Programming for School Libraries: Introduction

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Privacy is one of the core values of librarianship, and the library community has a strong commitment to extending and protecting the privacy of students using school libraries. This commitment is based on state and federal statutes as well as policy statements of library professional associations. The American Association of School Librarians’ “Position Statement on the Confidentiality of Library Records” states: “The library community recognizes that children and youth have the same rights to privacy as adults.” Unfortunately, in some cases current state and federal laws do not support this level of privacy for students who are minors.

Student Expectations of Privacy

When students enter a school library, two expectations of privacy should be guaranteed:

- The right to read and borrow library materials free from scrutiny regardless of age, and
- The right to seek information and have the subject of academic and personal research remain private.

Implicit in these expectations is that library staff will keep confidential the titles of resources used in the library, discussed as reference questions, reviewed online, checked out, placed on reserve, and/or sought through interlibrary loan. Although the school library supports the curriculum and student academic research, it is also a place for seeking information related to personal interests and needs. “Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights” reminds school librarians of their obligation “to an ethic of facilitating, not monitoring, access to information.”

State Library Records Laws

Nearly every state has laws that protect the confidentiality of library records, although these laws may not apply to every type of library. Since these laws vary greatly, a school library professional must be knowledgeable about his/her state’s library records law and able to interpret how it affects the confidentiality of student library records. The laws state the conditions, or “exceptions,” under which library records may be released such as with a valid court order and, in a number of states, to parents or guardians. Unless disclosure is specifically required by law, minor students’ library records should remain confidential. State library records laws are archived on the American Library Association’s website and located by searching for “State Privacy Laws” at www.ala.org.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the confidentiality of K–12 and post-secondary students’ “education records.” Although the U.S. Department of Education’s Family Policy Compliance Office has not issued written guidance on whether student library records are considered “education records,” according to Ingrid Brault, an employee in that office,

Under FERPA, “education records” are defined as those records that are directly related to a student and maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution. 34 CFR § 99.3 “Education records.” As such, we advise schools that library circulation records as you describe them [records of books and other materials checked out by students with the student’s name attached to the record of each item s/he has checked out] meet the definition of education records under FERPA and cannot generally be disclosed absent consent of the parent unless an exception to the consent requirement applies.

FERPA includes exceptions under which student education records may be divulged. Brault delineated those exceptions when education records, including library records can be disclosed without parental consent as being:

- . . . to appropriately designated school officials with legitimate educational interest, [34 CFR § 99.3(a)(1)] School Officials, or
- if all the conditions apply under FERPA’s health and safety provisions [34 CFR § 99.36] . . . , or
- if any of the exceptions listed under section 99.31 of the FERPA regulations applies such as in compliance with a lawfully issued court order or subpoena.

For additional information related to library records as “education records,” contact the American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom, the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, and local district legal counsel.
School Library Privacy Issues

Every day in school library media centers, situations occur in which students’ privacy is either disregarded or protected. The difference between the two outcomes depends on whether the school library media specialist accepts privacy as one of the core values of librarianship and has the moral courage to stand up for that principle. The ALA Code of Ethics states, “We protect each library users’ right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted.”

There are many issues related to maintaining student privacy in school library media centers. Library media specialists struggle over questions and dilemmas such as these:

- To whom may student library records be released legally and under what circumstances?
  - Real life situation: A principal requests the reading history of a middle school student with no reason given for the directive. Can the school librarian legally divulge the list of library resources checked out by that student over a period of time?

- How should information about overdue library materials be relayed to students? Does age make a difference in the manner in which information is communicated?
  - Real life situation: A first grade girl has not returned a book to the library, and it is several weeks overdue. Should the school librarian send a note with the title to her classroom teacher or speak to the student again during the class’s scheduled library period?

- How long should library student circulation records be retained?
  - Real life situation: A high school junior has failed to return multiple books for a class assignment. Is it permissible to send individual printed overdue notices listing the titles to a classroom and ask a teacher to distribute them to the appropriate students? Are faculty members aware that student library records are confidential and reading the titles of overdue items aloud in a classroom compromises the privacy of students?

