

OAK LAWN PUBLIC LIBRARY

BOARD POLICY

THE FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT

The Oak Lawn Library Board of Trustees supports the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement. The following is an excerpt from that statement:

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*
2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*
3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*
4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*
5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*
6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*
7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council

Amended 1/28/1972, 1/16/1991, 7/12/2000, 6/20/2004

The ALA's The Freedom to Read Statement in its entirety can be located on the ALA's website:
<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

Adopted: 9/10/1985

Revised: 6/10/1986, 6/09/1987, 10/17/1995, 10/17/2023