



## **Inclusiveness in Materials Statement**

Pleasanton Public Library's (Library) mission is to be a place for all members in the community to "Discover, Connect, and Share" and is guided by the Library and Recreation Department's values of integrity, inclusiveness, innovation, customer service, and collaboration. To fulfill its mission and values, the Library is dedicated to free and equal access to resources in a variety of formats to meet the cultural, informational, recreational, and educational needs of the diverse community it serves.

This statement articulates the Library's position on its freedom to acquire lawful materials without content limitations, and the Library's commitment to oppose attempts to ban, remove, or otherwise restrict library patrons' free and open access to books, materials, information, and resources. In doing so, this statement reinforces the Library's commitment to a patron's individual choice.

### **Book Challenges in Public Libraries**

Books have been banned throughout the history of the United States, without sustained success or benefit to its citizenry. Removing or denying access to resources based on personal bias, prejudice, or because the materials may be viewed as controversial or objectionable, is a form of censorship which is constitutionally restricted.

The American Library Association's (ALA) Library Bill of Rights, a set of guiding principles originally adopted in 1939, outlines free and equitable access to information to support an enlightened citizenry. The American Library Association launched Banned Books Week in 1982 in response to a surge in the number of challenges to books in schools, bookstores, and libraries. The event highlights the value of free and open access to information and brings together community members, librarians, booksellers, publishers, journalists, and teachers in shared support of the freedom to seek and express ideas. Banned Books Week is celebrated each year in October to highlight these important freedoms.

Despite these efforts, the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom reported that book challenges in the United States nearly doubled between 2021 and 2022, reaching the highest number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling data about censorship in libraries more than 20 years ago.

### **Individual Choice in Libraries**

The Library affirms the right for individuals to make their own decisions about their use of library materials and information. The Library is a public space established for the

community and serves as an impartial repository of materials that encompass stories and ideas from different walks of life, that may be discovered, borrowed, and viewed without hindrance. Concerns and disagreements may arise regarding the specific content of library materials, and these differences of opinion are important in a democratic society.

### **Role of Parents and Guardians in the Library**

The American Library Association's Bill of Rights strongly supports the vital role of parents and guardians in helping their children develop fundamental reading skills, in determining their children's use of library materials, and in guiding their children's reading, viewing and listening, as appropriate for their personal stages and individual beliefs. These rights and responsibilities are acknowledged by the Library.

As part of its commitment to collaboration and customer service, Library staff are trained and prepared to assist families by providing curated book lists, professional review sources, and recommendations of library materials for each child's individual reading stages, needs, and interests.

### **Library Collection Development [Policy](#)**

Library staff select and maintain a wide range of materials for the community under the guidance of the Library's Collection Development Policy. This policy outlines selection criteria that consider community needs and interests, the quality and merit of materials, contemporary significance, relevance to diverse populations, collection gap areas, local history, as well as budgetary and space limitations. Each of the selection criteria reflects the five departmental values of integrity, inclusiveness, innovation, customer service, and innovation.

### **Reconsideration of Library Materials [Form](#)**

The Library maintains a process for patrons to request a reconsideration of any materials in the Library's collection. The Request for Reconsideration of Materials form asks that the requestor state their concerns, indicate that they have read or viewed the material in its entirety, and provide specific information related to the concern. Upon receipt of the form, staff will review each request using the Collection Development Policy as the basis for the determination. Responses are provided within 30 days of submission.

The Library values this process for patron input and welcomes community feedback regarding its selection of materials.

Approved by the Library Commission, October 5, 2023.

Adopted by the Pleasanton City Council, November 7, 2023.