, and I wanted to give this matter our full diligence. I hope you understand.

Warm regards,  
Joe

Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

On Sun, Jul 18, 2021 at 4:44 PM

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that " ... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children,

I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

My concern is that the book is positioned for display upon entering the room to attract the attention of that young child *who is more likely to be confused by than enlightened by the material.*

If one agrees that the subject is not a "children's subject", then what is the objective of purchasing and displaying (prominently directed at children) a book on this topic?

I am concerned that the display of this book is *political advocacy* by a library employee aimed at children. Alternatively, the library is supporting the prominent display of books on transgenderism to young children.

I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

--

Sent from my Android device with K-9 Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

--

**Jay Smith**

Director of Government and Legal Services

Ohio Library Council

Phone: (614) 410-8092 x103

Cell: (614) 619-0844

Email: [jsmith@olc.org](mailto:jsmith@olc.org)



**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Joseph Fulford](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Children's Book on Transgenderism  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 8:58:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [Response to Same is My Sister Reconsideration Request - DRAFT.docx](#)

---

Joe,

I reviewed it one last time and the only change I made was to make all references to me as Ms. Hale (instead of a few saying Kristi). If you are good with it, please send – along with the copy of the Collection Development Policy I sent in an earlier e-mail.

Thank you very, very much for the support on this.

Kristi

---

**From:** Joseph Fulford [mailto:[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 21, 2021 9:14 PM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: Children's Book on Transgenderism

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Kristi,

Oh my gosh you made this letter so much better! No changes on my end to version 2.0 and length is just perfect. I'd like to get it out tonight if you see this and approve.

Been out sailing all day with Perry. I think he is in a better place now.  
Joe

On Wed, Jul 21, 2021 at 12:54 PM Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)> wrote:

Joe

I've attached Draft #2. It's long, maybe too long. See what you think. Let's discuss before sending.

Kristi

---

**From:** Joe [mailto:[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 20, 2021 6:56 PM  
**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Children's Book on Transgenderism

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Sounds good. You are an amazing juggler and tomorrow evening is fine.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 20, 2021, at 3:53 PM, Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)> wrote:

Thanks Joe. I have been tied up in meetings all day, and I have more in the morning. I've started on it, and I'll make it my top priority for tomorrow afternoon.

---

**From:** Joseph Fulford [<mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 20, 2021 3:19 PM

**To:** Kristi Hale <[hale@wrightlibrary.org](mailto:hale@wrightlibrary.org)>

**Subject:** Children's Book on Transgenderism

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Kristi,

Here is a first draft. I am happy to make it a dual signature kind of letter if you think that is better. :)

Joe

**Dear**

**Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your letter of concern and your support of a library free of censorship.**

**At our July Board meeting last night, myself, our other trustees, and our Director, Kristi Hale, discussed your email point by point and examined a copy of "Sam is My Sister." Ms Hale explained to us that this popular and newly published book is owned by 13 other Ohio libraries (including Dayton Metro, Washington-Centerville, and Greene County libraries) and was one of 300 new children's picture books we recently purchased. This particular picture book made its way out to that display area as one of about 25 on a wide range of topics. She also explained how display books get replenished from our new purchase stack for patrons to peruse. In short, it is a random process. Nevertheless, she checked with our youth services employees and they confirmed there was no underlying intent or political advocacy behind what was displayed. Ms Hale also confirmed with other team leads that there was no surreptitious push for**

**the prominent display of transgenderism books. In summary, Wright Library staff replenished the books randomly and both staff and leadership have no overarching agenda.**

**Regarding the protection of children, Ms Hale informed us that libraries cannot and do not act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's [Code of Ethics](#). And, even though there is a national rating system for movies and video games to help parents, there is no rating system for children's books. Saying that, she has asked the youth services staff to remove this book from prominent display and shelve it. Unfortunately, without some sort of national rating system, libraries just do not have the tools to filter children's books. That is, there may be similar books in the future on display.**

**Again, thank you for your letter of concern. I apologize for the short delay in responding but given that we had the entire Board together last night, and it was a good opportunity to have a roundtable discussion about the points you raised, I hope you understand.**

**Warm regards,  
Joe**

**Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419**

----- Forwarded message -----

From:

Date: Sun, Jul 18, 2021 at 4:44 PM

Subject: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

To: <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that " ... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

My concern is that the book is positioned for display upon entering the room to

attract the attention of that young child *who is more likely to be confused by than enlightened by the material.*

If one agrees that the subject is not a "children's subject", then what is the objective of purchasing and displaying (prominently directed at children) a book on this topic?

I am concerned that the display of this book is *political advocacy* by a library employee aimed at children. Alternatively, the library is supporting the prominent display of books on transgenderism to young children.

I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

The book is owned by 13 other library systems in SearchOhio, including Washington-Centerville, Dayton Metro, and Greene County, and will likely be added to others (it's newly published). It's based on actual events of one family's journey to understand and embrace their child's identity as transgender. In the back, it provides additional resources for where to find support. I will have the book with me at the board meeting.

This patron submitted a Request for Reconsideration, reiterating that he does not wish it withdrawn from the collection, but only that it not be displayed.

I did some inquiring in youth services, and there was no intent or political advocacy in selecting this book for display. It was one of about 25 new books on the "new book" display. We have had a huge influx of about 300 new children's picture books (our book jobber is finally getting caught up after COVID, and there's been a big backlog that is now coming in). When the display needs replenishing, staff grab a stack and put them out. This was explained to the patron when he visited and inquired.

