

MASL Supports School Libraries in their Efforts to Provide Diverse Reading Choices for all Students 11/30/2021

The Maine Association of School Libraries (MASL) stands behind the American Library Association **Library Bill of Rights**¹ which “affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas.”

MASL feels strongly that Maine school library programs should be built on **Maine Reading Standards**² and **Maine School Library Standards**³ “to help students become competent consumers of a wide variety of texts in diverse forms.”

MASL believes strongly in the **Freedom to Read**.⁴ “The First Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees all individuals the right to express their ideas without governmental interference, and to read and listen to the ideas of others.”⁵

MASL believes that every child deserves **access to books and reading material that represent the world we live in**. Books not only serve as **mirrors**, reflecting the reader’s identity, they also act as **windows** into other lives and worlds.⁶ Books allow students, parents, and teachers a way to **discuss difficult topics**.

MASL **denounces the removal of books from school libraries solely on the basis of the ideas they contain**. While parents have every right to limit the reading choices of their own child, they do not have the right to limit the reading choices of all students.

MASL stands behind the **professionalism** of our trained librarians and library staff to follow school policy in selecting books for their school library collection.

MASL believes schools must follow their **policies**, not only for maintaining a strong library collection, but also in accordance with the district’s approved procedures for hearing complaints.

MASL stands with the American Library Association in **opposition to widespread efforts to censor books**.⁷

For support, please reach out to MASL (maslibraries@gmail.com) or ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom (<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/oif>).

¹<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

²<https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/content/ela/standards/reading>

³<https://maslibraries.org/Maine-School-Library-Standards>

⁴<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

⁵<https://www.ftfrf.org/>

⁶Rudine Sims Bishop: Bishop, R. S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. Perspectives: Choosing and Using Books for the Classroom, 6(3).

⁷https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/the-american-library-association-opposes-widespread-efforts-to-censor-books-in-u-s-schools-and-libraries/?fbclid=IwAR0EGO1BP-qlojCQN9WqU_gvS4-l1dJ_bd01Z332UBAebnd4ySveQLX_-H0