- Is it ever permissible for a school librarian to violate a student’s privacy?
  - Real life situation: A school librarian discovers defacement to a book after it was checked in and placed on the shelf. Should the link between an item and a student be retained after check-in to allow for later investigation of previously unnoticed damage?

- How can surveillance technology be utilized in a school library while safeguarding students’ privacy?
  - Real life situation: A school district concerned with student security and increasing vandalism is installing surveillance technology throughout its campus, and two cameras will be placed in the school library media center. How can the school librarian advocate maintaining student privacy?

These issues are very complex because they involve state and federal law, public school or private school policy, and professional ethics. The American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom counsels schools and libraries to undertake the following actions to protect student library records:

- . . . craft policies that extend additional privacy protection to students’ library records;
- adopt record retention policies that protect students’ confidentiality in regard to their use of the library media center; and,
- where applicable, incorporate state law protections for library records.

ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom is available to consult with school library media specialists on specific situations dealing with privacy and confidentiality issues. Additionally, there are two sources which discuss student privacy in school libraries in depth.

**Notes**


4. Ibid.


Privacy Lesson for Grades K–2

UNIT/LESSON TITLE: WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT USING MY LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER?

GRADE LEVEL/CONTENT: INTRODUCED IN K, REVIEWED 1 & 2

CURRICULAR FOCUS
AASL 4.1.1—Read, view, and listen for pleasure and personal growth

OVERVIEW
Proper Book Care
Library Etiquette
Privacy and Material Checkout

ASSESSMENT
Observe student behavior in the library and students checking out library books and looking over books that are returned.

RESOURCES
NO! NO! NO! bag and the YES! YES! YES! Bag for Book Care
Stop Sign for Etiquette and Privacy

INSTRUCTION/ACTIVITIES
Fill two bags with items that are reminders to students of how to treat library books and call them the NO! NO! NO! bag and the YES! YES! YES! bag.

• The NO! NO! NO! bag holds items such as:
  - Scissors—Keep books away from scissors when working on projects so the book does not get in the way and is accidentally cut.
  - Markers and Crayons—Marks from markers and crayons cannot be removed from books.
  - Water bottle—Books can be ruined by water and mold. Show book examples.
  - Little doll—Remind students to keep books away from little brothers or sisters or little friends visiting who do not know how to take care of library books yet. Show book examples.

• Stuffed animal dog and cat—Keep books up off the floor so pets can not be tempted to chew on the books. Show book examples.

• Snacks like Cheetos—No one wants to open up a library book and find crumbs or fingerprints in it.

• Scotch Tape—Remind students to let us know when a book has a tear on a page so we can repair it with book tape. Do not use tape at home. We are the best library book fixers. Show examples of poor tape repairs in a book.

• The YES! YES! YES! Bag holds items such as:
  - Backpack—Remind students that backpacks protect books when they take their books home and carry them back.
  - Soap—Remind students to wash their hands and that clean hands are good for library books.
  - Bookmarks—if they need to remember where they left off reading, a bookmark can do the job.
  - Mirror—Show students themselves in the mirror because they are the absolute best thing for library books. You make a book come alive when you read it!

• Stop Sign

Library voices are discussed and practiced. Three inch voice is a normal talking voice. A one inch voice is a whisper and how a library voice sounds. Sometimes they are even asked to have a no inch voice because of what may be going on in the library.

Private information. They are asked to stop at the STOP signs that we have posted next to the check out computers and wait for the person in front of them to leave. The information on the computer screen is just for the librarian and the person checking out to see.
Privacy Lesson for Grades 3–5

UNIT/LESSON TITLE: INTERNET SAFETY FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS

GRADE LEVEL/CONTENT: GRADES 3–5

CURRICULAR FOCUS: NETS STANDARD 5: DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP
Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.

OVERVIEW
In an evening presentation, parents and students learn about and discuss internet ethics and safety. They participate in varied activities designed to apply rules students already know about honesty, politeness, and safety to the online environment. The main issues addressed include safety, privacy, personal responsibility and ethical use of the internet.