I can ask that the book get shelved today, but I cannot promise that

this book will never be displayed. Nor can I promise that children will not be exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice. Unlike audiovisual materials, books do not come with ratings where the library can block certain types of patrons from checking them out. Libraries do not and cannot act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. If a parent sends their child to the library with a library card, they have full access to all the books in our collection, and library staff do not censure them. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's Code of Ethics. Parents have a choice to not sign their children up for a library card and not let them visit alone.

**From:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**To:** [Jacqui Taylor](#); [Brian Potts](#); [Elizabeth Schmidt](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Friday, July 23, 2021 12:59:00 PM

---

Librarians,

I wanted to share with each of you the second round of correspondence between [redacted] and Joe Fulford. I don't think this needs to be shared with everyone on your teams, but I wanted you to be aware of the content of [redacted] continued concerns, and our response.

Kristi

---

**From:** Joseph Fulford [mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 23, 2021 12:37 PM  
**To:**  
**Cc:** Kristi Hale <hale@wrightlibrary.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear

Thank you again for reaching out to me regarding how Wright Library is governed. Let me address each of your points.

The American Library Association's (ALA) Code of Ethics is not legally binding authority. ALA provides libraries across the USA with guiding principles much like the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) does for their community. Neither have legal authority but are important nonprofits bringing together communities of interest and experts in each field. Just as ASME voluntary standards are cited by government agencies and sometimes included in federal, state, or local regulations, ALA guiding principles certainly help but do not legally bind libraries unless those principles are included in law.

The appropriate law regarding library trustees is under Ohio Revised Code 3375.15 <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3375.15> which states that libraries "...shall be under the control and management of a board of library trustees consisting of seven members." I understand, as do the other trustees and Ms. Hale, that the Director is accountable to the library board which has members appointed by the Oakwood School Board.

Regarding collection development, there are 20 criteria that Wright Library's very experienced and professional staff use to guide purchases. As trustees, we very much rely upon our librarian's discretion when selecting materials that meet our policy. They excel at their job and get regular and high praise from the community.

The purchase of "Sam is My Sister" was initiated based on local patron requests to provide books on this and similar topics related to diverse families. It was procured for our collection to satisfy these requests and aligns with our collection development policy.

Again, I thank you for sharing your views. The book has been removed from the display and shelved normally.

Warm regards,  
Joe

Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

From:

Date: Thu, Jul 22, 2021 at 10:37 AM

Subject: Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

To: Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>

Hello Joseph,

Thank you for your reply and attention to my concerns.

I would like to point out that the American Library Association is a private nonprofit that does not have legal authority and should not be used as a primary source for what libraries can and cannot do, or what they should or should not do.

The appropriate source is applicable laws and accountability to the community via the elected school board who appoint the trustees. This is what Ms. Hale should be bound by, not the position statements of a nonprofit organization, which carry no inherent legal authority. To me, this is a fundamental misunderstanding as to whom Ms. Hale owes a duty to - which is the community via the elected school board, not the private association.

Second, the development policy is exceptionally vague to the degree of providing no actual boundaries on purchases, instead leaving librarian discretion.

I also take indirectly from the reply that the purchase was made by librarian decision and not patron request, and that this material was widely available via inter library loan and need not be added to our collection via taxpayer funds given this wide availability. This wide availability undercuts rather than supports the premise for

purchase being agnostic.

I request you consider these reasoned points. I may send an additional message after further thought.

Thank you for your reply,

On July 22, 2021 9:56:39 AM EDT, Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your letter of concern and your support of a library free of censorship.

The development, maintenance, and display of the library's collection is the responsibility of the Library Director, so I consulted with Director Kristi Hale when I received your inquiry. Ms. Hale shared that you submitted a Request for Reconsideration form, asking that the book be removed from display. Together, Ms. Hale and I brought your concerns to the Wright Library Board of Trustees at our July Board meeting Monday night. Myself, our other trustees, and Ms. Hale discussed your email point by point and examined a copy of "Sam is My Sister."

From your letter, you asked for follow up on these points:

1. Provide an explanation for how this and similar books are selected for purchase.
2. Determine whether or not library employees are engaged in political advocacy in what we select for purchase and display.
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An evaluation conducted this week by Ms. Hale and her staff concluded that "Sam is My Sister" meets Wright Library's Collection Development Policy (see attached pdf). It fills a subject area that has interest and appeal to local parents, and it has received positive reviews in numerous library journals and publications (Kirkus Review March 1, 2021, Publisher's Weekly, May 3, 2021, and School Library Journal, June 1, 2021), as well as professional websites (i.e. Youth Services Book Review). It is owned by 13 other Ohio libraries in the SearchOhio consortium, including Dayton Metro, Washington-Centerville, and Greene County public libraries.

Regarding the second point, "Sam is my Sister" was not displayed with a political intent. Rather, it was one of about 300 new books that recently arrived at the library, and it was placed on a new book display along with about 25 other new books. As patrons deplete the display, it is backfilled from the remaining new books, without regard to their subject matter. It is a random process. Nevertheless, Ms. Hale checked with youth services employees and confirmed there was no underlying intent or political advocacy behind what was displayed. Ms. Hale also confirmed with other team leadership that there has been no surreptitious push for the prominent display of transgenderism books. In summary, Wright Library staff replenished the books randomly and both staff and leadership have no overarching agenda.

