

LIBRARY COLLECTION POLICY: BANNED BOOKS AND WHAT WE LEARNED

Presented by

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Lake Superior
Libraries
Symposium
2026

PREVIEW

- **Banned Books Week**
- **The New Law**
- **LSC Library Sets Up Policy**
- **MLA's IFC Resources Page**
- **Q&A**

ALA's Censorship by the Numbers

Who challenges books?
Where do challenges take place?

Graphic: Office for Intellectual Freedom, ALA

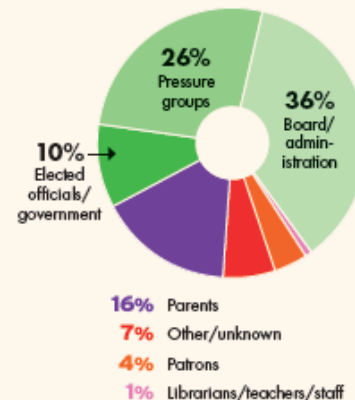
CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS



The American Library Association documented another year in an unabating deluge of efforts to censor library materials in 2024, continuing an extremist campaign to suppress access to books that began in 2021. Last year, **2,452 unique titles** were challenged, the third highest number ever documented by ALA and significantly exceeding the annual average of 273 unique titles over the period from 2001–2020. [Learn more at ala.org/bbooks](https://ala.org/bbooks)

WHO CHALLENGES BOOKS?

Nearly 72% of censorship attempts in 2024 were initiated by pressure groups and decision makers who have been swayed by them.



Statistics based on 5,813 book challenges.

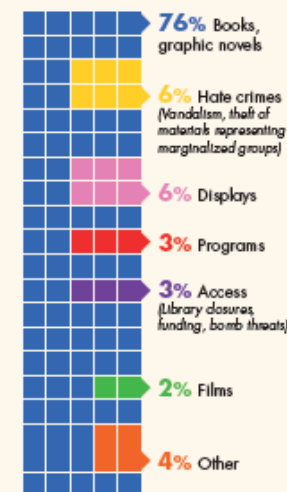
WHERE DO CHALLENGES TAKE PLACE?



Statistics based on 804 cases with known locations.

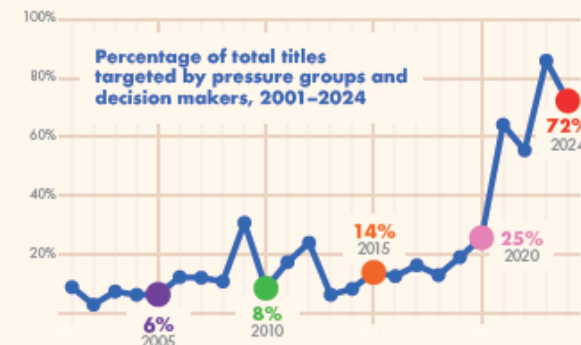
BOOKS AND BEYOND

ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 821 censorship attempts in 2024. Here's the breakdown:



CENSORSHIP TRENDS

The majority of library censorship can be tied to organized campaigns. Pressure groups and the administrators, board members, and elected officials they influenced targeted 4,190 total titles in 2024. From 2001–2020, this constituency attempted to remove an average of 46 titles per year.



CENSORSHIP STATISTICS COMPILED BY: OFFICE FOR Intellectual Freedom American Library Association

ALA's Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2024

Includes:

All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto

Gender Queer: A Memoir

The Bluest Eye

The Perks of Being a Wallflower

Tricks

Graphic: Office for Intellectual Freedom, ALA

TOP 10 MOST CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2024

The American Library Association documented **821 attempts to censor** materials and services at libraries, schools, and universities in 2024. The most common reasons for challenges were false claims of illegal obscenity for minors; inclusion of LGBTQIA+ characters or themes; and dealing with topics of race, racism, inclusivity, equity, and social justice. Of the **2,452 unique titles** that were challenged or banned in 2024, here are the top 10 most frequently targeted.



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

ALA.ORG/BBOOKS

Not Legal Advice
We are not lawyers.

**We are sharing our
journey with you .**

The New Law

It's not really new, it has been in place since August 2024. However, it was new to us...