Note: This may be taught during the school day, but involving parents may help to reinforce meaningful application of good internet safety at home.

INSTRUCTION/ACTIVITIES
1. Conduct pre-test of parents and students.
2. AV presentation, pausing periodically for activities (PowerPoint and internet safety video by Ryan Chatel found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZHq4CQekTY).
3. Small and large group discussions.
4. In small groups, create short videos using Photo-Story 3 or similar software to be shared on morning announcements at school and podcast on the school’s website about different internet safety rules.
5. Conduct post-test of parents and students.
6. Encourage each family to create their own cyber rules.
7. Share resource list.

ASSESSMENT
Pre- and post-multiple choice questions using a class voting system, such as CPS/Senteos, or paper forms.

Videos created by parents and students, using Photo-Story 3 or equivalent product.

RESOURCES
Privacy Lesson for Grades 6–8

UNIT/LESSON TITLE: FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

GRADE LEVEL/CONTENT: GRADES 6–8

CURRICULAR FOCUS: SOCIAL STUDIES, INFORMATION LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION ARTS/READING

LIBRARY MEDIA STANDARDS

• **Standard 2**: The student who is information literate evaluates information critically and competently.
  
  » **Benchmark 2.1**: Determines accuracy, relevance, and comprehensiveness
  
  » **Knowledge Based Indicators**: The student understands:
    
    › 2.1.1: multiple sources, both primary and secondary, must be examined when determining what information is used in the research process.
  
  » **Benchmark 3.3**: Applies information to critical thinking and problem solving
  
  » **Knowledge Based Indicators**: The student understands:
    
    › 3.3.1: problem solving requires focus on a question and criteria for judging possible answers.

• **Standard 5**: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and recognizes the importance of information to a democratic society.

• **Standard 6**: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and practices ethical behavior in regard to information and information technology.

  » **Benchmark 6.1**: Respects the principles of intellectual freedom and property rights

  » **Knowledge Based Indicators**: The student understands:

    › 6.1.1: that intellectual freedom, the freedom of inquiry and the freedom of expression, was established in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

  › 6.1.1a: apply concepts of intellectual freedom by respecting the views and ideas of others when working in a group.
  
  › 6.1.1b: explore and discuss First Amendment rights, responsibilities, and intellectual freedom.
  
  › 6.1.2: the importance of expressing information and ideas in her/his own words.

• **Standard 7**: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and participates effectively in groups to pursue and generate information.

  » 7.1.1: share and discuss ideas with others in the group, listen well and respectfully, and change ideas when appropriate.

CONTENT STANDARDS

Social Studies Grades 6

• **Standard 4 (Concept): Power, Authority, and Governance**: the student uses a working knowledge and understanding of the concepts of power, authority, and governance.

  » **Benchmark 4 (Enduring Understandings)**:

    › Power and influence determine who has the authority to govern and provides structure for and impacts the needs of societies.

    › Student recognizes that every civilization has a form of law or order (Hammurabi’s Code and Twelve Tables).

• **Standard 7 (Concept): Individual Development and Identity**: the student uses a working knowledge and understanding of the concepts of individual development and identity.

  » **Benchmark 7 (Enduring Understandings)**:

    › History represents the story of human diversity and the development of individual and national identity over time.

    › Student understands the impact of primary and secondary sources on the understanding of past civilizations (e.g., artifacts and oral tradition).

• **Standard 8 (Concept): Civic Ideals**: the student uses a working knowledge and understanding of civic ideals.
Benchmark 8 (Enduring Understandings):
» Citizenship confers rights, responsibilities, and privileges.
» The student understands the rights of people living in Ancient Greece (Sparta and Athens), Classical Rome, and modern United States.
» Compare and contrast the rights of people living in Ancient Greece (Sparta and Athens) and Classical Rome with the modern United States.

Communication Arts/Reading Grade 7
• Standard 1 Reading: student reads and comprehends texts across the curriculum.
  » Benchmark 2: The student reads fluently.
• Standard 2 Reading: student understands the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.
  » Benchmark 3: The student expands vocabulary.

