

# Library and Banned Books News 4-18-25

Pentagon schools' book removals continue; campaign to support the reinstatement federal funding for libraries



VICTORIA WADDLE

APR 19, 2025



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The logo for the American Library Association #ForOurLibraries campaign

Hi Friends,

Today's Good Friday, which despite its name, is the most solemn day in the Christian calendar. If you are a celebrant, I know you're looking forward to the light that follows the darkness. Here's to things hoped for.

For me, the biggest book news of the week is that the U.S. military schools are moving forward with more book purges. Also the American Library Association has begun “Show up for our Libraries” campaign to support the reinstatement of federal funding for libraries. You can find ideas on making your voice heard at <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/show-up-for-our-libraries>.

## A look at the 2024 book challenge and ban numbers

[The Truth Behind the Censorship Numbers in the State of America’s Libraries Report](#) from School Library Journal

## Book purges at U.S. military schools

[Students at Pentagon schools sue Hegseth over book bans on race and gender](#) from The Guardian

Twelve students studying in Pentagon schools in the US and around the world are suing the defense secretary, [Pete Hegseth](#), over the book bans he has instigated to remove titles on race and gender from their libraries.

A lawsuit lodged on the students’ behalf by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on Tuesday argues that their first amendment rights are being irreparably harmed. The complaint says that the censorship has been applied system-wide across Pentagon schools, and was endangering children by preventing them from learning critical information about health, hygiene, biology and abuse.

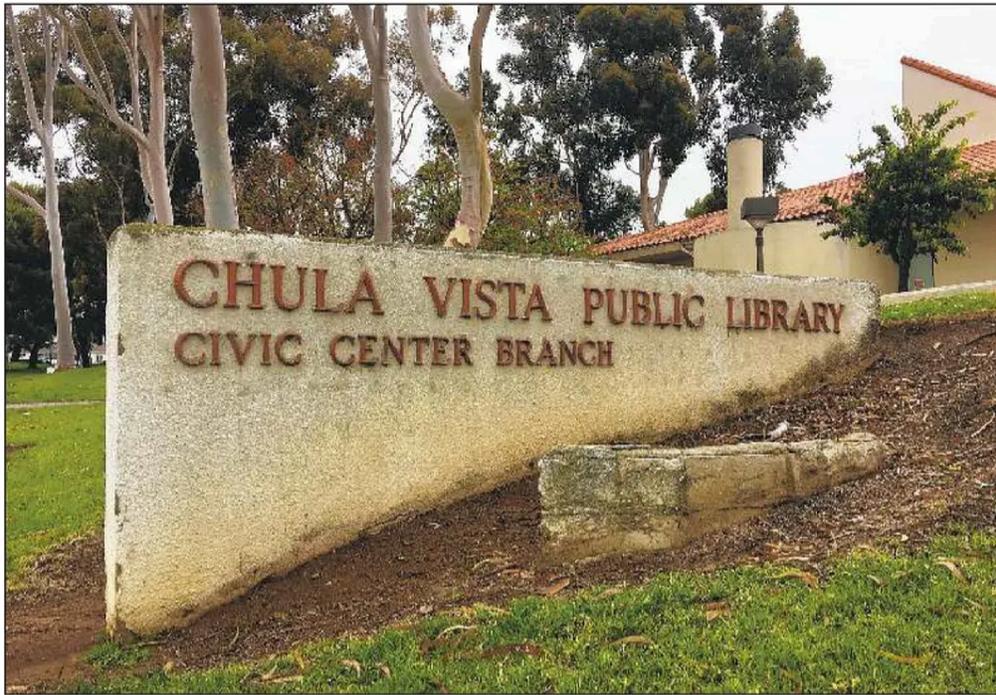
[US army and air force libraries ordered to comb stacks for books related to DEI](#) from The Guardian

US army and air force libraries have been told to go through their stacks to find books related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), according to new memos

obtained by the Associated Press.

The orders from service leaders come about two weeks after the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, [Maryland](#), removed nearly 400 books from its library after being told by the office of the defense secretary, [Pete Hegseth](#), to get rid of those that promote DEI.

The latest army and air force orders are part of the [Trump administration](#)'s far-reaching efforts to purge so-called DEI content from federal agencies.



GUSTAVO SOLIS / San Diego Union-Tribune

**THE LATEST** federal cuts are targeting the nation's libraries and museums.

## Librarian knows what will be lost

Re "Libraries lose millions after federal grant is terminated," April 5

**T**HANK you for prominently featuring the termination of federal monies to libraries on the front page of your California section. Although not as far-reaching, perhaps, as cuts to USAID or the U.S. Department of Education, the elimination of Library Services and Technology Act grant funds will impact library services to thousands of people throughout California.

