



# Panther Press

A publication of the Georgia Academy for the Blind

Friday, October 2nd, 2020

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider*

**Dr. Cindy Gibson, Superintendent**

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Georgia Academy for  
the Blind - GAB

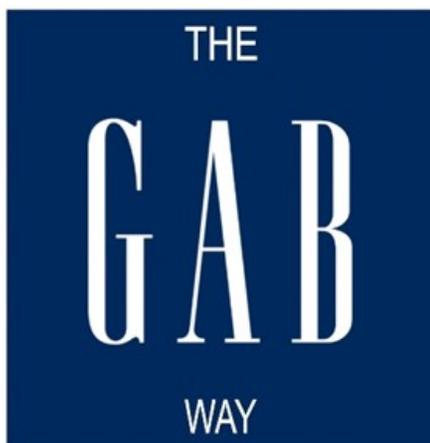


Follow our library:

@gablibrary

Mission Statement: The Georgia Academy for the Blind provides quality education services to Georgia's students with visual impairments and/or visual impairments in conjunction with other disabilities to prepare them to achieve their highest level of independence in transition to college and career readiness. *Check out this student produced video*

*featuring this Mission Statement:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRrbhkGSe98>



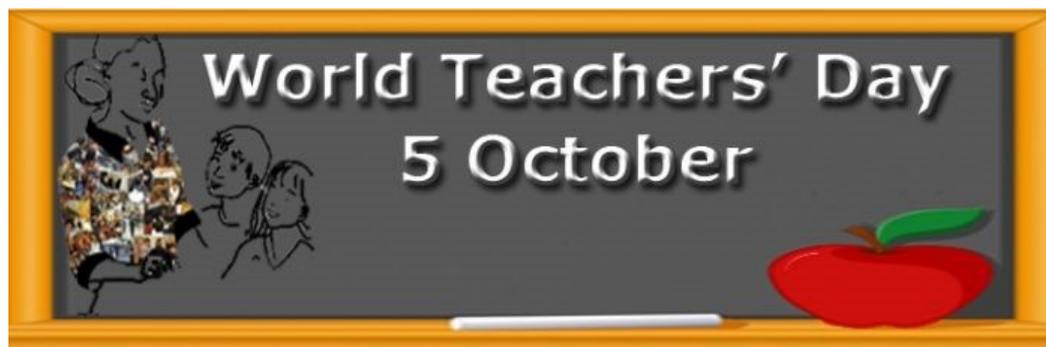
Give it your best  
Achieve your goals  
Be respectful

*Mark your Calendar*

Our next holiday is:

Thanksgiving Break  
11/23—11/27

**October:**



This newsletter is published by our Parent Mentor/Family Engagement Specialist, Jennifer Minter. Please send your ideas, news and resources in your community to her: [JMinter@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:JMinter@doe.k12.ga.us) or call **478-262-3303**. ***Please remember to contact her if you've had a change in address, phone number and/or email!***

# A message from our Superintendent

Dear GAB Families,

Congratulations on completing 6 weeks of the 2020-2021 school year in safety and academic compliance. Some of you received more and new technology this week! We are so happy for you.

If you know anything about GAB, you know that we are “celebrate this day,” “this moment is precious” kinds of people. Whether online or onsite, we are striving to continue our traditions that make our environment inviting and inclusive. This week our media specialist Kim Smith has led us in celebrating Banned Books Week.

Students can earn a treat for checking out a book in celebration of our freedom to read. Audio/eBooks count! Even adults may receive a treat for checking out a book! See the link below for more information about classics that have been banned and challenged over the years.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/classics>

How fortunate we are to celebrate our freedom to choose what we read and the help we receive here at GAB to do so. So many options for which we are thankful as braille, screen readers, audio players, refreshable braille devices, and all assistive technology prescribed for the individual student.