Social Studies Grade 8
• Standard 8 (Concept): Civic Ideals: the student uses a working knowledge and understanding of civic ideals.
  » Benchmark 8 (Enduring Understandings):
    » Citizenship confers rights, responsibilities, and privileges.
    » The student understands the United States Constitution is written by and for the people and it defines the authority and power given to the government as well as recognizes the rights retained by the state governments and the people.
    » The student understands how the United States Constitution can be changed through amendments.

OVERVIEW
For 3 years, middle school students are exposed to their First Amendment rights every September as part of our Right to Read activities.

In 6th grade, World History students learn that all civilizations have some form of government and most have a document as the foundation of that government, i.e., Hammarabi’s Code. Then we talk about America’s Constitution and how the First Amendment and Bill of Rights came to be. We learn “Give Me 5” and discuss the rights in the First Amendment that give us the right to read. We watch a 4-minute video on “Give Me 5” and then handle a primary source copy of the original First Amendment document. Students analyze it carefully, count the words, and infer who, when, and where it was written. They then underline the 5 rights guaranteed, circle words that look weird to them (press, Congress), highlight the rights that deal with the right to read, and then answer the question “Why do you think the First Amendment was actually written?” If students finish before the end of the class we have a link on the library web page to the Illinois First Amendment Organization where they can take an on-line quiz about the Constitution or work on an on-line word search about the First Amendment.

In 7th grade, we review the 5 rights guaranteed in the First Amendment. We talk about why books get challenged. We watch the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom online puppet clip about “Banned Books Week!” I share the Top Ten most challenged/banned books from the previous year. We then move to 6 small groups and each group gets a challenged book and their task is to decide why the book was challenged or banned. We take 10 minutes and then come back together as a group and report out. After each group, I share with them from the ALA Banned Book List why the book was challenged. Students also have a ballot of the six books and vote after each book whether to remove or keep the book on the shelf. After a break, we watch the after-school special The Day They Came to Arrest the Book. This is an adaptation of Nat Henoff’s book of the same title.

In 8th grade, Social Studies teachers are in the midst of teaching the Constitution as part of their American History curriculum. They review the 5 rights again and I show a 15 minute video about what each of the 5 rights means. Then on a Friday morning at the end of our Right to Read Week, we have a culminating special event for the 8th graders.

I invite an attorney to talk about and discuss the First Amendment with the students. This is where the students get a chance to question the “dark side” of the First Amendment on their freedoms of expression and privacy. The attorney makes sure to discuss things like the Nazi Party, anti-war signs, Fred Phelps, and adult books that are also protected under the First Amend-
ment. They wonder why music can be labeled adult/mature and books in the library can’t. We talk about their parent’s right to check what they are reading when they get home but that we can’t tell their parents what they are reading if they call. We spend all 3 years of middle school teaching that disappointment or shock in a book isn’t a reason to ban it but to bring it back and check out another book. We also bring in a public librarian and she espouses the Library Bill of Rights and the public library’s take on privacy and challenging books. Our art teacher has put together a presentation on Banksy, the graffiti artist who has never been seen or arrested but has expressed himself all over the world. Students get to discuss whether graffiti is art and expression or vandalism. Finally, we have a news reporter come from a local news station and talk about the First Amendment and the media. In 8th grade students get to see multiple perspectives on the First Amendment and hopefully begin thinking for themselves about the importance of being aware of your rights and not being afraid to speak up.

ASSESSMENT

In 6th grade, students are assessed on 3 First Amendment questions. This is an assessment for learning and is worth 10 points.

- Question #1—Underline the 5 rights guaranteed in the First Amendment.
- Question #2—Highlight the rights in the First Amendment that give us the right to read.
- Question #3—Why was the First Amendment actually written?

In 7th grade, students are assessed by their communication arts/reading teacher through a reflection writing piece.

In 8th grade, students are not assessed. However, communication arts/reading teachers have them write thank you letters to all of the speakers.

