

Class Discussion- Book Challenge

Interview with Mentor:

Have you ever had a book challenged at your campus?

Not yet. But there is at least one book on the Bluebonnet list for next year that I wonder about.

Does your district have a process in place for addressing challenges? Briefly discuss the policy. The district does have a policy. I know that parents must go through a specific process when challenging.

From our policy manual: "Anyone may challenge materials used for instruction. Challenges should first be made at the campus level unless the materials were adopted on a District wide basis. The campus administrator will cause the implementation of procedures noted in the district policy which include an informal reconsideration, a formal reconsideration, and an appeal. If such challenges are made at the District level to Board members, the Superintendent of Schools or other central administrators will cause the implementation of the same procedures."

What is the first thing you would do as a librarian when a parent or other entity wants you to remove a book from the library or restrict access?

I would hear out their concerns. Then make them aware of the policies and procedures we have in place for these types of concerns and go from there. I would also immediately go to my admin and discuss so they are aware of the issue.

Who is authorized to speak to a parent or the media about reconsideration requests for your school district?

Our district has a public relations department so I would reach out to them if the situation was escalating.

Should librarians base their book selections on their own beliefs and/or viewpoints? Why or why not?

As librarians, we are asked not to censor our children. I know there are books that I purchased that don't necessarily follow my beliefs or viewpoints. But, as a child I know that I benefitted from reading books that were not exactly my viewpoint. That being said, I think it's a touch and go subject-- I think there is such thing as "too young" or "too much" for elementary students, but as far as allowing them to explore subjects that don't necessarily interest me, go for it kids!

What steps and what resources could you use to avoid bias in your materials selection policy?

I use lists and professional tools when selection books for the library so my purchases are less biased. I also ask other librarians what they have purchased and research before making any purchases.