



Lafayette Parish Candidate Responses on Library Censorship

The following report was compiled by Lafayette Citizens Against Censorship (LCAC) in September of 2023 to help educate voters on the serious issues regarding censorship and book banning in Lafayette Parish. This information is based upon the candidates' responses to LCAC's survey. All survey questions are included below.

Note that Lafayette Citizens Against Censorship (LCAC) **does not endorse** candidates. This report is provided as an educational tool for voters who are interested in learning more about Lafayette Parish candidate stances on censorship and book banning in Lafayette Parish.

For questions about this report, or if any candidates would like to provide additional information on their position towards the current issues in our public libraries or on censorship in general, please reach out to lafcitizensagainstcensorship@gmail.com.



Survey by Lafayette Citizens Against Censorship

Candidates were invited to respond to the following questions:

1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?	Yes / No / Maybe
2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?	Yes / No / Maybe
3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?	Yes / No
4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?	Yes / No
5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle?	
a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.	Yes / No
b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.	Yes / No
c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.	Yes / No
d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.	Yes / No
e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.	Yes / No
6. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in Lafayette Parish? Be as specific as possible.	
7. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for Lafayette Parish.	Most Least
a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives	1 2 3 4 5
b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)	1 2 3 4 5
c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)	1 2 3 4 5
d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)	1 2 3 4 5
e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc	1 2 3 4 5
8. What qualities and/or qualifications do you think candidates chosen for the library Board of Control should have? Why?	
9. Do you think the library Board of Control should make decisions regarding day-to-day operation of the public library, including programming and collection development?	Yes / No
10. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?	



Jeremy Monts, Lafayette Parish Council District 3

<p>1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?</p>	<p>Maybe</p>
<p>I want to preface my thoughts with the fact that I'm an IT person. I am not a trained librarian, psychologist, counsellor, or any other type of professional that should be consulted to make this type of decision.</p> <p>While I believe that any type of restriction should be minimal, I also believe that there are certain types of information that should not be easily available. I don't know that there is a large benefit to having detailed manuals for creation of bombs or the 3d printing of guns should be readily available, however, I could be convinced that there are valid reasons for having these types of information readily available.</p>	
<p>2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?</p>	<p>Maybe</p>
<p>As per my previous statement in regard to public libraries, it is possible that there some texts and materials that are inappropriate for location in a school library.</p> <p>I would not make any recommendations for any type of bans, censorship, or restrictions without significant proof from licensed and trained professionals.</p>	
<p>3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>I think parents should know their children well enough to know what level of information they're capable of understanding. Parents should also be willing to let their child go outside of the boundaries that they're comfortable with to allow them to grow.</p>	
<p>4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Over the course of my career I've been the subject matter expert for many companies when they were making decisions about their information technology. I gained this level of authority by getting a college degree and working in the field for many years. Librarians are to libraries as IT Experts are to IT.</p>	
<p>5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle?</p>	
<p>a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>6. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in Lafayette Parish? Be as specific as possible.</p>	



Jeremy Monts, Lafayette Parish Council District 3

7. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for Lafayette Parish.	Most					Least
a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives	1	2	3	4	5	
b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)	1	2	3	4	5	
c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)	1	2	3	4	5	
d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)	1	2	3	4	5	
e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc	1	2	3	4	5	

8. What qualities and/or qualifications do you think candidates chosen for the library Board of Control should have? Why?

I think candidates for the board should have an interest in the budget and longevity of the Lafayette library system. The board should also have the capacity to understand what the Library Director's duties are, and what makes a good Director.

The charter for the board is to focus on the budget, not to become mired in the day to day of the library and I feel the above reflects those qualities.

9. Do you think the library Board of Control should make decisions regarding day-to-day operation of the public library, including programming and collection development?	No
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The board's job is to appoint a director and manage a budget, along with being champions for the Library. The director should be in charge of the library.

10. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?

I'd strive to have qualified board members appointed and push for a fully funded library budget.