RESOURCES

In 6th Grade

- First Amendment Worksheet with copy of original primary source document
- First Amendment Introductory Video on DVD

In 7th Grade

- In the Night Kitchen by Maurice Sendak
- Ferdinand the Bull by Munro Leaf
- The Lorax by Dr. Seuss
- Father Christmas by Raymond Briggs
- Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig
- Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein
- After-school special The Day They Came to Arrest the Book

In 8th Grade

- Speakers: Public Librarian, Attorney who knows the First Amendment, News reporter for TV or newspaper, Art teacher
- 15-minute video from Illinois First Amendment Center—First Amendment Teen Video on DVD—Grades 7 thru 12

INSTRUCTION/ACTIVITIES

In all 3 grades I instruct on the importance of our First Amendment rights. Every year the students get more information to take in and think about and it all culminates in 8th grade.

This year we also added a blog to our library web page that asked students to answer the following question during Right to Read Week:

It’s that time of year when we think about our right to read and how important it is to us. This blog is to make you SPEAK. READ. KNOW—the theme of this year’s Right to Read Week. Here’s your statement—“The freedom to read is essential to our democracy.” What does this comment mean to you?
Privacy Lesson for Grades 9–12

UNIT/LESSON TITLE: PRIVACY MATTERS!
GRADE LEVEL/CONTENT: GRADES 9–12
CURRICULAR FOCUS: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT STANDARDS
- Principles of democratic government (e.g., rule of law, limited government etc.)
- Core civic values inherent in the United States Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration of Independence that have been the foundation for unity in American society
- The importance of the provisions of the 14th Amendment

OVERVIEW
Privacy impacts students on a daily basis from computers to cell phones. Students review a variety of headlines determining if the individual's privacy was breached. Through discussion, students determine the purpose of privacy laws and how they are impacted. Students create an online poster through Glogster analyzing a current issue. Students will present their posters virtually.

ASSESSMENT
Rubric

RESOURCES
- SIRS Researcher
- Global Issues
- Opposing Viewpoints
- Government Textbook
- Other relevant library resources

INSTRUCTION/ACTIVITIES
Part I
Watch “Discovery Education United” streaming video, “Fourth Amendment: Right to Privacy” and a segment of: “You, the Jury” (or other related videos)
If videos are unavailable, review text of Fourth Amendment. FindLaw and other websites provide text and examples. http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com
Reference the privacy rights inherent in amendments one, three, five, nine, and fourteen.
Student discussion: “Do actions in the video segment violate privacy? Yes or No? Why?”

Present electronically a variety of current articles on privacy issues. If time allows, students working in small groups may locate articles for discussion. Review articles and discuss privacy issues.

Examples: fight to open adoptee birth records, experiment using RFID chips to track movement of individuals, parent access to information and grades for college students eighteen and older, emails searches, cities using security cameras on streets.

Students brainstorm the different ways privacy impacts their lives.

Examples:
- Facebook
- Credit card companies
- Cell phones & GPS
- Airport security
- Cookies on computers
- Doctor information to parents
- Checking out a book
- Computer use at school with management software allowing teachers to view student monitors
- Google maps showing your home

Discussion: Why? Purpose?

Part II—Privacy Matters! Analysis
Choose one area from discussion or locate an example from the news to create an online poster through Glogster and analyze your issue and how it impacts privacy and privacy laws. See checklist listed below for specific requirements.

1. Summary of article.
2. Who is impacted?
3. How is ___ privacy impacted?
4. How does it relate to you?
5. Is it right or wrong according to you and your values?
6. Is it right or wrong according to our laws?

Use public domain images using creativecommons.org to create a creative poster that expresses your learning.
Cite your sources (using bibme.org, for example) in APA format at the bottom of your poster.

Checklist:

- Summary of article.
- Who is impacted?
- How is ____ privacy impacted?
- How does it relate to you?
- Is it right or wrong according to you and your values?
- Is it right or wrong according to our laws?
- At least 3 images and/or a video related to the topic
- All images are public domain
- At least three sources used
- Citations in APA format