This week I am on leave celebrating my son’s wedding and my anniversary in beautiful Bluffton, SC. While here I am following the guidance of my colleague Leslie Jackson, Supt. of the Georgia School for the Deaf in Cave Spring. She advises that we read something just for personal enjoyment and something that pertains to our professional service every day. I like this advice. This week I am rereading *Pride and Prejudice* which most of us read by 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and as Cortical Visual Impairment is now the leading cause of visual impairment in 1<sup>st</sup> world countries, Christine Roman-Lantzy’s book *Cortical Visual Impairment An Approach to Assessment and Intervention*. Freedom to read is the heartbeat of learning, for sure.

Two quick notes that are important to you. . . We plan to announce plans for instruction effective Monday, October 26, 2020, sometime next week after approvals from GaDOE administration.

Secondly, be reminded that students cannot be on campus at GAB with symptoms of COVID. Please do not send students to school sick or having taken medicine to prevent fever. Please provide a recent doctor appointment documentation if symptoms as runny nose, etc., may be diagnosed something other than COVID. We apologize for the inconvenience and assure you we are trying to keep all safe and healthy.

Enjoy your weekend, maybe a little fall weather and good football celebrations!

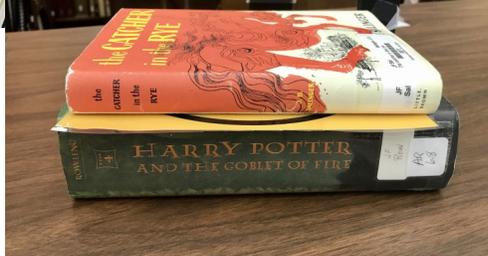
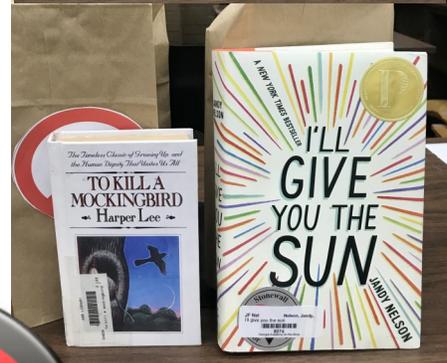
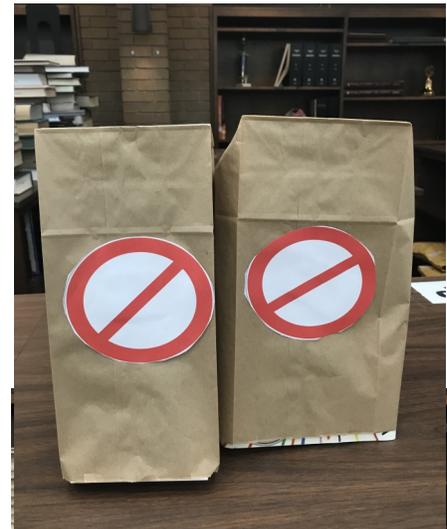
Always,

Cindy



# Banned Books Week

The American Library Association does not support banning books. Banned Books Week is meant to bring attention to attempts to do so and to encourage people to celebrate their freedom to read. Reading can look different for everyone: braille books, audio books, picture books, eBooks. Every format is valid and should be celebrated!

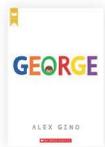


TOP 10

# CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2019



The American Library Association tracked **377 challenges** to library, school, and university materials and services in 2019. Overall, 566 books were targeted. Here are the “Top 10 Most Challenged Books in 2019,” along with the reasons cited for censoring the books:



**1 | *George* by Alex Gino**

Challenged, banned, restricted, and hidden to avoid controversy; for LGBTQIA+ content and a transgender character; because schools and libraries should not “put books in a child’s hand that require discussion”; for sexual references; and for conflicting with a religious viewpoint and “traditional family structure”



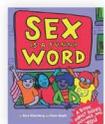
**2 | *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin**

Challenged for LGBTQIA+ content, for “its effect on any young people who would read it,” and for concerns that it was sexually explicit and biased



**3 | *A Day in the Life of Marlon Bundo* by Jill Twiss, illustrated by EG Keller**

Challenged and vandalized for LGBTQIA+ content and political viewpoints, for concerns that it is “designed to pollute the morals of its readers,” and for not including a content warning