Clyde Gabriel, Lafayette Parish Council District 5

1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?	No
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Censorship is a tool utilized by those who subscribe to the belief that they can control the narrative, which controls what is disseminated to the public and thereby effectively controlling their thoughts and ideas.

2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?	No
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I'm some believe it is more important to contr what is taught in school, especially in the formative years of young adults

3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?	Yes
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Parents are/should be responsible for their kids exposure.

4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?	No
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Barring anything illegal, students and the general public should have unlimited access to reading materials.

5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle?	
a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.	Yes
b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.	Yes
c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.	Yes
d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.	Yes
e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.	Yes

6. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in Lafayette Parish? Be as specific as possible.
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No

7. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for Lafayette Parish.	Most				Least
a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives	1	2	3	4	5
b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)	1	2	3	4	5
c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)	1	2	3	4	5
d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)	1	2	3	4	5
e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc	1	2	3	4	5

8. What qualities and/or qualifications do you think candidates chosen for the library Board of Control should have? Why?
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Open-minded



Clyde Gabriel, Lafayette Parish Council District 5

9. Do you think the library Board of Control should make decisions regarding day-to-day operation of the public library, including programming and collection development?	Yes
The board should reflect the community it serves in terms of ideals and values across the board	
10. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?	
By controlling who is nominated and selected to the governing board	



Kenneth Boudreaux, Lafayette Parish Council District 5

1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?	No
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No any form of discrimination is dangerous.

2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?	No
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Same as above.

3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?	Yes
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Their child their responsibility. Choice

4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?	Yes
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They are the trained educated professional in the field. Not political not emotional

5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle?	
a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.	Yes
b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.	Yes
c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.	Yes
d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.	Yes
e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.	Yes

6. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in Lafayette Parish? Be as specific as possible.
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None that I am aware of.

7. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for Lafayette Parish.	Most	Least
a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives	1 2 3 4 5	
b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)	1 2 3 4 5	
c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)	1 2 3 4 5	
d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)	1 2 3 4 5	
e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc	1 2 3 4 5	

8. What qualities and/or qualifications do you think candidates chosen for the library Board of Control should have? Why?
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Basically same qualifications it takes to hold most public office, age registered voter, resident etc. In addition a love and passion for libraries similar to those appointed to parks and recreation have a love for recreation. Someone with a history of engagement and participation with libraries. Someone who can pledge and take oath where as they can be held accountable when they deviate from the mission and goals of the library. (This is general position)



Kenneth Boudreaux, Lafayette Parish Council District 5

9. Do you think the library Board of Control should make decisions regarding day-to-day operation of the public library, including programming and collection development?	No
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A board is like the council. I cannot run the day to day operation of the city. I legislate, I vote on policy and procedure issues, i can suggest things but i cannot and a board should not.

10. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?

Yes, I authored the ordinance and proclamation which created all this fall out. Story time. I do not and cannot support or participate in any form or type of discrimination as a Black Male who has experienced hate, dislike and mistreated only for my difference. I stood against a 50 signature petition of pastors, a mayor president and some community members. I would do it again. BRING BOUDREAUX BACK, BUILD THE NE LIBRARY. Kenneth Boudreaux



Nureaka Ross, Lafayette Parish Council District 5

<p>1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?</p>	<p>No</p>												
<p>I fully support freedom of expression and oppose censorship or banning books, as it goes against the principles of the freedom I fought for as a proud veteran and align with the principles of liberty and democracy.</p>													
<p>2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?</p>	<p>No</p>												
<p>As a veteran, I firmly stand against book banning in schools or any restrictions on materials, as it contradicts the very ideals we fought to uphold—freedom, diversity, and the open exchange of ideas.</p>													
<p>3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?</p>	<p>Yes</p>												
<p>It is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child's activities, including what they access in a public library. Parental involvement and guidance can play a crucial role in a child's education and exposure to different ideas and materials.</p>													
<p>4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?</p>	<p>Yes</p>												
<p>Absolutely! Trained librarians are like navigators for libraries, helping choose the best books and resources to create a diverse and enriching collection that serves the community's needs.</p>													
<p>5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle?</p>													
<p>a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.</p>	<p>Yes</p>												
<p>b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.</p>	<p>Yes</p>												
<p>c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.</p>	<p>Yes</p>												
<p>d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.</p>	<p>Yes</p>												
<p>e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.</p>	<p>Yes</p>												
<p>6. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in Lafayette Parish? Be as specific as possible.</p>													
<p>No because I do not support censorship. It's important to promote a wide range of viewpoints and ideas in public libraries to foster learning and critical thinking.</p>													
<p>7. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for Lafayette Parish.</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">Most</th> <th style="width: 50%;">Least</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 2 3 4 5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 2 3 4 5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 2 3 4 5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 2 3 4 5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 2 3 4 5</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Most	Least	1 2 3 4 5		1 2 3 4 5		1 2 3 4 5		1 2 3 4 5		1 2 3 4 5	
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<p>c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)</p>													
<p>d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)</p>													
<p>e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc</p>													