Minnesota Statute 134.51

**ACCESS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS
AND RIGHTS PROTECTED.**

State With Similar Laws

New Jersey
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Illinois
Maryland

Washington
Delaware
Rhode Island
Vermont
Oregon

**NY State Passed the Freedom
to Read Act in June 2025**

**Governor Hochul
vetoed it in December
of that same year**

Minnesota

Statute 134.51

Subd. 1.

A public library must not ban, remove, or otherwise restrict access to a book or other material based solely on its viewpoint or the messages, ideas, or opinions it conveys.

Subd. 2.

Definitions.

(a) For purposes of this section, the terms defined in this subdivision have the meanings given.

(b) "Public library" means:

Subd. 2. continued

(1) a library that provides free access to all residents of a city or county, receives at least half of its financial support from public funds, and is organized under the provisions of this chapter, except that a library under this clause does not include libraries such as law, medical, or other libraries organized to serve a special group of persons and not the general public;

Subd. 2.

continued

(2) a library jointly operated by a city and a school district under section 134.195;

(3) a school district or charter school library or media center under section 124D.991, including libraries operated by an intermediate school district or cooperative unit under section 123A.24, subdivision 2; or

Subd. 2. **continued**

4) a public higher education
institution library.

Subd. 2. continued

(c) "Governing body" means a group of persons that oversees the operations, budget, policies, and other administrative responsibilities of a regional public library system under section 134.20, subdivision 2; a multicounty, multitype library system under section 134.351, subdivision 4; a combination library under section 134.195, subdivision 7; a school library under section 124D.991, including libraries operated by an intermediate school district or cooperative unit under section 123A.24, subdivision 2; or any other public library under section 134.001, subdivision 2.

Subd. 3.

Limitations.

(a) Nothing in this section limits a public library's authority to decline to purchase, lend, or shelve or to remove or restrict access to books or other materials legitimately based upon:

(1) practical reasons, including but not limited to shelf space limitations, rare or antiquarian status, damage, or obsolescence;

(2) legitimate pedagogical concerns, including but not limited to the appropriateness of potentially sensitive topics for the library's intended audience, the selection of books and materials for a curated collection, or the likelihood of causing a material and substantial disruption of the work and discipline of the school; or

(3) compliance with state or federal law.

(b) Nothing in this section impairs or limits the rights of a parent, guardian, or an adult student under section [120B.20](#).

Subd. 4.

Collection management.

A governing body of a public library or any other public body with personnel authority for a public library may not discriminate against or discipline an employee for complying with this section.

Subd. 5.

Library materials policy.

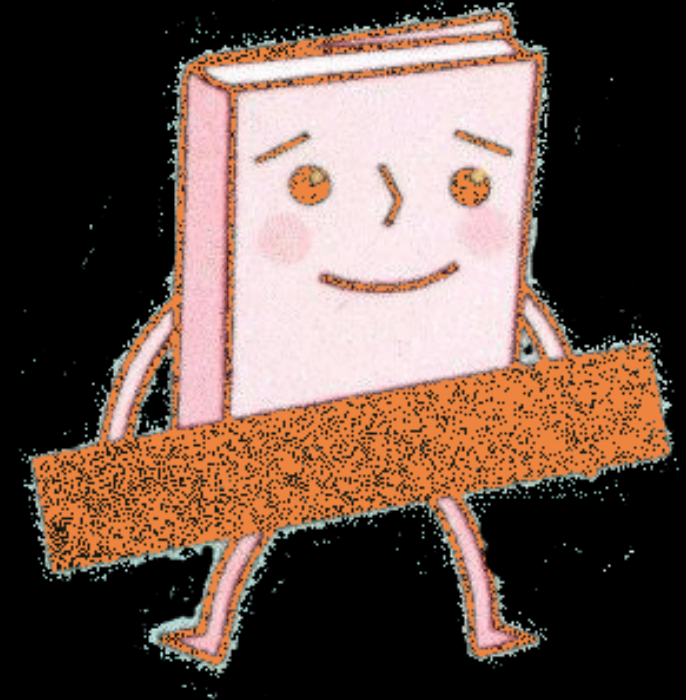
- (a) A governing body of a public library must adopt a policy that establishes procedures for selection of, challenges to, and reconsideration of library materials in accordance with this section.**
- (b) The policy must not impair or limit the rights of a parent, guardian, or adult student under section 120B.20.**
- (c) The policy must establish that the procedures for selection and reconsideration will be administered by:**
 - (1) a licensed library media specialist under Minnesota Rules, part 8710.4550;**
 - (2) an individual with a master's degree in library science or library and information science; or**
 - (3) a professional librarian or a person trained in library collection management.**
- (d) Upon the completion of a content challenge or reconsideration process in accordance with the governing body's adopted policy, the governing body must submit a report of the challenge to the commissioner of education that includes:**
 - (1) the title, author, and other relevant identifying information about the material being challenged;**
 - (2) the date, time, and location of any public hearing held on the challenge in question, including minutes or transcripts;**
 - (3) the result of the challenge or reconsideration request; and**
 - (4) accurate and timely information on who from the governing body the Department of Education may contact with questions or follow-up.**