Regarding the protection of children, Ms. Hale informed us that libraries cannot and do not act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's [Code of Ethics](#), which states that all members of the librarian profession should be explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom to access information. The responsibility to monitor children's access and use of library resources must lie solely on parents or guardians. However, Wright Library staff assists parents and children by helping them select age-appropriate materials upon request. Wright Library also offers a Child Library Card, which limits film access to those designated as "family" in accordance with the Motion Picture Association rating system. Unfortunately, there is no similar rating system for books. Saying that, Ms. Hale has shelved the book in question rather than place it back on display at this time.

Again, thank you for your letter of concern. I apologize for the short delay in responding, but Ms. Hale, the Library Board, and I wanted to give this matter our full diligence. I hope you understand.

Warm regards,  
Joe

Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

On Sun, Jul 18, 2021 at 4:44 PM

wrote:

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that " ... shines a light on siblings and

how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

My concern is that the book is positioned for display upon entering the room to attract the attention of that young child *who is more likely to be confused by than enlightened by the material.*

If one agrees that the subject is not a "children's subject", then what is the objective of purchasing and displaying (prominently directed at children) a book on this topic?

I am concerned that the display of this book is *political advocacy* by a library employee aimed at children. Alternatively, the library is supporting the prominent display of books on transgenderism to young children.

I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

--

Sent from my Android device with K-9 Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

**From:** [Joe](#)  
**To:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Friday, July 23, 2021 5:09:25 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Kristi,  
FYI. A conversation better at this point.  
Joe

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:**  
**Date:** July 23, 2021 at 4:55:33 PM EDT  
**To:** Joseph Fulford <fulford.joseph@gmail.com>  
**Subject: Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material**

Hello Joseph,

I appreciate you taking the time to reply to my messages.

I would like to emphasize what I think is the most important part of this email thread: the Wright Library Staff made a decision to purchase a book that was already owned by \*13\* other Ohio library systems with \*35\* copies available, of which currently only 8 are actually checked out (strangely the Wright Library's copy is not available for inter-library loan and not checked out?).

It is very difficult to portray this as a needed purchase especially in this context - which would reasonably raise the concern on its own, despite pleas to the contrary, that it was purchased due to viewpoint bias.

Even if one assumes the noblest of intentions, it creates the appearance of viewpoint bias, which has a negative impact on community confidence.

I hope you can understand why purchasing the 36th copy in the system when only a fraction are checked out is not a good use of discretion - and perhaps stricter guidelines are needed to prevent a curriculum too strongly influenced by the personal views of an employee.

I request that the trustees exercise their oversight in this manner.

Sincerely,

July 23, 2021 12:37:07 PM EDT, Joseph Fulford  
<fulford.joseph@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear

Thank you again for reaching out to me regarding how Wright Library is governed. Let me address each of your points.

The American Library Association's (ALA) Code of Ethics is not legally binding authority. ALA provides libraries across the USA with guiding principles much like the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) does for their community. Neither have legal authority but are important nonprofits bringing together communities of interest and experts in each field. Just as ASME voluntary standards are cited by government agencies and sometimes included in federal, state, or local regulations, ALA guiding principles certainly help but do not legally bind libraries unless those principles are included in law.

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Warm regards,

Joe

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President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

From:  
Date: Thu, Jul 22, 2021 at 10:37 AM  
Subject: Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
To: Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>

Hello Joseph,

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I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

--

Sent from my Android device with K-9 Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

**From:** [Joseph Fulford](#)  
**To:**  
**Cc:** [Kristi Hale](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material  
**Date:** Friday, July 23, 2021 12:37:22 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you again for reaching out to me regarding how Wright Library is governed. Let me address each of your points.

The American Library Association's (ALA) Code of Ethics is not legally binding authority. ALA provides libraries across the USA with guiding principles much like the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) does for their community. Neither have legal authority but are important nonprofits bringing together communities of interest and experts in each field. Just as ASME voluntary standards are cited by government agencies and sometimes included in federal, state, or local regulations, ALA guiding principles certainly help but do not legally bind libraries unless those principles are included in law.

The appropriate law regarding library trustees is under Ohio Revised Code 3375.15 <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3375.15> which states that libraries "...shall be under the control and management of a board of library trustees consisting of seven members." I understand, as do the other trustees and Ms. Hale, that the Director is accountable to the library board which has members appointed by the Oakwood School Board.

Regarding collection development, there are 20 criteria that Wright Library's very experienced and professional staff use to guide purchases. As trustees, we very much rely upon our librarian's discretion when selecting materials that meet our policy. They excel at their job and get regular and high praise from the community.

The purchase of "Sam is My Sister" was initiated based on local patron requests to provide books on this and similar topics related to diverse families. It was procured for our collection to satisfy these requests and aligns with our collection development policy.

Again, I thank you for sharing your views. The book has been removed from the display and shelved normally.

Warm regards,  
Joe

Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library

1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

From:

Date: Thu, Jul 22, 2021 at 10:37 AM

Subject: Re: Children's Book Display of transexual subject material

To: Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)>

Hello Joseph,

Thank you for your reply and attention to my concerns.

I would like to point out that the American Library Association is a private nonprofit that does not have legal authority and should not be used as a primary source for what libraries can and cannot do, or what they should or should not do.

The appropriate source is applicable laws and accountability to the community via the elected school board who appoint the trustees. This is what Ms. Hale should be bound by, not the position statements of a nonprofit organization, which carry no inherent legal authority. To me, this is a fundamental misunderstanding as to whom Ms. Hale owes a duty to - which is the community via the elected school board, not the private association.

Second, the development policy is exceptionally vague to the degree of providing no actual boundaries on purchases, instead leaving librarian discretion.