8. What qualities and/or qualifications do you think candidates chosen for the library Board of Control should have? Why?

A strong belief in the principles of free access to information and intellectual freedom. The ability to engage with the public, staff, and stakeholders effectively. They should be dedicated to serving the community's needs through the library system.

9. Do you think the library Board of Control should make decisions regarding day-to-day operation of the public library, including programming and collection development?

No

The library Board of Control should focus on policy decisions, leaving the day-to-day operations and programs to qualified library professionals who understand the nuances of these tasks. This allows for a more efficient management of the library's resources and services.

10. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?

When elected, I'll advocate for the reinstatement of black history month displays, fostering an inclusive environment. Most importantly working with the parish council because city council has no control over parish libraries. Additionally working with the library board and librarians to ensure readers have access to a diverse range of books and perspectives.



Stasia Herbert McZeal, PhD, Lafayette Parish School Board District 2

<p>1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?</p>	No	
<p>Libraries are a place of learning and refuge. As an avid reader who found solace in the library, I would never think of restricting access.</p>		
<p>2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?</p>	No	
<p>I believe that school librarians are subject matter experts and know age-appropriate materials for their student population.</p>		
<p>3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?</p>	Yes	
<p>Because libraries are open access, parents should monitor young children under 10. Libraries are not day cares, nor should the staff watch them.</p>		
<p>4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?</p>	Yes	
<p>As previously stated they are subject matter experts.</p>		
<p>5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle?</p>		
<p>a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.</p>	Yes	
<p>b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.</p>	Yes	
<p>c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.</p>	Yes	
<p>d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.</p>	Yes	
<p>e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.</p>	Yes	
<p>6. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in Lafayette Parish? Be as specific as possible.</p>	<p>There is nothing I would like restricted.</p>	
<p>7. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for Lafayette Parish.</p>	Most	Least
<p>a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives</p>	1 2 3 4 5	
<p>b. Digital Services (Internet Access, Electronic Databases, E-Books, Audiobooks)</p>	1 2 3 4 5	
<p>c. Community Services (Resume & Tax Assistance, Fax, Printing, Meeting Spaces, etc)</p>	1 2 3 4 5	
<p>d. Programming (Storytimes, Summer Reading, Craft Projects, How-To, Book Clubs)</p>	1 2 3 4 5	
<p>e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc</p>	1 2 3 4 5	
<p>8. What qualities and/or qualifications do you think candidates chosen for the library Board of Control should have? Why?</p>	<p>If at all possible, I think they should be apolitical, hold no political biases, willing to serve with an open mind and no preconceived judgement.</p>	



Stasia Herbert McZeal, PhD, Lafayette Parish School Board District 2

9. Do you think the library Board of Control should make decisions regarding day-to-day operation of the public library, including programming and collection development?	No
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The director should make day-to-day decisions about those things. The Board is there to assist with the hard decisions like securing funding for improvements or expansions.

10. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?

I would attend meetings of the Board of Control and find ways to collaborate on issues that impact education and learning in our community.



