



TexLine

TLA*
TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The assault on the freedom to read continues unabated. School and public libraries across Texas are facing unprecedented numbers of challenges and books are being removed from library shelves without going through established reconsideration processes.

Librarians are under tremendous pressure and TLA is committed to doing whatever we can to fight these censorship efforts.

Please complete this brief, seven-question [survey](#) to help us identify additional ways that we can support members dealing with materials challenges and other intellectual freedom issues.

To date, TLA has focused our efforts in three areas:

Media

TLA staff and TLA members have been interviewed by CNN, NPR, Texas Tribune, School Library Journal, Austin-American Statesman, Dallas Morning News, Houston Chronicle, the 19th and many other media outlets, sharing our viewpoint of the importance of the freedom to read.

The San Antonio Express News [ran our op-ed piece](#) (this is behind a paywall) responding to North East ISD's decision to remove and review over 400 books from school libraries.

Tools and Resources

The **TLA Intellectual Freedom Helpline** is now available to assist librarians facing materials challenges or with questions about intellectual freedom issues. The Helpline is staffed by TLA volunteers who will share their expertise, resources, and support. The Helpline coordinators who assign the cases will make every effort to match individuals to volunteers with similar library experience.

More information and the link to [request assistance](#) is on the TLA Intellectual Freedom Tools & Resources [webpage](#).

Interested in volunteering to assist Texas librarians facing these challenges? Complete this [online form](#) and a Helpline coordinator will contact you.

In October, we held a **TLA Talks** webinar on **Materials Challenges**, you can view the [recording](#) here; and the [Wakelet and slides here](#).

On January 25, a **TLA Talks** webinar on legal and policy issues related to materials challenges will be presented by Joy Baskin, director of legal services, Texas Association of School Boards; Deborah Caldwell-Stone, director, ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom; and Zachary Noblitt, assistant city attorney, City of Irving. [Register here](#).

In late February, TLA is hosting a **Freedom to Read Round Table**, sponsored by Macmillan Children's Publishing and Booklist. This panel for this national, virtual event will include a librarian, a parent, a legislator, a student, and an author. It will be a case study of how this issue is unfolding in Texas with a goal of providing an example of how communities around the country can have similar discussions.

Advocacy and Outreach

TLA staff testified at the Nov. 5 meeting of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC), and staff and TLA members will testify at the upcoming TSLAC Libraries & Talking Book Program Committee meeting.

We met with representatives from the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) and the Authors Guild, and will continue to reach out to other organizations to investigate opportunities for collaboration.

Letters were sent to the Texas Education Agency, members of the House General Investigating Committee, and the Texas State Library & Archives Commission. We have reached out to organizations including the Texas Association of School Administrators, Texas Association of School Boards, Texas PTA, ACLU, Association of Texas Professional Educators, and the Media Coalition. Additionally, we are communicating with publishers, and leaders at Texas Schools of Information Science.

Thank You

A huge "Thank you" to TLA members who have responded to media requests, volunteered their time to develop and support the Intellectual Freedom Hotline, shared resources and tools for the website, created infographics, edited op-eds, and more! We will continue to draw upon the strength and knowledge of our members as we bring our efforts on behalf of intellectual freedom and the freedom to read into 2022.



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