I also take indirectly from the reply that the purchase was made by librarian decision and not patron request, and that this material was widely available via inter library loan and need not be added to our collection via taxpayer funds given this wide availability. This wide availability undercuts rather than supports the premise for purchase being agnostic.

I request you consider these reasoned points. I may send an additional message after further thought.

Thank you for your reply,

On July 22, 2021 9:56:39 AM EDT, Joseph Fulford <[fulford.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:fulford.joseph@gmail.com)> wrote:

| Dear ,

Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your letter of concern and your support of a library free of censorship.

The development, maintenance, and display of the library's collection is the responsibility of the Library Director, so I consulted with Director Kristi Hale when I received your inquiry. Ms. Hale shared that you submitted a Request for Reconsideration form, asking that the book be removed from display. Together, Ms. Hale and I brought your concerns to the Wright Library Board of Trustees at our July Board meeting Monday night. Myself, our other trustees, and Ms. Hale discussed your email point by point and examined a copy of "Sam is My Sister."

From your letter, you asked for follow up on these points:

1. Provide an explanation for how this and similar books are selected for purchase.
2. Determine whether or not library employees are engaged in political advocacy in what we select for purchase and display.
3. Take steps to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice.

An evaluation conducted this week by Ms. Hale and her staff concluded that "Sam is My Sister" meets Wright Library's Collection Development Policy (see attached pdf). It fills a subject area that has interest and appeal to local parents, and it has received positive reviews in numerous library journals and publications (Kirkus Review March 1, 2021, Publisher's Weekly, May 3, 2021, and School Library Journal, June 1, 2021), as well as professional websites (i.e. Youth Services Book Review). It is owned by 13 other Ohio libraries in the SearchOhio consortium, including Dayton Metro, Washington-Centerville, and Greene County public libraries.

Regarding the second point, "Sam is my Sister" was not displayed with a political intent. Rather, it was one of about 300 new books that recently arrived at the library, and it was placed on a new book display along with about 25 other new books. As patrons deplete the display, it is backfilled from the remaining new books, without regard to their subject matter. It is a random process. Nevertheless, Ms. Hale checked with youth services employees and confirmed there was no underlying intent or political advocacy behind what was displayed. Ms. Hale also confirmed with other team leadership that there has been no surreptitious push for the prominent display of transgenderism books. In summary, Wright Library staff replenished the books randomly and both staff and leadership have no overarching agenda.

Regarding the protection of children, Ms. Hale informed us that libraries cannot and do not act *en loco parentis* like schools are required to do. This is in accordance with the American Library Association's [Code of Ethics](#), which states that all members of the librarian profession should be explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom to access information. The responsibility to monitor children's access and use of library resources must lie solely on parents or

guardians. However, Wright Library staff assists parents and children by helping them select age-appropriate materials upon request. Wright Library also offers a Child Library Card, which limits film access to those designated as "family" in accordance with the Motion Picture Association rating system. Unfortunately, there is no similar rating system for books. Saying that, Ms. Hale has shelved the book in question rather than place it back on display at this time.

Again, thank you for your letter of concern. I apologize for the short delay in responding, but Ms. Hale, the Library Board, and I wanted to give this matter our full diligence. I hope you understand.

Warm regards,  
Joe

Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

On Sun, Jul 18, 2021 at 4:44 PM

wrote:

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that " ... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

My concern is that the book is positioned for display upon entering the room to attract the attention of that young child *who is more likely to be confused by than enlightened by the material*.

If one agrees that the subject is not a "children's subject", then what is the objective of purchasing and displaying (prominently directed at children) a book on this topic?

I am concerned that the display of this book is *political advocacy* by a library employee aimed at children. Alternatively, the library is supporting the prominent display of books on transgenderism to young children.

I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

--

Sent from my Android device with K-9 Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

# Collection Development

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## Collection Development Policy

### I. Introduction

It is the policy of the Wright Memorial Public Library Board of Trustees to recognize the diverse library needs of all citizens, regardless of age, race, national origin, religious, social, or political views.

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to guide staff in effectively using the library's financial resources to meet the needs of the community by:

- 1) Broadly defining the purposes and scope of the collection.
- 2) Designating the authority and responsibility for collection development.
- 3) Describing the selection criteria to be used.
- 4) Stating the policies on accepting gifts, withdrawal of materials, replacing lost and damaged items, and patron objections to materials in the collection.
- 5) Affirming support for the intellectual freedom statements of the American Library Association.

### II. Purpose of the Library's Collection

The purpose of the collection of Wright Memorial Public Library is to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals accepted by the Board of Trustees:

#### Mission

*The Wright Memorial Public Library is a community focal point that helps fulfill patron needs for information and entertainment materials; meets the learning needs of patrons on topics related to work, school, and personal life; and encourages learning and intellectual growth from the earliest ages. The library provides high levels of efficient, friendly, personal service; and fosters an atmosphere of intellectual liberty in the American tradition of free ideas.*

#### Vision

Wright Memorial Public Library has a distinctive role in the community as an institution that fuels the intellect and imagination of people of all ages. Wright Memorial Public Library recognizes that libraries are no longer just physical places containing inventories of books, but have become channels through which knowledge flows to patrons from many sources. The Library strives to serve all patrons, whether on-site or virtual, by providing the resources they seek promptly, completely, accurately, and in a comfortable environment. The Library partners with other organizations to project its reach in the community and strives to expand physical and virtual access to its resources. Wright Memorial Public Library seeks to play an active role in preparing preschoolers to learn, helping students succeed in school, and supporting lifelong learners by providing a broad range of viewpoints, formats, and programs. Wright Memorial Public Library actively works to connect patrons with resources that will enrich their lives.

