

Intellectual Freedom Policy

Whelden Memorial Library is steadfast in its commitment to intellectual freedom, which is a cornerstone of a democratic society. This policy affirms our dedication to upholding the principles of free expression, equitable access to information, and the right of every individual to explore diverse ideas without fear of censorship or suppression. It serves as a guide for ensuring that the library remains a safe, inclusive space for inquiry, learning, and discovery.

This policy applies to all library operations, including but not limited to:

- Collection development and access
- Use of library facilities and resources
- Programming and displays
- Staff and volunteer conduct

Principles

- **Access to Information:** The library provides access to materials and information representing a wide range of viewpoints and subjects. All members of our community are encouraged to explore, learn, and engage with resources that reflect diverse perspectives.
- **Freedom to Read and View:** The library fully endorses the *Library Bill of Rights* and *Freedom to Read Statement*. Materials are selected without regard to personal, political, or religious beliefs, ensuring all voices have a place within the collection.
- **Neutrality and Inclusivity:** The library remains a neutral platform, fostering a welcoming environment for dialogue, exploration, and discovery. Programming, collections, and services reflect inclusivity, respect for diversity, and adherence to intellectual freedom.
- **Challenged Materials:** In the event of a challenge to library materials, programs, or displays, the library's *Request for Reconsideration* process will be followed. This ensures that challenges are addressed thoughtfully and consistently. To promote transparency, the library will notify the public annually of any challenges and their outcomes. Additionally, all book challenges will be logged and shared with the American Library Association (ALA) and reported annually to the state as part of their statistical submissions.
- **Protection Against Censorship:** The library opposes censorship and supports the right of individuals to access and evaluate information independently. Materials will not be removed or restricted due to personal, political, or religious objections.
- **Privacy and Confidentiality:** Patron privacy is safeguarded to ensure the freedom to explore ideas without intrusion. The library is committed to protecting the confidentiality of all patron inquiries and activities.

Responsibility

The library director and staff are responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring that library practices align with its principles. The Board of Trustees provides oversight and addresses challenges or concerns as necessary in keeping with library policies and established procedures.

Review and Reaffirmation

This policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure its alignment with current standards, legal requirements, and community needs. Whelden Memorial Library remains vigilant in its advocacy for intellectual freedom, ensuring that our library continues to serve as a beacon of knowledge, inclusion, and democratic values.