



September 13, 2023

Dear School Board Members and Superintendent McCabe,

The Maryland Association of School Librarians (MASL) has learned that a small group of parents has called for the removal of over 50 books from school library shelves in Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) and that the administration has complied. Without going through the reconsideration policy, school librarians were ordered to remove the titles, box them up, and put them out of sight. This administrative decision undermines best practices set forth by the American Library Association and the American Association of School Librarians. While removal of books is not in direct violation of the Carroll County policy and procedure, it does censor and limit the ability of students to have access to these titles. MASL strongly opposes any narrowly focused efforts to remove books from the school library shelves and asks you to support the First Amendment right to read that is afforded to students within their school libraries.

Additionally, MASL is deeply concerned that the school library supervisor was removed from her position and reassigned to the classroom. The removal of the school library supervisor and having the school librarians report to an unrelated curriculum supervisor with no school library experience is concerning.

Furthermore, MASL has grave concerns about the new Appendix J. School librarians were ordered to keep a signed document for every book they purchase. Librarians are now held "accountable" for any content in a book that is deemed inappropriate.

School librarians are experts in collection development and have been trained in how to select books that provide a wide range of topics and ideas that engage, inspire, and allow students to explore the world through books. CCPS librarians have always sought to make deliberate purchasing decisions to benefit their school communities. School library books are choice reading. No students are forced to read anything in the school library. We teach them the life skills of selection, and how to meet their unique needs for reading. Students must have choice in their selection of books so that they may learn these important life skills.

The Maryland Association of School Librarians, the Maryland Library Association and Citizens for Maryland Libraries urge the CCPS administration to trust their school librarian employees and to support their good faith efforts in teaching students to make wise decisions. We ask that the removal of the library media supervisor and the requirement of using Appendix J be reexamined.

Sincerely,

The Maryland Association of School Librarians

The Maryland Library Association

Citizens for Maryland Libraries

Cc:

President, MASL

President, MLA

President, CML