



## **Proposed Statement of the New Jersey Library Association on the decision of the Rancocas Valley Regional Board of Education Regarding its School Media Collection**

The New Jersey Library Association issues the following statement in response to the decision by the Rancocas Valley Board of Education to remove *Revolutionary Voices: a Multicultural Queer Youth Anthology* from the Rancocas Valley Regional High School Media Center's collection.

The challenge to this book arose from hostility to its content. NJLA believes that books should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Libraries do not discriminate against unpopular or controversial ideas. To the contrary, they select resources so that the library collection meets the needs of everyone in the community it serves.

The United States Supreme Court decision, *Board Of Education v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853 (1982), teaches that local school boards may not remove books from library shelves simply because certain members of the community dislike the ideas contained in those books. Unfortunately, this appears to have occurred in Rancocas Valley, as a result of a concerted political effort to remove books pertaining to homosexuality.

High school students are drawn to controversial subjects, and school libraries are charged with equipping the students with the analytical skills they will need to tackle these subjects in a complex world. It does not serve the needs of the students to remove controversial books from the school library.

The New Jersey Library Association urges the school district to uphold intellectual freedom and reconsider its decision to remove the book from the collection.

Adopted by the NJLA Executive Board on May 18, 2010