Action Steps

Review your collection development policy in light of the 2024 law

Review your library materials challenge form

Review how you communicate this information to you community



Library Collection Policy

DRAFT

Lake Superior College

Policy: Access to Library Materials and Protection of Intellectual Freedom

Policy Statement

Lake Superior College affirms its commitment to intellectual freedom, academic inquiry, and the free exchange of ideas. In accordance with Minnesota Statutes §134.51, Erickson Library shall not ban, remove, or otherwise restrict access to books or other library materials based solely on the viewpoint or the messages, ideas, or opinions expressed in those materials.

As a public higher education institution, Lake Superior College recognizes the essential role of its library in supporting teaching, learning, workforce preparation, and lifelong learning. The College Library's collections are developed to serve a diverse academic community and to reflect a broad range of perspectives, disciplines, and ideas appropriate to postsecondary education.

Scope and Authority

This policy applies to all library materials made available through Erickson Library, including physical and digital resources. The College President and the Lake Superior College governing authority retain responsibility for oversight of library policies and compliance with applicable state and federal laws.

Collection Management and Limitations

Nothing in this policy limits the Erickson Library's authority to select, decline to purchase, remove, or restrict access to library materials when such actions are legitimately based on:

- Practical considerations, including but not limited to space limitations, physical condition, obsolescence, or rare or antiquarian [status](#);
- Legitimate pedagogical or academic considerations appropriate to a postsecondary audience, including the development of a curated academic collection; or
- Compliance with state or federal law.
- This policy does not impair or limit the rights of parents, guardians, or adult students as provided under Minnesota law.

Selection, Challenge, and Reconsideration of Materials

Lake Superior College shall maintain a **Library Materials Policy** that establishes clear, fair, and transparent procedures for:

- The selection of library [materials](#);
- The submission of challenges to library materials; and
- The reconsideration of challenged materials.

These procedures shall be administered by qualified library professionals, including individuals with appropriate education, training, or professional experience in library science or library collection management.

Library employees shall not be disciplined or discriminated against for complying with this policy or with Minnesota Statutes §134.51.

Reporting Requirements

Upon completion of any formal content challenge or reconsideration process, Lake Superior College shall submit a report to the Minnesota Commissioner of Education, consistent with statutory requirements, documenting the nature and outcome of the challenge and providing appropriate contact information for follow-up.

Commitment

Through this policy, Lake Superior College upholds its responsibility as a public institution to protect access to information, support academic freedom, and ensure that library collections serve the educational mission of the College while remaining compliant with state law.

Library Collection Policy

Lake Superior College

Administrative Procedure: Library Materials Selection, Challenge, and Reconsideration

1. Purpose

This procedure establishes the processes by which Lake Superior College Library materials are selected, reviewed, challenged, and reconsidered. It implements the College's **Access to Library Materials and Protection of Intellectual Freedom Policy** and ensures compliance with Minnesota Statutes §134.51.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all physical and digital materials made available through Erickson Library, including but not limited to books, periodicals, audiovisual materials, electronic resources, and instructional media.