Amy Trahan, Lafayette Parish School Board District 4

1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?	No	
Libraries support literacy, reading, and education. Banning or restricting books limits an individual's ability to obtain knowledge and learning. We live in a free society, as such, we have rights to determine what we read and have access to read.		
2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?	No	
Libraries support literacy, reading, and education. Banning or restricting books limits an individual's ability to obtain knowledge and learning.		
3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?	Yes	
Parents are responsible for their children, they are their children's first teacher and instill the importance of reading.		
4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?	Yes	
Librarians are properly trained or have the knowledge to order age and grade appropriate materials.		
5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle?		
a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.	Yes	
b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.	Yes	
c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.	Yes	
d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.	Yes	
e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.	Yes	
Reading is critical to educational success and lifelong learning.		
6. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in Lafayette Parish? Be as specific as possible.		
No		
7. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for Lafayette Parish.	Most	Least
a. Physical books, Magazines, Archives	1 2 3 4 5	
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e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc	1 2 3 4 5	



Amy Trahan, Lafayette Parish School Board District 4

8. What qualities and/or qualifications do you think candidates chosen for the library Board of Control should have? Why?

Potential board members should demonstrate some knowledgebase in the operations of libraries and the role of librarians. They should be able to work with a diverse group of people and must support equitable resources for community members.

9. Do you think the library Board of Control should make decisions regarding day-to-day operation of the public library, including programming and collection development?

No

This is the responsibility of the library director and staff.

10. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?

As a newly elected school board member for Lafayette Parish, District 4, I would work with fellow board members and the superintendent to ensure that books are available to any child at any time of the year which will enhance the reading achievement of low-income students in particular and an absolutely necessary step in closing the reading achievement gap. I would also support librarians having the autonomy to make age and grade appropriate decisions for reading materials in their respective schools and public libraries.



Roddy Bergeron, Lafayette Parish School Board District 6

1. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in public libraries?	Maybe
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Only in the case of libraries upholding applicable and established law. This includes, but is not limited to, items like intellectual property, licensing of eBooks and digital media, and copyright laws. I'm not for banning materials just because someone doesn't approve of the content.

2. Do you believe in book banning, censorship, or any other form of restricting or preventing access to books or materials in school libraries?	Maybe
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To some extent due to LDOE and BESE guidelines already imposed on schools. Adhering to these guidelines helps create a unified educational experience and reinforces educational goals set by the state, benefiting both students and educators. I'm not for banning materials just because someone doesn't approve of the content.

3. Do you believe it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child while visiting a public library?	Yes
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Parents are responsible for monitoring their child at the library to ensure their safety, guide appropriate content choices, and promote positive behavior. This helps create a respectful and fun-filled environment for all library users.

4. Do you feel that trained librarians are the best choice of professionals to make collection decisions for public and school libraries?	Yes
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Trained librarians are experienced in selecting library materials due to their information literacy expertise, understanding of patron needs, diverse curation, resource evaluation, collaboration with educators, and commitment to improving education. These skills ensure a balanced and relevant collection of materials.

5. Do you agree with the following statements of principle?	
a. Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.	Yes
b. Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.	Yes
c. Individuals should be trusted to make their own decisions about what to read.	Yes
d. Parents of one family should not be making decisions for other parents' children.	Yes
e. Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.	Yes

6. Are there any books you would like to see censored or removed from public libraries in Lafayette Parish? Be as specific as possible.
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7. Please rank the following library services in order of importance for Lafayette Parish.	Most	Least
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e. Other Services: Makerspaces, Musical Instrument Libraries, Seed Libraries, etc	1 2 3 4 5	



Roddy Bergeron, Lafayette Parish School Board District 6

8. What qualities and/or qualifications do you think candidates chosen for the library Board of Control should have? Why?

Library Board of Control members should have passion for libraries, community advocacy, leadership skills, ethical integrity, and be committed to respectful governance.

9. Do you think the library Board of Control should make decisions regarding day-to-day operation of the public library, including programming and collection development?

No

That is the job of the people hired to run the library, including the library director. They have been trained and educated on how to run a library.

10. If elected, how would you ensure that readers will have access to a variety of books available to them and that the public has access to a variety of perspectives?