



General Assembly

January Session, 2025

Raised Bill No. 1271

LCO No. 4244



Referred to Committee on COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

Introduced by:
(KID)

AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) As used in this section and
2 sections 2 and 3 of this act:

3 (1) "Library and other educational material" means any material
4 belonging to, on loan to or otherwise in the custody of a school library
5 media center, including, but not limited to, nonfiction and fiction books,
6 magazines, reference books, supplementary titles, multimedia and
7 digital material, software and other material not required as part of
8 classroom instruction.

9 (2) "School library staff member" means a school library media
10 specialist, school librarian, any certificated or noncertificated staff
11 member whose assignment is in the school library or any individual
12 carrying out or assisting with the functions of a school library media
13 specialist or school librarian.

14 (3) "Individual with a vested interest" means any school staff member
15 employed by a local or regional board of education, parent or guardian

16 of a student currently enrolled in a school at the time a reconsideration
17 form is filed under section 3 of this act, and any student currently
18 enrolled in a school at the time a reconsideration form is filed under
19 section 3 of this act.

20 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a Library
21 Working Group to develop (1) model written policies regarding
22 collection development and maintenance, library display and programs
23 and material review and reconsideration, and (2) a uniform request for
24 review and reconsideration form for school library media centers for use
25 by local and regional boards of education.

26 (b) The Library Working Group shall consist of the following
27 members:

28 (1) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate who
29 shall be the executive director of the Cooperating Library Services Unit,
30 or the executive director's designee;

31 (2) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives
32 who shall be the president of the Connecticut Association of School
33 Librarians, or the president's designee;

34 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate who shall be
35 the executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of
36 Education, or the executive director's designee;

37 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of
38 Representatives who shall be the president of the Connecticut Library
39 Association, or the president's designee;

40 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate who shall be
41 the director of the Center for Literary Research at the Department of
42 Education, or the director's designee; and

43 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
44 Representatives who shall be the immediate former president of the

45 Connecticut Association of School Librarians, or the former president's
46 designee.

47 (c) All initial appointments to the working group shall be made not
48 later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy
49 shall be filled by the appointing authority.

50 (d) The president pro tempore of the Senate and the speaker of the
51 House of Representatives shall select the chairpersons from among the
52 members of the working group. Such chairpersons shall schedule the
53 first meeting of the working group, which shall be held not later than
54 sixty days after the effective date of this section.

55 (e) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the
56 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children
57 shall serve as administrative staff of the working group.

58 (f) Not later than March 1, 2026, the working group shall submit the
59 model written policies regarding collection development and
60 maintenance, library display and programs and material review and
61 reconsideration, and a uniform request for review and reconsideration
62 form for school library media centers, to the joint standing committee of
63 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children,
64 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

65 (g) The working group shall convene every fifth year to (1) revise and
66 update the model written policies and the uniform request for review
67 and reconsideration form, and (2) distribute the updated model written
68 policies and uniform request for review and reconsideration form to
69 local and regional boards of education with information explaining any
70 changes to such model written policies.

71 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) Each local and regional board
72 of education shall adopt, in accordance with the provisions of this
73 section, a (1) collection development and maintenance policy, (2) library
74 program and display policy, and (3) library material review and

75 reconsideration policy. Each such policy shall ensure that all library
76 materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the
77 protections against discrimination set forth in section 10-15c of the
78 general statutes, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on
79 race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual
80 orientation or disability. In developing each such policy, the board shall
81 have control over the content of each such policy, provided such board
82 has reviewed and considered the model policies developed by the
83 Library Working Group pursuant to section 2 of this act.

84 (b) The collection development and maintenance policy shall, at a
85 minimum:

86 (1) Recognize that library and other educational materials should (A)
87 be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all
88 students, and (B) represent a wide range of varied and diverging
89 viewpoints in the collection as a whole;

90 (2) Require student access to age-appropriate and grade-level-
91 appropriate material, and provide access to library and other
92 educational material that is relevant to the research, independent
93 reading interests and educational needs of students based on a student's
94 age, development or grade level;

95 (3) Recognize the importance of the school library media center as a
96 place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas
97 and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by
98 students;

99 (4) Acknowledge that a school library media specialist is
100 professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides
101 students with access to the widest array of age-appropriate and grade-
102 level-appropriate library and other educational material; and

103 (5) Establish a procedure for a certified school library media specialist
104 to continually review library and other educational material within a

105 school library media center using professionally accepted standards,
106 which shall include, but not be limited to, the material's relevance, the
107 condition of the material, the availability of duplicates or copies of the
108 material, the availability of more recent age-appropriate or grade-level-
109 appropriate material and the continued demand for the material.

110 (c) The library display and program policy shall, at a minimum:

111 (1) Recognize that library displays should (A) be provided for the
112 interest, information and enlightenment of all students, (B) represent a
113 wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints, (C) require student
114 access to age-appropriate and grade-level-appropriate content, and (D)
115 provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent
116 interests and educational needs of students;

117 (2) Recognize the importance of displays and student programs as
118 resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information
119 and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by
120 students; and

121 (3) Acknowledge that a school library media specialist is
122 professionally trained to curate and develop displays and programs that
123 provide students with access to the widest array of age-appropriate and
124 grade-level-appropriate library and other educational material.

