

The Law and Library Books



First Amendment to the US Constitution

The United States Supreme Court has determined that students have First Amendment rights that apply to the removal of books from school library shelves.



Students have a right to access information

Removing books from a school library simply because officials disagree with the ideas in them can violate the First Amendment.

School Districts Have Discretion

The School District can choose books for educational relevance, age appropriateness, and curricular alignment. The school district may not remove materials from a library for the purpose of denying students access to ideas with which the district disagrees.



Balance is Required

The School District may not censor materials just to suppress a viewpoint, but they may make decisions based on legitimate educational concerns. The school district may remove materials if, in accordance with District policy, they are deemed pervasively vulgar or if the removal is based solely on the educational suitability of the books in question.

Who Decides?

If a library book is challenged, a School Library Advisory Committee will convene to review the book and determine whether it meets the legal and/or District policy requirements for removal from the library shelves.

A key Supreme Court case, *Board of Education v. Pico* (1982), held that while school boards can remove books for reasons like age-appropriateness or poor quality, they cannot do so simply because they dislike the ideas expressed.