



The Voice of
Small & Rural
Libraries

*ARSL builds
strong communities
through advocacy,
professional
development, and
elevating the impact
of rural and small
libraries.*

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ARSL Access to Information Statement

Public libraries are uniquely American institutions, providing opportunities for lifelong learning and open discourse. The expression of differing ideas has a long history in our country and is a core aspect of our national character. Banning, removing, or censoring materials, speakers, or displays without due process violates people's Constitutional rights.

The Association for Rural & Small Libraries (ARSL) represents library professionals serving diverse communities across the United States. As a professional organization:

ARSL stands in firm support of the freedom to read and free speech as inalienable rights protected by the First Amendment. We are committed to defending those rights for all individuals and recommend library policies that support the selection of library materials that represent a broad range of topics and ideas.

ARSL stands in support of small and rural librarians' expertise in selecting materials and affirms their dedication to the communities they serve. Librarians use their professional training to develop collections and programs that are reflective and supportive of the communities they serve while providing opportunities to learn about other communities that may be different from their own. Materials are carefully selected following established collection development policies and professional standards. If library users voice concerns about materials or services that they find objectionable, libraries have procedures in place for reevaluating those selections.

ARSL stands in support of caregivers' rights to guide their own children's use of the library, and to determine which materials are appropriate or beneficial for their children. We recognize that not every book is right for every reader; however, no one person or group has the authority to determine what is appropriate for someone else's child. Access to a wide variety of reading materials increases the chances that children will become lifelong learners.