125 (d) The material review and reconsideration policy shall, at a
126 minimum:

127 (1) Limit consideration of requests to reconsider and remove
128 material, displays or student programs to the parents and guardians of
129 students and eligible students currently enrolled in the school or school
130 district;

131 (2) Require that no library and other educational material, display or
132 program shall be removed from library media centers, or programs be
133 cancelled, because of the origin, background or viewpoints expressed in

134 such material, display or program, or because of the origin, background
135 or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display or program;

136 (3) Require that library and other educational materials, displays and
137 student programs may only be excluded for legitimate pedagogical
138 purposes or for professionally accepted standards of collection
139 maintenance practices as adopted in the collection development and
140 maintenance policy or the display and program policy;

141 (4) Require that any process for petitioners to challenge any library
142 and other educational material, display or student program shall neither
143 favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics;

144 (5) Provide for the creation of a request for reconsideration form,
145 based on the model reconsideration form developed by the Library
146 Working Group pursuant to section 2 of this act, that may be submitted
147 by an individual with a vested interest to the principal of the school in
148 which the library and other educational material is being challenged to
149 initiate a review of such material. The form shall require such individual
150 to specify which portions of such material such individual objects to and
151 provide an explanation of the reasons for such objection;

152 (6) Require the principal, or the principal's designee, to promptly
153 forward the request for reconsideration to the superintendent of schools
154 for the school district. The superintendent, or the superintendent's
155 designee, shall appoint a review committee consisting of: (A) The
156 superintendent, or the superintendent's designee, (B) the principal of the
157 school in which the library or other educational material is being
158 challenged, or the principal's designee, (C) the school library media
159 specialist for the school or a school library media specialist from another
160 school in the school district or, if there is no school library media
161 specialist employed by the local or regional board of education for the
162 school district, a school library media specialist from a neighboring
163 school district, (D) the director of the local public library, or the
164 director's designee, (E) a representative from the local or regional board

165 of education, (F) at least one grade-level-appropriate teacher familiar
166 with the library material, provided the teacher selected is not the
167 individual who submitted the form, and (G) a parent or guardian of a
168 student enrolled in the school district, provided the parent or guardian
169 selected is not the individual who submitted the form. In cases where
170 such form is submitted by a student enrolled in grades nine to twelve,
171 inclusive, and when appropriate and at the discretion of the
172 superintendent, a student enrolled in grades nine to twelve, inclusive,
173 may serve on the review committee if such student did not submit the
174 reconsideration form, provided the superintendent consults with the
175 principal of the school involved in such reconsideration request prior to
176 making this determination whether to include such student on the
177 review committee;

178 (7) Require that any library and other educational material being
179 challenged remain available in the school library media center
180 according to such material's catalog record and be available for a
181 student to reserve, check out or access until a final decision is made by
182 the review committee;

183 (8) Require the review committee to evaluate the request for
184 reconsideration form, read the challenged material in its entirety,
185 evaluate the challenged material against the school district's collection
186 development and maintenance policy and make a written decision on
187 whether or not to remove the challenged material not later than sixty
188 school days from the date of receiving such request. A copy of the
189 committee's decision and report shall be provided to the individual with
190 a vested interest who submitted the form and to the principal of the
191 school;

192 (9) Permit the individual with a vested interest who submitted the
193 request for reconsideration form to appeal the review committee's
194 decision to the local or regional board of education for the school
195 district. The board shall (A) provide a written statement of the reasons
196 for the reconsideration or nonreconsideration of the library and other

197 educational material, (B) provide any final decision that is contrary to
198 the decision of the review committee, and (C) publish such reasons or
199 decision on the Internet web site of the school district;

200 (10) Provide that once a decision has been made by the review
201 committee on any library and other educational material, such material
202 cannot be subject to a new request for review and reconsideration for a
203 period of three years; and

204 (11) Permit a school district to consolidate any requests for review
205 and reconsideration of the same challenged library and other
206 educational material.

207 (e) Any school library media specialist or school library staff member
208 who, in good faith, implements the policies described in this section
209 shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might
210 otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity
211 with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such
212 implementation.

213 (f) Any school library media specialist, school library staff member,
214 teacher, administrator, school staff member or local or regional board of
215 education member may bring an action for emotional distress,
216 defamation, libel, slander, damage to reputation or any other relevant
217 tort against any person who harasses such school library media
218 specialist, school library staff member, teacher, administrator, school
219 staff member or local or regional board of education member for
220 implementing the policies described in this section.

