

Dealing with Censorship

What to Do Before the Censor Comes

- Be familiar with the written selection policy, appeals procedure and complaint form.
- Have a copy of the TLA Intellectual Freedom Handbook for guidelines.
- Identify local groups interested in maintaining intellectual freedom in libraries.

What to Do When the Censor Comes

- Be positive and emphatic in dealing with the complainant.
- Be objective, professional and calm in handling the incident.
- Do not argue with the patron.
- Discuss your selection policy as it relates to the service philosophy of the library.
- Outline the appeals procedure and supply complaint form.
- Prepare a written record of the complaint, keep complete, factual records of all subsequent written and oral communications.
- Notify the Director of Library Services.
- Do not remove disputed materials until the appeals process is completed. Do not involve the media until the appeals process is completed. Do not despair, or resign your position. Above all...
- Do not be reluctant to seek advice from TLA, ALA or NCTE .

Intellectual Freedom Handbook

Don't defend the book – explain the selection policy!

Other Resources

- [The Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Access to Resources and Services in the School Library: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Freedom to Read Statement](#)

The Students' Right to Read