



CANADIAN  
PUBLISHERS'  
COUNCIL



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## **Statement from the Canadian Publishing Industry on the Alberta Government's "Ensuring Age-Appropriate Books in School Libraries" Initiative**

May 30, 2025

The Association of Canadian Publishers (ACP), the Canadian Publishers' Council (CPC), and the Literary Press Group of Canada (LPG) join colleagues across the publishing, education, and library sectors in expressing concern over the [Alberta government's recent announcement regarding "age-inappropriate" materials in school libraries](#). While we support the principle that school collections should be thoughtfully curated to reflect students' developmental stages, we are alarmed that this initiative appears to disproportionately target 2SLGBTQIA+ content, raising important questions about the true intent of the process.

The public consultation launched by Alberta's Ministry of Education and Childcare, framed as a means of creating consistent standards, lacks transparency and professional input. It risks raising public alarm rather than fostering informed dialogue about the purpose and value of school libraries. Notably, all four of the books cited by the ministry as problematic feature 2SLGBTQIA+ characters or themes, an approach that stigmatizes queer identities and narratives.

We echo the [Canadian School Libraries' reminder](#) that "not every book in a school library is meant for every student." Selections are made to support the broad spectrum of student needs and experiences. The distinction between materials used for instruction and those available for self-directed reading must be respected.

As Canadian publishers, we affirm that every child has the right to see themselves reflected in the stories they read. A robust library collection is critical to fostering belonging and understanding among all students, especially those who are marginalized or questioning where they fit in. Our associations champion the ideals of

freedom of expression, freedom to publish, and freedom to read, all of which are cornerstones of a democratic society and a thriving educational ecosystem.

It is troubling that this initiative is happening amid long-standing cuts to school library professionals in Alberta. The dissolution of the Alberta School Library Association and the decline in the number of trained teacher-librarians reflect a broader erosion of respect for the expertise required to develop inclusive and developmentally appropriate collections. Rather than imposing rigid standards, the Alberta government should be investing in teacher-librarians whose training allows them to work closely with students, parents, and educators to navigate challenging content with care and context.

The Canadian publishing industry urges the Government of Alberta to engage in genuine consultation with teacher-librarians, school boards, students, parents, and publishing professionals—including those from 2SLGBTQIA+ communities—before imposing top-down standards on school libraries. While collections should be carefully curated to serve student needs, outright book bans risk undermining the educational role of libraries and the rights of students to access diverse narratives.

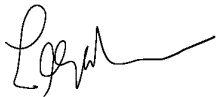
Signed,

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*ACP is the national voice of English-language Canadian-owned book publishers. ACP contributes to the development and maintenance of vibrant, competitive book publishing companies in order to support and strengthen the contribution that Canadian books make to Canada's cultural, economic, and educational landscape.*

*CPC represents the interests of publishing companies that publish books and other media for elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, professional and reference markets, and the retail and library sectors. CPC maintains liaison with major Canadian and international sector associations in writing and publishing, to monitor key developments in the sector and advocate for policies that promote a healthy and prosperous industry.*

*LPG is a non-profit association representing Canadian-owned and -operated literary book publishers. As a national arts service organization, they advocate for members and for Canadian literary culture; offer critical business services including sales, distribution, and marketing; operate the online book retailer All Lit Up; provide professional development and knowledge-sharing opportunities; and represent member publishers at national and international events.*

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