## Goals

- 1) **Stimulate Imagination:** Reading, viewing and listening for pleasure.  
Library patrons will have materials and programs that excite their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing and listening experiences.
- 2) **Help Students Succeed in School:** Homework help.  
Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.
- 3) **Create Young Readers:** Early literacy.  
Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.
- 4) **Satisfy Curiosity:** Lifelong learning and life choices.  
Patrons will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives. Patrons will have the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.
- 5) **Provide a Comfortable Place to Visit:** Physical and virtual spaces.  
Patrons will have a safe and welcoming physical place to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.
- 6) **Connect Patrons to the Online World:** Public Internet access.  
Patrons will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

## III. Scope

The collection is intended to meet most needs of a suburban population, preschool age through senior adults. It is not intended to provide complete coverage of any given subject area, but rather a balanced selection of materials currently available. The collection is not archival and is reviewed and revised continuously to meet current needs.

Wright Memorial Public Library intends to offer choices of format, treatment, and level of difficulty so that most individuals' needs can be met without needlessly duplicating the resources available in other area libraries.

Both circulating and reference materials will usually be collected at the Basic Information Level for all subject areas, as defined by the American Library Association's *Guide for Written Collection Policy Statements*. Collecting at this level means that the library will usually purchase materials that serve "to introduce and define a subject and to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere." Emphasis is on works of general interest for the non-specialized user. The library uses interlibrary loan services to offer more specialized materials for patrons who request them.

An exception to the "basic level" of collecting is Oakwood local history materials, which are acquired as comprehensively as possible.

#### **IV. Authority and Responsibility for Collection Development**

Collection Development is and shall be vested in the Library Director by the Board of Trustees. Under the Library Director's direction, collection development may be delegated to members of the professional staff who are qualified for these duties by reason of education, training, and experience. Any material so selected for the collection shall be considered to have been selected by the Board of Trustees.

#### **V. Selection Criteria**

The selection of any material for the library does not constitute an endorsement of its content.

These are selection criteria to be used by collection development staff:

For all materials:

- 1) Reviews in library journals and other publications (though lack of a review or lack of a favorable review shall not be the sole criteria for rejection of a title for which there is popular demand)
- 2) Information from publishers' catalogs and promotions
- 3) Examination copies
- 4) Patron recommendations
- 5) Popular demand
- 6) Availability and cost
- 7) Interest and appeal to Wright Memorial Public Library patrons
- 8) Professional judgment based on education, training, and experience

Additional criteria for nonfiction:

- 1) Qualification or reputation of the author in the subject field
- 2) Scope of the subject matter
- 3) Quality of the writing
- 4) Needs of the community
- 5) Timeliness of the information
- 6) Reputation of the publisher
- 7) Organization of content (such as inclusion of indices and bibliographies)
- 8) Relationship to the existing collection
- 9) Weakness of the collection in a particular area
- 10) Physical qualities (binding, print size, illustrations)

Additional criteria for audiovisual items:

- 1) Reputation of an author, publisher, producer, director, artist, and/or performer
- 2) Quality of production and sound

#### **VI. Gifts and Donations**

Wright Memorial Public Library welcomes and encourages monetary gifts to supplement the materials budget. All acquisitions made with donated funds are made in accordance with this collection development policy. The library may not be able to fulfill requests regarding subject matter or specific titles. Due to space and use constraints, we cannot guarantee that any gift will remain permanently part of the collection.

The library also accepts donations of books and other library media. These are evaluated using the same criteria as is used for selection of all library materials.

The library retains unconditional ownership of gifts and decides if items will be added to the collection, offered in a book sale, or discarded. The library reserves the right to refuse donations.

The library does not provide monetary appraisal of any gift for income tax or other purposes, but may provide a receipt for the number of items donated.

### **VII. Withdrawal of Materials**

The library's objective is to maintain a collection of materials that are in demand by our patrons. Materials not in demand will be weeded and discarded. Weeding will be done continuously. Discarded materials may be made available in the library's book sale.

These are factors collection development staff will consider as favorable to weeding and discarding:

1. Poor physical condition
2. Content no longer considered accurate or factual and material not needed to represent a historical viewpoint
3. Little or no recent use
4. Excessive number of copies
5. Superseded editions
6. Availability of newer, better, more up-to-date editions or releases

### **VIII. Replacement of Lost or Damaged Items**

Materials missing, lost, destroyed, long overdue, or damaged will not automatically be replaced. The library only buys replacement copies of materials if usage warrants. Factors to be considered by staff in deciding on replacement include:

- 1) Is there a comparable, more recent title on the same subject?
- 2) Is there already adequate coverage in the subject area without replacing the title?
- 3) Is there demand for that specific title?
- 4) Is the title an essential work in the literature of the subject field or of a particular author?

### **IX. Patron Objections to Materials in the Collection**

Library patrons may address questions and concerns about materials selected, or about the collection policy, to the Director. Such patrons will be provided with a copy of this policy and a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Material" form. A patron who is not satisfied with the Director's response may choose to make arrangements to address the Board of Trustees at one of its regular meetings.

### **X. Intellectual Freedom**

The library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some users. Selection decisions are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the work in relation to the overall development of the collection and the necessity of meeting the needs of many individuals with a broad range of interests and viewpoints. No material shall be excluded because of race, nationality, political, religious or social views of the originator.

