



CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Infinite Possibilities

A Message from the CCPL Board of Trustees

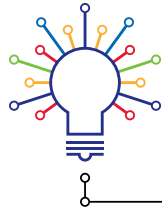
The Carroll County Public Library Board of Trustees stands in support of librarians and library staff here in our County and across our State. We appreciate the professionalism and expertise of CCPL's staff in developing and providing access to robust collections that underpin and reinforce each individual's freedom to read and our freedom of speech.



The board affirms that parents are best positioned to select what their children read, just as we have full confidence in our library staff's ability to curate a well-rounded collection of titles.

As a public library, CCPL will continue to maintain a well-rounded collection and will ensure that all challenged titles will be part of the CCPL collection.

The CCPL Board of Trustees endorses the statement by the CCPL Executive Director. We invite you to join us as we celebrate the Freedom to Read.



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An Open Letter to the Community from CCPL Executive Director

During my brief time in Carroll County, I've discovered a community marked by compassion, dedication to education and a strong sense of patriotism, and whose people recognize the importance of constructive civil discourse in maintaining a healthy and open society.

Recent events have raised pressing concerns about the erosion of this last, pivotal characteristic. Divisive lines have been drawn. We have strayed from a tradition of valuing the freedom to express differing opinions and participating in intellectually rigorous debates. Instead, we have descended into the realm of name-calling and pejorative labeling, forsaking the impartial consideration of opposing perspectives.



Andrea Berstler
Executive Director of
Carroll County Public Library

Benjamin Franklin emphasized the necessity of free speech for a thriving republic in his Silence Dogood letters, stating, "Without Freedom of Thought, there can be no such Thing as Wisdom; and no such Thing as publick (sic) Liberty, without Freedom of Speech." Franklin goes on to argue that the only justifiable reason for limiting one's speech is if it causes harm or seeks to control another person. Sadly, today's public rhetoric appears to be solely aimed at those two exact purposes.

A crucial aspect of a librarian's work is the safeguarding of this freedom of speech, the free press, and to foster true civil discourse. This encompasses the freedom to hear spoken words and read written ones. Censorship stifles civilizations, limits potential and hinders professional growth.

Libraries ensure access to information for every individual without judgment, censorship, restrictions or the need for payment. This commitment empowers each individual with the ability to actively engage in their community. I have taken great pride in dedicating the last 24 years to this work.

Carroll County Public Library staunchly supports the tireless efforts of library staff to ensure access to information free from the specter of retribution. We endorse the belief that parents should choose what is suitable for their own child to read and that librarians are uniquely qualified to curate collections that reflect diversity and inclusivity designed to meet the needs of all members of our community. These two principles can and should coexist harmoniously.

Carroll County Public Library remains unwavering in its commitment to serve all members of our community. Therefore, we pledge to incorporate any title removed from the shelves of Carroll's public school libraries into our own collection. We invite you to visit us, explore our wealth of resources and diverse perspectives and exercise your cherished freedom to read.



Find the letter on [The Baltimore Sun's website](#).