

HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Policy 209 **Freedom to Read (ALA)**

Purpose: To adopt the American Library Association's ("the ALA") position on library patrons' freedom to read

General Policy

The ALA's positions are guidelines for the Highland Park Public Library's ("the Library") development of policies, regulations, and procedure.

Freedom to Read

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with 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 books 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 with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or the 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,

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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 and the Association of American Publishers Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004.

Endorsed April 14, 1998, by the Board of Trustees, to the extent that the Freedom to Read tenets do not conflict with any approved policy of the Library.

Reviewed and revised November 8, 2022

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