Responsibility for children's use of the library rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection is not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to children. Library materials are not



marked to show approval or disapproval of their contents, nor are they sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

**The Library Board vigorously supports the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and its interpretive documents. (See following sections)**

**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.

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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.
- 3) Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- 4) Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- 5) A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- 6) 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, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

**The Library Board vigorously supports intellectual freedom as articulated in the following position papers adopted by the American Library Association Council.**

**The Freedom to View**

The Freedom to View, along with 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, we affirm these principles:

- 1) It is in the public interest to provide the broadest possible access to films and other audiovisual materials because they have proven to be among the most effective means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to ensure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.



- 2) It is in the public interest to provide for our audiences films 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.
- 3) It is our professional responsibility to resist the constraint of labeling or prejudging a film on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
- 4) It is our professional responsibility to contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Education Film Library Association's Freedom to View Committee, and adopted by the EFLA Board of Directors in February, 1979. Endorsed by the ALA January 10, 1990. Educational Film Library Association, 43 W. 61 Street, New York, NY

### **Free Access to Libraries for Minors**

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, non-print, 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.<sup>1</sup>



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.<sup>2</sup>

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.

<sup>1</sup> 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).

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Ohio law (*Ohio Revised Code* 149.432) allows a minor child’s parent, guardian, or legal custodian to have access to library records or patron information pertaining to that minor child. Library Board policy allows a minor child’s parent, guardian, or legal custodian to choose not to allow that child the ability to use his/her library card to borrow audiovisual materials.

### **Libraries: An American Value**

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America’s libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed.



To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- 1) We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the library's resources and services;
- 2) We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;
- 3) 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;
- 4) We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the library's resources;
- 5) We protect each individual's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services;
- 6) We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services;
- 7) We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners - informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.

By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

Adopted February 3, 1999, by the Council of the American Library Association

**From:** [Joseph Fulford](#)  
**To:** [Kristi Hale](#); [Mary Hopton](#)  
**Subject:** Enis Notes for BoT Mtg  
**Date:** Thursday, August 12, 2021 7:20:51 PM  
**Attachments:** [Letters re Transgender Books.pdf](#)

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Kristi and Mary,

I'm going to summarize my emails with \_\_\_\_\_ on Monday night but for trustees that want the entire email text here it is. Please also address his request for **Elephants are not Birds**, in a strategic sense, as informed by our collection development policy.

Joe

Sunday, 18 July 2021, 4:44 pm

Dear Mr. Fulford

I am writing in concern to a recent visit I had with my young daughters to the Wright Library.

Upon entering the children's book section, prominently displayed was a book titled "Sam is My Sister", which is a story that " ... shines a light on siblings and how their unconditional love plays a special and invaluable role in the life of a child who is transgender".

I read the book, while I believe this topic not age-appropriate for children, I do not mind the library owning the book as I do not believe in censorship. I would not have a problem with the book being on the shelf for a parent to choose for their child if they so desire.

My concern is that the book is positioned for display upon entering the room to attract the attention of that young child *who is more likely to be confused by than enlightened by the material.*

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I request steps be taken to prevent children from being exposed to books on sexuality without parental choice, and inquire as to how this (and similar) books were selected for purchase.

I appreciate the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,

Thursday, 22 July 2021, 9:56 am

Dear

Thank you for your recent email. We appreciate your letter of concern and your support of a library free of censorship.

The development, maintenance, and display of the library's collection is the responsibility of the Library Director, so I consulted with Director Kristi Hale when I received your inquiry. Ms. Hale shared that you submitted a Request for Reconsideration form, asking that the book be removed from display. Together, Ms. Hale and I brought your concerns to the Wright Library Board of Trustees at our July Board meeting Monday night. Myself, our other trustees, and Ms. Hale discussed your email point by point and examined a copy of "Sam is My Sister."

From your letter, you asked for follow up on these points:

1. Provide an explanation for how this and similar books are selected for purchase.
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Association rating system. Unfortunately, there is no similar rating system for books. Saying that, Ms. Hale has shelved the book in question rather than place it back on display at this time.

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Warm regards,  
Joe

Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

Thursday, 22 July 2021, 10:37 am

Hello Joseph,

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The appropriate source is applicable laws and accountability to the community via the elected school board who appoint the trustees. This is what Ms. Hale should be bound by, not the position statements of a nonprofit organization, which carry no inherent legal authority. To me, this is a fundamental misunderstanding as to whom Ms. Hale owes a duty to - which is the community via the elected school board, not the private association.

Second, the development policy is exceptionally vague to the degree of providing no actual boundaries on purchases, instead leaving librarian discretion.

I also take indirectly from the reply that the purchase was made by librarian decision and not patron request, and that this material was widely available via inter library loan and need not be added to our collection via taxpayer funds given this wide availability. This wide availability undercuts rather than supports the premise for purchase being agnostic.

I request you consider these reasoned points. I may send an additional message after further thought.

Thank you for your reply,

Friday, 23 July 2021, 12:37 pm

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you again for reaching out to me regarding how Wright Library is governed. Let me address each of your points.

The American Library Association's (ALA) Code of Ethics is not legally binding authority. ALA provides libraries across the USA with guiding principles much like the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) does for their community. Neither have legal authority but are important nonprofits bringing together communities of interest and experts in each field. Just as ASME voluntary standards are cited by government agencies and sometimes included in federal, state, or local regulations, ALA guiding principles certainly help but do not legally bind libraries unless those principles are included in law.

The appropriate law regarding library trustees is under Ohio Revised Code 3375.15 <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3375.15> which states that libraries "...shall be under the control and management of a board of library trustees consisting of seven members." I understand, as do the other trustees and Ms. Hale, that the Director is accountable to the library board which has members appointed by the Oakwood School Board.

