

# WSRA Position Statement

## *Intellectual & Academic Freedom*

WSRA supports freedom of speech, thought, and inquiry as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In the spirit of freedom, WSRA is committed to developing reading comprehension, including literal understanding, interpretation, and evaluation of what is read, viewed, and heard. Helping students to develop this critical perspective requires an enlightened educational program, including:

- The freedom to choose from a rich choice of print and non-print materials dealing with many facets of a diverse society;
- The freedom to discuss issues identified by such reading;
- The freedom to defend positions against challenges from those with different points of view.

WSRA further believes that formal policies and procedures for handling criticisms of materials should be established by school districts, and that concerned individuals should use these channels when filing a complaint. These standard procedures should include the following:

- Written and school board approved policies for the selection of materials, developed with input from teachers, students, parents, civic leaders, and community groups;
- Written guidelines for identifying and handling complaints;
- A system for openly communicating with civic, religious, educational, political, and other bodies within the community;
- Systematic methods for disseminating positive information about intellectual and academic freedom.

