

VALLEY COTTAGE LIBRARY

110 Route 303, Valley Cottage, New York 10989 • 845.268.7700 • www.valleycottagelibrary.org



Board Statement on Materials Challenges

The Valley Cottage Library is dedicated to providing a welcoming environment in which materials and services support and enhance the educational, artistic, professional, personal, and recreational needs and interests of the community.

But deeper than our own library's mission is the mission of public libraries writ large, and their importance in safeguarding our democracy. The freedom to read is a crucial one, and the cornerstone of the public library's role in upholding a just and equitable society.

Likewise, intellectual freedom, defined by the American Library Association (ALA) as "the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction," is essential to a well-informed citizenry with agency to explore ideas and make decisions.

The ALA defines a materials challenge as "an attempt to remove or restrict materials, based upon the objections of a person or group." The Association is then quick to note that "Challenges do not simply involve a person expressing a point of view; rather, they are an attempt to remove material from the curriculum or library, thereby restricting the access of others."

The Valley Cottage Library is the place to satisfy curiosity, be inspired, and connect with others. We recognize that one person's curiosity may be vastly different from another's—indeed, that is what makes our diverse community so special. Even the best-intentioned of challenges opens the door to another challenge—perhaps one that may shrink someone's worldview, invalidate someone's deeply-held beliefs, or diminish someone's identity or self-worth.

The presence of a particular book, periodical or media offering in the Valley Cottage Library's collection does not imply endorsement of the ideas expressed in those materials. As your neighborhood library and partner in creating an informed and intellectually curious community, VCL serves as a neutral provider of information from all points of view. Our only "endorsement" is your right as a member of this community to have access to a wide range of reading, listening and viewing materials.

The Valley Cottage Library has a unique ability to bring people of all ages and backgrounds together around common goals: education, information, personal development and community connection. We want everyone who comes to the library to see themselves in our offerings—and remain committed to providing free, equitable, and confidential access to information to everyone in our Nyack/Valley Cottage community.

Adopted September 21, 2022