Regarding collection development, there are 20 criteria that Wright Library's very experienced and professional staff use to guide purchases. As trustees, we very much rely upon our librarian's discretion when selecting materials that meet our policy. They excel at their job and get regular and high praise from the community.

The purchase of "Sam is My Sister" was initiated based on local patron requests to provide books on this and similar topics related to diverse families. It was procured for our collection to satisfy these requests and aligns with our collection development policy.

Again, I thank you for sharing your views. The book has been removed from the display and shelved normally.

Warm regards,

Joe

Joseph Fulford  
President, Board of Trustees  
Wright Memorial Public Library  
1776 Far Hills Ave  
Oakwood OH 45419

Friday, 23 July 2021, 4:55 pm

Hello Joseph,

I appreciate you taking the time to reply to my messages.

I would like to emphasize what I think is the most important part of this email thread: the Wright Library Staff made a decision to purchase a book that was already owned by \*13\* other Ohio library systems with \*35\* copies available, of which currently only 8 are actually checked out (strangely the Wright Library's copy is not available for inter-library loan and not checked out?).

It is very difficult to portray this as a needed purchase especially in this context - which would reasonably raise the concern on its own, despite pleas to the contrary, that it was purchased due to viewpoint bias.

Even if one assumes the noblest of intentions, it creates the appearance of viewpoint bias, which has a negative impact on community confidence.

I hope you can understand why purchasing the 36th copy in the system when only a fraction are checked out is not a good use of discretion - and perhaps stricter guidelines are needed to prevent a curriculum too strongly influenced by the personal views of an employee.

I request that the trustees exercise their oversight in this manner.

Sincerely,

12 August Update:                    has requested we purchase **Elephants Are Not Birds**, a 2021 children's book by Ashley St. Clair and published by Brave Books. The book was written, according to St. Clair, as a rebuke to the acceptance of young people's claims they are transgender. The publisher chose not to work with book distributors, selling it only on their own website instead.

# Collection Development

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## Collection Development Policy

### I. Introduction

It is the policy of the Wright Memorial Public Library Board of Trustees to recognize the diverse library needs of all citizens, regardless of age, race, national origin, religious, social, or political views.

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to guide staff in effectively using the library's financial resources to meet the needs of the community by:

- 1) Broadly defining the purposes and scope of the collection.
- 2) Designating the authority and responsibility for collection development.
- 3) Describing the selection criteria to be used.
- 4) Stating the policies on accepting gifts, withdrawal of materials, replacing lost and damaged items, and patron objections to materials in the collection.
- 5) Affirming support for the intellectual freedom statements of the American Library Association.

### II. Purpose of the Library's Collection

The purpose of the collection of Wright Memorial Public Library is to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals accepted by the Board of Trustees:

#### Mission

*The Wright Memorial Public Library is a community focal point that helps fulfill patron needs for information and entertainment materials; meets the learning needs of patrons on topics related to work, school, and personal life; and encourages learning and intellectual growth from the earliest ages. The library provides high levels of efficient, friendly, personal service; and fosters an atmosphere of intellectual liberty in the American tradition of free ideas.*

#### Vision

Wright Memorial Public Library has a distinctive role in the community as an institution that fuels the intellect and imagination of people of all ages. Wright Memorial Public Library recognizes that libraries are no longer just physical places containing inventories of books, but have become channels through which knowledge flows to patrons from many sources. The Library strives to serve all patrons, whether on-site or virtual, by providing the resources they seek promptly, completely, accurately, and in a comfortable environment. The Library partners with other organizations to project its reach in the community and strives to expand physical and virtual access to its resources. Wright Memorial Public Library seeks to play an active role in preparing preschoolers to learn, helping students succeed in school, and supporting lifelong learners by providing a broad range of viewpoints, formats, and programs. Wright Memorial Public Library actively works to connect patrons with resources that will enrich their lives.

## Goals

- 1) **Stimulate Imagination:** Reading, viewing and listening for pleasure.  
Library patrons will have materials and programs that excite their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing and listening experiences.
- 2) **Help Students Succeed in School:** Homework help.  
Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.
- 3) **Create Young Readers:** Early literacy.  
Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.
- 4) **Satisfy Curiosity:** Lifelong learning and life choices.  
Patrons will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives. Patrons will have the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.
- 5) **Provide a Comfortable Place to Visit:** Physical and virtual spaces.  
Patrons will have a safe and welcoming physical place to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.
- 6) **Connect Patrons to the Online World:** Public Internet access.  
Patrons will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

## III. Scope

The collection is intended to meet most needs of a suburban population, preschool age through senior adults. It is not intended to provide complete coverage of any given subject area, but rather a balanced selection of materials currently available. The collection is not archival and is reviewed and revised continuously to meet current needs.

Wright Memorial Public Library intends to offer choices of format, treatment, and level of difficulty so that most individuals' needs can be met without needlessly duplicating the resources available in other area libraries.

Both circulating and reference materials will usually be collected at the Basic Information Level for all subject areas, as defined by the American Library Association's *Guide for Written Collection Policy Statements*. Collecting at this level means that the library will usually purchase materials that serve "to introduce and define a subject and to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere." Emphasis is on works of general interest for the non-specialized user. The library uses interlibrary loan services to offer more specialized materials for patrons who request them.

An exception to the "basic level" of collecting is Oakwood local history materials, which are acquired as comprehensively as possible.