221 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) The board of trustees, or other
222 governing body, of each public library shall adopt, in accordance with
223 the provisions of this section, a (1) collection development and
224 maintenance policy, (2) library program and display policy, and (3)
225 library material review and reconsideration policy. Each such policy
226 shall ensure that all library materials are evaluated and made accessible
227 in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in

228 section 46a-64 of the general statutes, including, but not limited to,
229 discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion,
230 national origin, sexual orientation or disability. In developing each such
231 policy, the board shall have control over the content of each such policy,
232 provided such policies are in accordance with the provisions of this
233 section. The board of trustees or other governing body shall review, and
234 update as necessary, each such policy every five years.

235 (b) The collection development and maintenance policy shall, at a
236 minimum:

237 (1) Recognize that library materials should (A) be provided for the
238 interest, information and enlightenment of all residents, and (B)
239 represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the
240 collection as a whole;

241 (2) Recognize the importance of the public library as a place for
242 voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas and the
243 promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents;

244 (3) Acknowledge that librarians are professionally trained to curate
245 and develop a collection that provides resident with access to the widest
246 array of library and other educational materials; and

247 (4) Establish a procedure for a librarian to continually review library
248 and other educational material within a public library using
249 professionally accepted standards, which shall include, but not be
250 limited to, the material's relevance, the condition of the material, the
251 availability of duplicates or copies of the material, the availability of
252 more recent age-appropriate or grade-level-appropriate material and
253 the continued demand for the material.

254 (c) The library display and program policy shall, at a minimum:

255 (1) Recognize that library displays should (A) be provided for the
256 interest, information and enlightenment of all residents, (B) represent a

257 wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints, and (C) provide access
258 to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests and
259 educational needs of residents;

260 (2) Recognize the importance of displays and programs as resources
261 for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas
262 and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by residents; and

263 (3) Acknowledge that librarians are professionally trained to curate
264 and develop displays and programs.

265 (d) The material review and reconsideration policy shall, at a
266 minimum:

267 (1) Limit consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays or
268 programs to individuals residing in the town in which the library is
269 located or the town in which the contract library is located;

270 (2) Require that no library material, display or program shall be
271 removed from library media centers, or programs be cancelled, because
272 of the origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material,
273 display or program or because of the origin, background or viewpoints
274 of the creator of such material, display or program;

275 (3) Require that library materials, displays and programs may only
276 be excluded for legitimate pedagogical purposes or for professionally
277 accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the
278 collection development and maintenance policy or the display and
279 program policy;

280 (4) Require that any process for petitioners to challenge any library
281 material, display or program shall neither favor nor disfavor any group
282 based on protected characteristics;

283 (5) Provide for the creation of a request for reconsideration form,
284 based on the model reconsideration form developed by the Library
285 Working Group pursuant to section 2 of this act that may be submitted

286 by an individual to the library director to initiate a review of such
287 material. The form shall require such individual to specify which
288 portions of such material such individual objects to and provide an
289 explanation of the reasons for such objection;

290 (6) Acknowledge that reconsideration requests are not confidential
291 patron records under section 11-25 of the general statutes;

292 (7) Require that any library material being challenged remain
293 available in the library according to its catalog record and be available
294 for a resident to reserve, check out or access until a final decision is made
295 by the library director;

296 (8) Require the library director to evaluate the request for
297 reconsideration form, read the challenged material in its entirety,
298 evaluate the challenged material against the collection development and
299 maintenance policy and make a written decision on whether or not to
300 remove the challenged material not later than sixty days from the date
301 of receiving such request. A copy of the library director's decision and
302 report shall be provided to the individual who submitted the form;

303 (9) Permit the individual who submitted the request for
304 reconsideration form to appeal, in writing, the library director's decision
305 to the board of trustees or other governing body for the library. The
306 board shall (A) consult with the library director, (B) deliberate on such
307 request for reconsideration, (C) provide a written statement of the
308 reasons for the reconsideration or nonreconsideration of the library
309 material, and (D) provide any final decision that is contrary to the
310 decision of the library director;

311 (10) Provide that once a decision has been made by the library
312 director or the board of trustees or other governing board on the
313 reconsideration of any library material, such material cannot be subject
314 to a new request for reconsideration for a period of three years; and

315 (11) Permit a library director to consolidate any requests for

316 reconsideration of the same challenged library material.

317 Sec. 5. Subsection (i) of section 11-24b of the general statutes is
 318 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
 319 *2025*):

320 (i) No principal public library shall be eligible to receive a state grant
 321 in accordance with the provisions of subsections (b), (c) and (d) of this
 322 section if such principal public library does not maintain and adhere to
 323 [collection development, collection management and collection
 324 reconsideration policies] a collection development and maintenance
 325 policy, a library display and program policy and a material review and
 326 reconsideration policy that have been [approved] adopted by the board
 327 of trustees or other governing body of such library pursuant to section
 328 4 of this act. Such [collection reconsideration] material review and
 329 reconsideration policy shall offer residents a clear process to request a
 330 reconsideration of library materials. In the instance of a book challenge,
 331 these policies shall govern.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	11-24b(i)

Statement of Purpose:

To require public and school libraries to develop a (1) collection development and maintenance policy, (2) library program and display policy, and (3) library material review and reconsideration policy.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]