

To our community,

Recently, a concern about age-appropriate content was brought to the Library Board's attention in connection with a field trip from a local, public elementary school. A staff member of the local school raised concerns that a book read to the visiting 5th grade classes was inappropriate. The book, *A Kids Book about Equality* by Billie Jean King, uses the term "non-binary" in relation to equality. The staff member also raised concerns that a new book on display about reproduction, *It's So Amazing* by Robie H. Harris, was inappropriate.

Upon learning about the class visit, a community member began a petition to remove all material and symbols related to "gender ideology", citing books and images of rainbow-colored items on display in the Children's and Young Adult section of the library. One of the books cited was miscataloged and had already been moved to the Young Adult section prior to the petition's release. Since the petition started, we have also received counter-concerns on the potential harm of these materials being removed from the Children's and Young Adult section of the library.

As a Board, we wanted to address related concerns and share our guiding principles as a Library.

For almost 125 years the Library has served Millbrook and the surrounding areas through its mission to empower the community to be resilient, informed, and equitable through leadership and collaboration, provide free and open access to ideas and information, as well as educational, enjoyable programs and services in a welcoming, inclusive environment. We want to encourage each of you in our community to feel seen, heard, and valued based on the array of content that is included within our walls and in our digital collections.

We wholeheartedly agree that it is the job of the parent or guardian to guide their own children through the process of understanding the world, and not the job of the Library to do so on their behalf.

We have heard and understand the book read during the class visit referenced topics that some parents believe are inappropriate for their children. To that end, we have a new procedure in place to ensure that for all field trips--when parents and guardians are not present with their children in the library--content will be pre-selected by the visiting school in advance to align with the needs of the specific classes and curriculum.

In terms of content selection and removal, we have an established Collection Development Policy that exists to help guide the staff in the selection of materials to support the community. Should anyone in the community wish to have books within the library reconsidered for circulation, we have a policy in place to do so. Please see a link to this specific policy [here](#), and all library policies [here](#).

We pride ourselves on working with you to ensure the materials we have include a wide range of viewpoints across social, political, spiritual, and religious topics. Families in the community have recently

requested age-appropriate books on the theme of gender identity. All these materials have been vetted through the Collection Development Policy.

We appreciate that there are many different perspectives in a healthy and thriving community, and that is what makes a community great – the ability to share varying points of view and information through passionate discourse. A combination of participation from the Millbrook community, library leadership and staff, and oversight from the Board is exactly what has helped in our growth as a Library these past years.

As a Board, we wholeheartedly support the leadership and staff of the library in their steadfast adherence to its mission, policies, and goals. We thank everyone who has reached out to us in person, over the phone, over email, and in writing to share their unique perspectives on this issue. We encourage you to continue to share your ideas, concerns and wishes with the Library staff and look forward to seeing you in the building or at one of our upcoming programs soon.

Thank you,  
The Board of Trustees of the Millbrook Library