

Tyler Public Library
Executive Summary
December 13, 2021

Across the country today schools and libraries are under scrutiny for pushing Critical Race Theory, hateful anti-America indoctrination, and providing access to inappropriate, graphic, and explicit sexual material to our children.

Critical Race Theory ('CRT') and the sexual indoctrination of minors is no longer a secret. Due to the pandemic, children were schooled online at home for an extended period of time. Because of this, parents witnessed firsthand what is being taught to their children. In addition, parents have discovered that children as young five years old are exposed to graphic and sexually explicit books and images. Parents and grandparents are rightly outraged.

Evidence of this activity has been exposed across the nation and, regrettably, is also present in the Tyler Public Library.

Tyler's elected officials are our first and best line of defense against CRT, inappropriate sexual content, and wrongful ideology that seek to rob our children of their innocence, cause them to hate our country, and to despise our Constitution. With a budget of \$1.8 million, the Tyler Library *should be* a shining example of the best an East Texas Library can offer. **Today, this is not the case.**

The City of Tyler is a city that values Christian, conservative, patriotic and wholesome ideals. This perception is proven by the fact that voters in Tyler and Smith County historically vote **70+%** of the time for conservative values and candidates. Our adherence to these values is what makes Tyler a place people are proud to call home.

Tyler has attracted a record number of people who have fled from states such as Oregon, California, North Carolina, and Illinois to make their home here. People are attracted to Tyler because they believe our community to be like-minded and steadfast in maintaining our conservative values. **Let's not let them down.**

Outlined for your review are areas of concern in the Tyler Public Library, documented evidence of the problem, viable solutions, and suggested updates to our Library Policies. **The goal is to enhance the experience of the library, increase traffic and appeal to the interests of the general population. We would like to ensure our \$1.8 Million budget is money well spent.**

1. Displays of Books, Magazines, Newspapers
2. Collections Policy & Compliance Audit
3. Transparency
4. Proclaim June as Patriotic Month and Celebrate Veterans Day

Displays of Books, Magazines and Newspapers

Summary of Concern: The majority of materials prominently displayed throughout the Library's first floor demonstrate a distinctly one-sided political and cultural viewpoint. This includes a noticeable number of children's books that are condoned and promoted by the American Library Association (ALA) and Critical Race Theorists (CRT) and promote anti-American indoctrination. More specifically, there is a clear and distinct bias towards displaying predominantly Democrat politicians' books in the Children's Biography Section. The assortment of newspaper and magazine selections reveal a similar one-sidedness.

Materials located anywhere on the library's first floor can be easily accessed by minors, including materials promoting Critical Race Theory, hateful anti-America indoctrination, and inappropriate, graphic, and explicit sexual material. In the December 8th board meeting more than fifteen concerned citizens addressed the board members and library staff and presented documentation about one or all of these issues.

Evidence and Documentation: Library Bill of Rights, Lauren Snyder Speech, Lauren Snyder Facebook Post, Jackson Hug Speech, Summary of Craig Licciardi Speech, Pictures from the book *It's Perfectly Normal*.

Solutions: We recommend adding a new library policy that defines what Prominently Displayed Materials are and clarifies the librarian's selection and placement of these materials. To be clear, there is no intention to exclude materials due to the origin, background, or views. The library is expected to be in compliance with the Library Bill of Rights. However, **the Library Bill of Rights is not to be misinterpreted or exploited in order to display or promote Critical Race Theory, hateful anti-America indoctrination, and inappropriate, graphic, and explicit sexual material in or around the children's section.**

Suggested Language Addition to Exhibits and Displays Policy: 'Prominently Displayed Materials shall present a balanced approach to viewpoints on subjects that 1) appeal to and are reflective of the general interest of the Tyler population and 2) are age-appropriate for minors. Prominently Displayed Materials include Books, Magazines, Newspapers and Periodicals displayed in clear sight, including those items displayed on any library shelves or display cases where the entire front or back cover of the material is displayed in sight of patrons and minors.' **In no case shall sexually explicit materials be Prominently Displayed in view of minors.**

Collections Policy & Compliance Audit

Summary of Concern: During the December 8th library board meeting, attendees voiced disapproval and presented documentation regarding books about Critical Race Theory, anti-America indoctrination, and inappropriate, graphic, and explicit sexual books being displayed in the children's sections.

Based on the documented bias of displayed materials* throughout the first floor of the library, the community voiced concern that the Librarian's bias may also be reflected in 1) new purchases and 2) materials that are being purged from the library.

Displayed materials are not absolute proof as to whether the new materials purchased or purged as a whole are similarly biased. However, several constituents voiced requests for an audit of the library material to ensure a balanced collection of materials exists as required in the Collections Policy.