3. Responsibility

The administration of this procedure is the responsibility of the Library Director or designee, who must be:

- A professional librarian,
- An individual with a master's degree in library science or library and information science, or
- A person trained in library collection management, as required by Minnesota Statutes §134.51, subdivision 5.

4. Selection of Library Materials

• General Principles

Library materials are selected to support the College's instructional programs, workforce development mission, student success initiatives, and lifelong learning goals. Selection decisions are guided by professional library standards and academic relevance rather than personal, political, or ideological viewpoints.

• Selection Criteria

Materials may be selected based on, but are not limited to, the following considerations:

- Relevance to curriculum, programs, and academic disciplines;
- Accuracy, currency, and authority of content;
- Contribution to a balanced and diverse collection representing multiple perspectives;
- Anticipated use by students, faculty, and staff;
- Format, cost, and accessibility;
- Availability of space and technological infrastructure.

5. Removal or Restriction of Materials (Non-Content-Based)

Library materials may be removed from the collection or have access restricted for legitimate reasons, including:

- Physical damage or deterioration;
- Obsolescence or lack of continued academic relevance;
- Space limitations;
- Replacement by newer or more authoritative resources;
- Compliance with state or federal law.

Materials shall not be removed, restricted, or otherwise made inaccessible solely due to the viewpoints, messages, ideas, or opinions they express.

6. Informal Concerns

Individuals with concerns about library materials are encouraged to discuss their concerns informally with the Library Director or designee. Informal discussions do not initiate a formal challenge and do not result in removal or restriction of materials.

7. Formal Challenge Process

• Eligibility to File a Challenge

Formal challenges may be submitted by students, employees, or community members with a documented relationship to Lake Superior College.

• Submission of Challenge

A formal challenge must be submitted in writing using the College's designated **Library Materials Reconsideration Request Form** and must include:

- Identification of the specific material being challenged;
- Specific concerns and the basis for the challenge;
- Whether the challenger has reviewed the entire work.

• Status of Materials During Review

Challenged materials shall remain accessible during the reconsideration process unless access must be restricted to comply with state or federal law.

8. Reconsideration Review Process

• Review Committee

Upon receipt of a formal challenge, the Library Director shall convene a review process that may include consultation with library staff, faculty subject-matter experts, and academic leadership, as appropriate.

8.2 Evaluation Criteria

Materials under reconsideration shall be reviewed in their entirety and evaluated based on:

- The College's mission and academic programs;

Library Collection Policy

- Professional library selection standards;
- The work as a whole, rather than isolated excerpts;
- Relevance and appropriateness for a postsecondary academic audience;
- Applicable legal requirements.

8.3 Decision

Following review, the Library Director shall issue a written decision to:

- Retain the material without restriction;
- Retain the material with reasonable access considerations consistent with law and policy; or
- Remove the material for reasons permitted under Minnesota Statutes §134.51.

9. Appeal

A challenger may appeal the reconsideration decision in writing to the Vice President responsible for Academic and Student Affairs (or designee) within a specified timeframe established by the Library Materials Policy. The decision on appeal shall be final.

10. Protection of Employees

No library employee shall be disciplined, retaliated against, or discriminated against for selecting, retaining, or managing library materials in compliance with College policy, this procedure, and Minnesota law.

11. Reporting Requirements

Upon completion of a formal content challenge or reconsideration process, the College shall submit a report to the Minnesota Commissioner of Education that includes:

- Title, author, and identifying information of the challenged material;
- Date, time, location, and documentation of any public hearing, if held;
- The outcome of the challenge or reconsideration;
- Accurate and current contact information for College follow-up.

12. Review and Revision

- This procedure shall be reviewed periodically by the Library Director and College administration to ensure continued compliance with state law, professional standards, and institutional mission.

Lake Superior College

Library Materials Reconsideration Request Form

This form initiates a **formal request for reconsideration** of specific library materials. Completion of this form is required to begin the formal review process. Informal concerns may be discussed with library staff without submitting this form.