#### **IV. Authority and Responsibility for Collection Development**

Collection Development is and shall be vested in the Library Director by the Board of Trustees. Under the Library Director's direction, collection development may be delegated to members of the professional staff who are qualified for these duties by reason of education, training, and experience. Any material so selected for the collection shall be considered to have been selected by the Board of Trustees.

#### **V. Selection Criteria**

The selection of any material for the library does not constitute an endorsement of its content.

These are selection criteria to be used by collection development staff:

For all materials:

- 1) Reviews in library journals and other publications (though lack of a review or lack of a favorable review shall not be the sole criteria for rejection of a title for which there is popular demand)
- 2) Information from publishers' catalogs and promotions
- 3) Examination copies
- 4) Patron recommendations
- 5) Popular demand
- 6) Availability and cost
- 7) Interest and appeal to Wright Memorial Public Library patrons
- 8) Professional judgment based on education, training, and experience

Additional criteria for nonfiction:

- 1) Qualification or reputation of the author in the subject field
- 2) Scope of the subject matter
- 3) Quality of the writing
- 4) Needs of the community
- 5) Timeliness of the information
- 6) Reputation of the publisher
- 7) Organization of content (such as inclusion of indices and bibliographies)
- 8) Relationship to the existing collection
- 9) Weakness of the collection in a particular area
- 10) Physical qualities (binding, print size, illustrations)

Additional criteria for audiovisual items:

- 1) Reputation of an author, publisher, producer, director, artist, and/or performer
- 2) Quality of production and sound

#### **VI. Gifts and Donations**

Wright Memorial Public Library welcomes and encourages monetary gifts to supplement the materials budget. All acquisitions made with donated funds are made in accordance with this collection development policy. The library may not be able to fulfill requests regarding subject matter or specific titles. Due to space and use constraints, we cannot guarantee that any gift will remain permanently part of the collection.

The library also accepts donations of books and other library media. These are evaluated using the same criteria as is used for selection of all library materials.

The library retains unconditional ownership of gifts and decides if items will be added to the collection, offered in a book sale, or discarded. The library reserves the right to refuse donations.

The library does not provide monetary appraisal of any gift for income tax or other purposes, but may provide a receipt for the number of items donated.

### **VII. Withdrawal of Materials**

The library's objective is to maintain a collection of materials that are in demand by our patrons. Materials not in demand will be weeded and discarded. Weeding will be done continuously. Discarded materials may be made available in the library's book sale.

These are factors collection development staff will consider as favorable to weeding and discarding:

1. Poor physical condition
2. Content no longer considered accurate or factual and material not needed to represent a historical viewpoint
3. Little or no recent use
4. Excessive number of copies
5. Superseded editions
6. Availability of newer, better, more up-to-date editions or releases

### **VIII. Replacement of Lost or Damaged Items**

Materials missing, lost, destroyed, long overdue, or damaged will not automatically be replaced. The library only buys replacement copies of materials if usage warrants. Factors to be considered by staff in deciding on replacement include:

- 1) Is there a comparable, more recent title on the same subject?
- 2) Is there already adequate coverage in the subject area without replacing the title?
- 3) Is there demand for that specific title?
- 4) Is the title an essential work in the literature of the subject field or of a particular author?

### **IX. Patron Objections to Materials in the Collection**

Library patrons may address questions and concerns about materials selected, or about the collection policy, to the Director. Such patrons will be provided with a copy of this policy and a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Material" form. A patron who is not satisfied with the Director's response may choose to make arrangements to address the Board of Trustees at one of its regular meetings.

### **X. Intellectual Freedom**

The library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some users. Selection decisions are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the work in relation to the overall development of the collection and the necessity of meeting the needs of many individuals with a broad range of interests and viewpoints. No material shall be excluded because of race, nationality, political, religious or social views of the originator.

Responsibility for children's use of the library rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection is not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to children. Library materials are not

marked to show approval or disapproval of their contents, nor are they sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

**The Library Board vigorously supports the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and its interpretive documents. (See following sections)**

**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.

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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.
- 3) Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- 4) Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- 5) A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- 6) 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, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

**The Library Board vigorously supports intellectual freedom as articulated in the following position papers adopted by the American Library Association Council.**

**The Freedom to View**

The Freedom to View, along with 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, we affirm these principles:

- 1) It is in the public interest to provide the broadest possible access to films and other audiovisual materials because they have proven to be among the most effective means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to ensure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.

- 2) It is in the public interest to provide for our audiences films 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.
- 3) It is our professional responsibility to resist the constraint of labeling or prejudging a film on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
- 4) It is our professional responsibility to contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Education Film Library Association's Freedom to View Committee, and adopted by the EFLA Board of Directors in February, 1979. Endorsed by the ALA January 10, 1990. Educational Film Library Association, 43 W. 61 Street, New York, NY

### **Free Access to Libraries for Minors**

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, non-print, 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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.

<sup>1</sup> 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).

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Ohio law (*Ohio Revised Code* 149.432) allows a minor child’s parent, guardian, or legal custodian to have access to library records or patron information pertaining to that minor child. Library Board policy allows a minor child’s parent, guardian, or legal custodian to choose not to allow that child the ability to use his/her library card to borrow audiovisual materials.

### **Libraries: An American Value**

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America’s libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed.



To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- 1) We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the library's resources and services;
- 2) We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;
- 3) 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;
- 4) We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the library's resources;
- 5) We protect each individual's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services;
- 6) We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services;
- 7) We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners - informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.

By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

Adopted February 3, 1999, by the Council of the American Library Association