Evidence and Documentation: Tyler Public Library Collection Development Policy, Amended Version of Collection Development Policy, Summary of Craig Licciardi Speech, Pictures from the book *It's Perfectly Normal*, Jackson Hug Speech

Solutions: An *independent* audit should be performed to ensure that the Librarian's choice of books are in compliance with the Collections Policy and provide a balanced collection of materials that appeal to the interests of the general Tyler population. **City employees and board members should not participate in the audit to ensure it is completely independent.** Choosing an auditor should be publicly discussed at the City Council meetings. The scope and results of the audit should be open to the community during City Council meetings to ensure transparency and a fair audit process. (Similar to the redistricting process.)

The goal of the audit is to ensure our Library inventory, policies and practices contain a well-balanced collection reflecting the general interest of the taxpayers of Tyler.

Suggested Policy Changes: Nothing recommended at this time, *pending independent audit.*

* See 'Displays of Books, Magazines and Newspapers'

Transparency & Public Posting of Planned Book Purchases/Purges

Summary of Concern: On November 30th, 2021, a request was made to the Librarian and Assistant Deputy City Manager that a list of books the Librarian is *planning to purchase* be publicly posted. That request was declined. At the December 8 library board meeting several citizens made the same request and this request was again declined. **Multiple attendees made the point that taxpayers funding the library have the right to know what books are going to be purchased before the fact, not after. Due to the documented bias in the library, transparency is now a big issue with taxpayers.** Taxpayers are requesting and certainly deserve transparency regarding the intention of the Librarian's purchases. They are rightly outraged that the Librarian and Assistant Deputy City Manager would refuse to publicly post this list. There is no written policy that prohibits this.

Important Note: The current process to remove an already-purchased book only allows taxpayers to request a book be 'reconsidered' *after* it has been purchased. **When an *already-purchased* book is disputed, the same Library Staff that chose the book in the first place determines whether to allow the book to be removed.** This decision is further prejudiced by the fact that money has already been spent buying the book and staff time has been used processing and shelving the book. If the already-purchased book is actually removed from the Collection, we do not get our money refunded and we also must spend more time processing its removal and disposing of it.

The current process to dispute objectionable material is a cumbersome and prejudiced process. This process can be vastly improved by simply notifying citizens in advance what books are going to be purchased. **To be clear, taxpayers are not interested in censoring books. Taxpayers are highly interested in efficiency and transparency.**

Evidence and Documentation: Emails Regarding Request to Publicly Publish Book Lists, Summary of Sara Maynard Speech

Solutions: The Librarian will publicly post lists of books to be purchased or purged at least 30 days prior to taking action. This list will provide easy access to the public via Facebook and the library website. The list will include Title, Author, Topic/Subject and Placement in the Library. A **Pre-purchase/Purge Book Form** will be available for patrons who wish to dispute a book's purchase or placement in the library *prior to taking action*. The same Form can be used to prevent removal of a book. The Pre-purchase/Purge Book Form process helps avoid the expense of buying, processing, and shelving a book that, upon consideration, isn't a viable option for the Tyler Public Library. It also gives patrons an opportunity to keep treasured books from being removed.

Suggested New Policy: At least thirty days prior to purchasing or purging library materials a list will be publicly posted on the Library's Facebook page and website to ensure easy access to the public. The list shall include but not be limited to: Title, Author, Topic/Subject, Placement in the Library. Patrons have the right to submit a Pre-purchase/Purge Book Form prior to the purchase or removal of the book. If the patron's request is denied, he can appeal to the library's governing body.

Patriotic Month / Veterans Day Celebration

Summary of Concern: The library did nothing to celebrate four of Texas' and America's most important Patriotic celebrations. Veterans Day, Juneteenth, Flag Day, and July 4th were all ignored in the library. It did not go unnoticed by some of our Veteran population that the library completely ignored Veterans Day. Additionally, the library had no pro-American celebrations or displays during June for Juneteenth, Flag Day, or July 4th.

Evidence and Documentation: Summary of Sarah Fields Speech, Pictures of June 29th – July 7th Book Displays

Solutions: Pass an ordinance proclaiming June as 'Patriotic Month in the Library.' The Library Youth Service Staff will collaborate with the community to provide activities to educate and celebrate in the days leading up to Juneteenth, Flag Day and culminating with a celebration of July 4th.

Veterans Day will be celebrated in coordination with Tyler's Veteran community and organizations. This celebration should include education of the sacrifices our Veterans made that allow our freedoms to continue in America, the state of Texas and Tyler in particular.

Suggested New Policy: During the month of June, the library's Youth Services Staff *shall* provide uplifting patriotic activities to educate and inform **adult, youth, and child patrons** in the days leading up to Juneteenth, Flag Day, and culminating with a celebration of July 4th. Veterans Day will be honored annually by providing education about all branches of the armed services, patriotic displays of our national heroes and local Veterans in conjunction with our local Veteran organizations. The shelves and display cases will be utilized during these holidays to educate and inform the public about our local and national Veteran heroes.