

## Intellectual Freedom Is Being Challenged Across the Country

May 27, 2021

In the Michigan Library Association's current strategic plan, we state: "We believe in equal and free access to information and knowledge, while protecting an individual's right to privacy." Intellectual freedom is a core value of the library profession and a basic right in our democratic society. Our guiding principle expresses the importance of protecting the rights of library users to read, seek information, and speak freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment.

According to an [Education Week article published on May 17, 2021](#), "four states have now passed legislation that would limit how teachers can discuss racism, sexism and other controversial issues...In total, lawmakers in at least 15 states have introduced bills that seek to restrict how teachers can discuss racism, sexism, and other social issues."

Michigan was added to the mix a few days after this article was published. On May 20th, [Senate Bill 460](#) was introduced by Senator Lana Theis and co-sponsored by Senators Kevin Daley, Jim Runestad, Tom Barrett, Roger Victory, Dale Zorn, Rick Outman, and Curtis VanderWall. This bill would amend The Revised School Code by adding a new section that precludes coverage of critical race theory, the 1619 project, and other anti-American and racist theories.

MLA will be watching this bill closely and keeping our members informed if there is any movement.