I am retired now, but for 10 years worked for the California State Library, which distributes federal library funds statewide. I administered and monitored many LSTA grants and assessed their positive outcomes. I saw thousands of young people benefit from the state's after-school homework help programs, as well as its highly effective summer reading program. I was also proud that the library helped veterans constructively engage with their communities. California needs its libraries and the LSTA funds that support them.

CINDY MEDIAVILLA, Culver City

It should come as no great surprise that the Trump administration is cutting funds to libraries: President Trump and his MAGA bros do not want people to read, or to think or to ask questions, or to learn about folks different from themselves, or to develop empathy for others, or to dream of a better world in which all people are valued and respected — what is necessary to achieve that. Where can all of this happen? In a library!

SANDY SCHUCH  
Los Angeles

## Attacks could be reciprocated

Re "Mexico warns against possible U.S. drone strikes," April 9

If the U.S. launches drone strikes on drug cartels in Mexico, will Mexico launch drone strikes on U.S. gun dealers supplying guns to those same cartels?

EVAN P...  
Los Angeles

## Lessons from 'White Lotus'

Re "Darkness falls on 'White Lotus,'" April 9

One idea of the #ForOurLibraries campaign is to write letters to the editors of your local newspaper. I was happy to see two letters to the editors of the LA Times by librarians I am familiar with. One taught a class I took in the Cal State San Jose MLS program; another was a longtime leader in the CA School Library Association before retiring.

## Book bans in Tennessee

## [ACLU of Tennessee Files Lawsuit on Behalf of PEN America and Families to Halt Book Bans in Rutherford County, TN Schools](#) from PEN America

(NASHVILLE, TN)—Today [4-16-2025], the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee, along with attorney Kerry Knox, [filed a lawsuit](#) on behalf of three Rutherford County families and PEN America against the Rutherford County Board of Education, in response to the banning and restriction of more than 145 books from school libraries in the county. The three families, who are anonymous, include two rising freshmen and a rising senior who will attend Rutherford County schools next year. PEN America, a national writers and free expression organization, joined the lawsuit on behalf of its author members, 32 of whom have had a total of 53 books banned or restricted by the Rutherford County school board....

The Rutherford County school board began banning materials in the spring of 2024 through informal requests by school board members, initially without any public meeting or vote of the board. By September 2024, members of the board indicate that rather than reading the books they were banning, they had begun to rely almost exclusively on a website and a rating system created by individuals associated with the far-right organization Moms for Liberty to target books for removal. The website gives books poor ratings if they include LGBTQ+ characters; “racial, social or religious commentary” the organization considers “controversial;” profanity; nudity; among other characteristics. ...

PEN America’s affected author members include Laurie Halse Anderson, Jesse Andrews, Elana K. Arnold, Jay Asher, Margaret Atwood, Judy Blume, Deb Caletka, Mary H.K. Choi, Mike Curato, Jessie Ann Foley, E.R. Frank, Alex Gino, John Green, Jenny Han, Ellen Hopkins, Khaled Hosseini, George M. Johnson, Brian Katcher, Rupi Kaur, A.S. King, Jean Kwok, Malinda Lo, Gregory Maguire, Mindy McGinnis, Casey McQuiston, Preston Norton, Ashley Hope Pérez, Jodi Picoult, Amy Reed, Rainbow Rowell, Cory Silverberg and Angie Thomas.

A complete list of the books that have been banned by the Rutherford County Board of Education can be found at: [https://www.rcschools.net/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC\\_ID=525032&type=d&pREC\\_ID=2636708](https://www.rcschools.net/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=525032&type=d&pREC_ID=2636708)

### [Authors Speak Up About Their Books Being Misrepresented in a Lawsuit Headed the Supreme Court](#) from PEN America

“The books cited in this case are short picture books that take only a few minute read,” said [Robin Stevenson, author of the picture book *Pride Puppy*]. “I would encourage people to do that rather than forming opinions based on what they ha read online.”

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Kevin C Stories I Tell Myself 13h



♥ Liked by Victoria Waddle

Thanks for this reminder of the threat to libraries. It's easy to forget an executive order from a month ago with all that's happened since.

♥ LIKE (1)    💬 REPLY



1 reply by Victoria Waddle

1 more comment...