1. Requestor Information

- **Name:** _____
- **Relationship to Lake Superior College:**
☐ Student ☐ Employee ☐ Community Member ☐ Other: _____
- **LSC ID Number (if applicable):** _____
- **Mailing Address:** _____
- **Email Address:** _____
- **Phone Number:** _____

2. Material Being Requested for Reconsideration

- **Title:** _____
- **Author/Creator:** _____
- **Publisher/Source:** _____
- **Format:**
☐ Book ☐ eBook ☐ Video ☐ Audio ☐ Database ☐ Other: _____
- **Library Location or Call Number (if known):** _____

Please review Minnesota Statute 134.51. Subdivision 1.

134.51 ACCESS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS AND RIGHTS PROTECTED.

Subdivision 1. Book banning prohibited.

A public library must not ban, remove, or otherwise restrict access to a book or other material based solely on its viewpoint or the messages, ideas, or opinions it conveys.

The entire statute can be read by visiting: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/134.51>

3. Nature of the Concern

Please identify the specific concern(s) prompting this request. (Check all that apply.)

Library Collection Policy

- ☐ Accuracy of content
- ☐ Currency or relevance
- ☐ Appropriateness for a postsecondary academic audience
- ☐ Alignment with curriculum or academic mission
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

4. Specific Objections or Concerns

Please describe your concerns **in detail**, citing specific passages, sections, or aspects of the material. Attach additional pages if necessary.

5. Review of the Material

- **Have you reviewed the entire work?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, please specify which portions were reviewed:

6. Requested Action

What action are you requesting? (Check one)

- ☐ Retain the material without restriction
- ☐ Retain the material with specific access considerations
- ☐ Remove the material
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

7. Statement of Understanding

By submitting this form, I understand that:

- Lake Superior College will review the material in its entirety using professional library standards and institutional policy.
- Materials will remain accessible during the reconsideration process unless removal or restriction is required by law.
- Decisions are based on the material as a whole, not isolated excerpts or viewpoints.

8. Signature

• **Signature:** _____

• **Date:** _____

9. Submission Instructions

Return the completed form to:

- **Erickson Library, Lake Superior College**
Attn: Kate Rolfe
2101 Trinity Rd.
Duluth, MN 55811

MLA's IFC

The screenshot displays a Wakelet collection titled "Minnesota Library Materials Challenge" (MLA's IFC). The collection is organized into four main sections, each with a header and a grid of resources:

- Before a Challenge:** Includes a document titled "Empowered Against Book Bans Workshop Recording and Slides" and a link to "Minnesota's Open Access Policy".
- Informal Challenge:** Features a "BOOK RESUME" graphic, a document titled "Be ready to talk about specific books with IASB: Book Resumes", and an "Action Toolkit" graphic.
- Formal Challenge:** Includes a document titled "A FORMAL CHALLENGE OCCURS" and a link to "Reporting Forms - Minnesota Library Materials Challenge".
- Ongoing Advocacy:** Features a document titled "ONGOING ADVOCACY" and a link to "Consider joining MLA".

The Wakelet interface shows the user is logged in as "Ann W. Gault" and the collection is titled "Minnesota Library Materials Challenge". The bottom of the screen shows the Windows taskbar with various application icons.

MLA's IFC

Link to resource page:

https://wakelet.com/wake/_tlGpPuf0Rx6jS79axjmp

Ann Kaste
@AnnKaste77947 Follow 17 items

BOOK CHALLENGE RESOURCES
FOR MINNESOTA LIBRARIES
MINNESOTA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Resources to Prepare for, Work through, and Report a challenge

And remember, contact the MLA Intellectual Freedom committee anytime for confidential assistance, letter writing, and support at intellectualfreedomcommitteechair@mnlibraryassociation.org

Informal Challenge Formal Challenge Ongoing

AN INFORMAL CHALLENGE: WHAT TO DO
Now is the time to have conversations. Know your talking.

A FORMAL CHALLENGE OCCURS
Once the challenge is in motion, the policies and processes that you have in place are activated.

ONGOING ADVOCACY
Stay informed, stay

**Thank
you!**

**Contact
Us!**

Suzy Cervin and Kate Rolfe
Email: lsclibrary@lsc.edu
Phone: 218-733-5912

Ann Kaste
Email: kaste@umn.edu

Q & A