**4 | *Sex is a Funny Word* by Cory Silverberg, illustrated by Fiona Smyth**

Challenged, banned, and relocated for LGBTQIA+ content; for discussing gender identity and sex education; and for concerns that the title and illustrations were “inappropriate”



**5 | *Prince & Knight* by Daniel Haack, illustrated by Stevie Lewis**

Challenged and restricted for featuring a gay marriage and LGBTQIA+ content; for being “a deliberate attempt to indoctrinate young children” with the potential to cause confusion, curiosity, and gender dysphoria; and for conflicting with a religious viewpoint



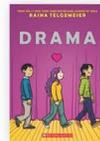
**6 | *I Am Jazz* by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings, illustrated by Shelagh McNicholas**

Challenged and relocated for LGBTQIA+ content, for a transgender character, and for confronting a topic that is “sensitive, controversial, and politically charged”



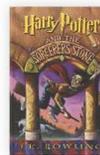
**7 | *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood**

Banned and challenged for profanity and for “vulgarity and sexual overtones”



**8 | *Drama* written and illustrated by Raina Telgemeier**

Challenged for LGBTQIA+ content and for concerns that it goes against “family values/ morals”



**9 | *Harry Potter series* by J. K. Rowling**

Banned and forbidden from discussion for referring to magic and witchcraft, for containing actual curses and spells, and for characters that use “nefarious means” to attain goals



**10 | *And Tango Makes Three* by Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson, illustrated by Henry Cole**

Challenged and relocated for LGBTQIA+ content

# CENSORSHIP

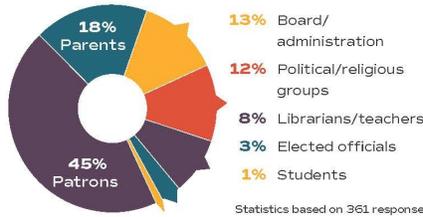
## BY THE NUMBERS 2019

Censorship is a dead end. It limits exploration and creates barriers to access information. The path toward the freedom to read starts at the library.

Learn more at [ala.org/bbooks](http://ala.org/bbooks).



### WHO INITIATES CHALLENGES?



### WHAT IS A CHALLENGE?

Attempt to remove or restrict materials or services based on content

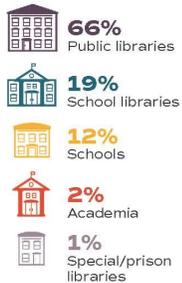
### WHAT IS A BAN?

Removal of materials or cancellation of services based on content

### REASONS FOR CHALLENGES



### WHERE DO CHALLENGES TAKE PLACE?



# 607

Total materials affected in censorship attempts in 2019 (including books, films, newspapers)

# +14%

Increase from last year

### READERS ON CENSORSHIP

Had I had a book like that on the shelf, I might have realized that I could love myself. I might have realized a lot sooner that it's O.K. to feel different."

Community member on keeping "Prince & Knight" on a public library's shelves

Obviously, I'm a Christian, and I take my God very seriously, but if I just simply ban everything that's going to be said about my God or about my faith, then I'm living in my own little, narrow world."

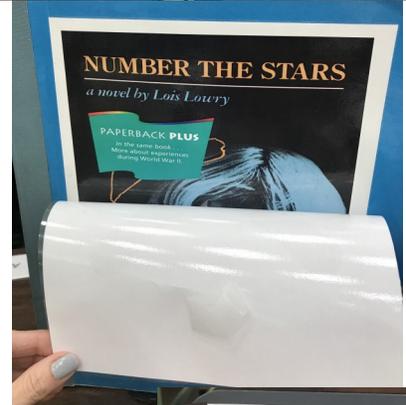
Pastor on the inclusion of "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time" on a school's summer reading list

### BOOKS AND BEYOND

The ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 377 challenges in 2019. Here's the breakdown:



\* Includes social media, hate crimes, games, filtering, databases, newspapers, magazines



# October Birthdays

10-2	Kemet	10-17	Kevin B.
10-3	Jordon	10-19	Andrew
10-9	Angelica	10-20	Hope K.
10-13	Kaleigh	10-24	Dashia

