



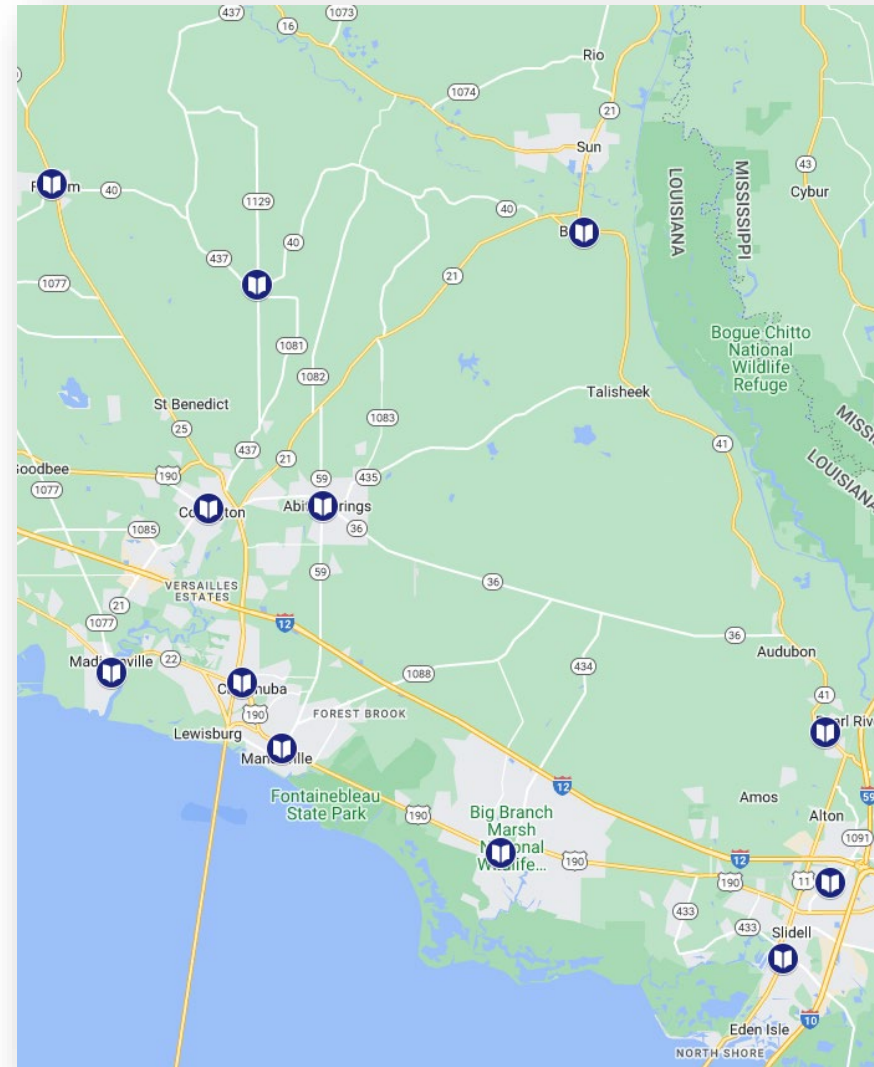
## **Policy, Practices, & Procedures**

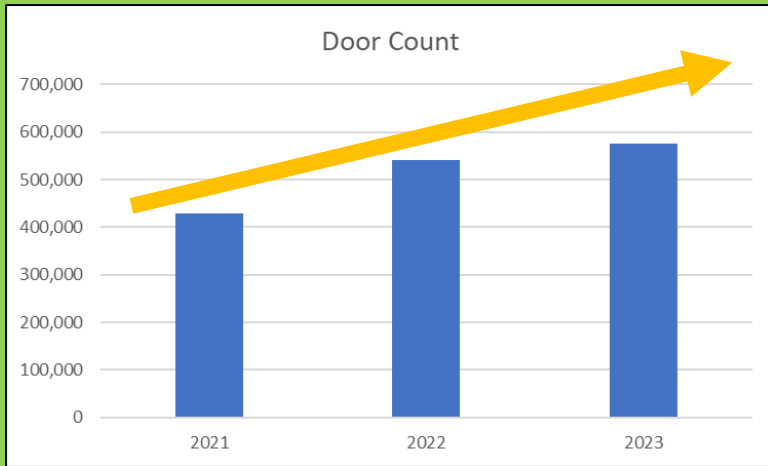
2022-2024



# STPL Snapshot

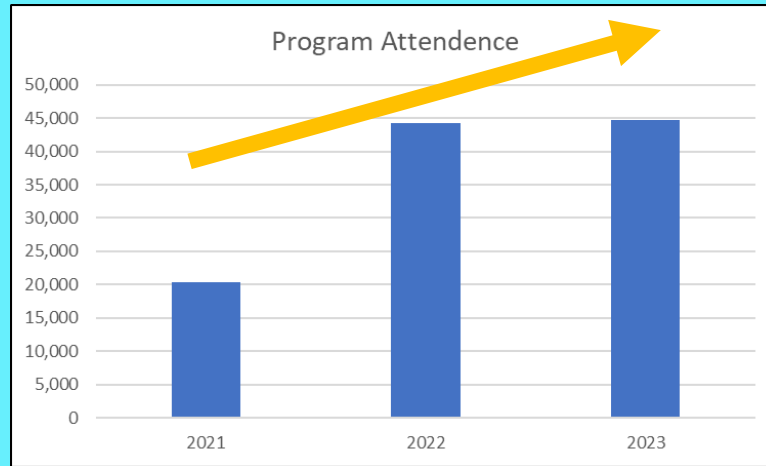
- **12 public locations** spread throughout the Parish
- **61,000** active cardholders
- Close to **200,000** sessions of Wi-Fi use
- Over **982,000** items circulated
- These statistics reflect a community that uses their Library system and trusts the people who work in our branches every single day.





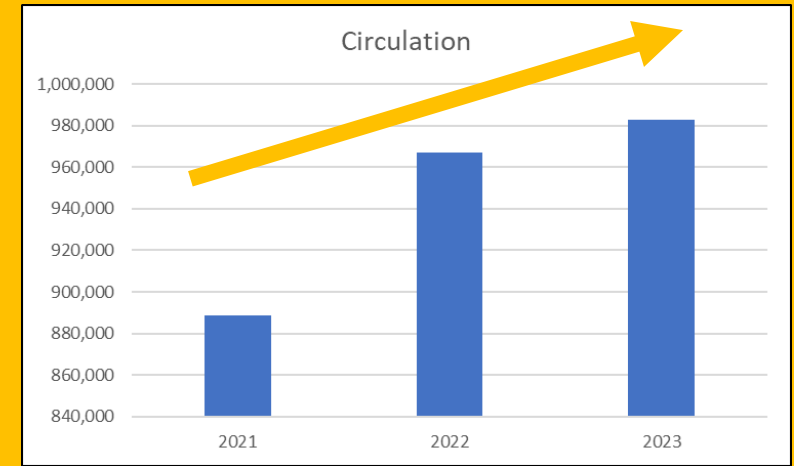
**575,421 Visitors**

**34,381** more visitors in 2023 than 2022



**60,513 Attended Programs**

**2,864** programs provided by the Library in 2023



**982,980 Items Circulated**

**15,653** more items checked out in 2023 than 2022

# Where we were in June of 2022

Library's Policy: **Parents** and **Guardians** are the decision-makers for what their children read, see, or hear.

We have several **Longstanding Policies** that protect the rights of parents.

## Policies in place before 2022

- Children **under the age of 18** may only obtain a Library card and use the computer with the written permission of their parent or guardian.
- Children **under the age of 10** must be accompanied by a parent or guardian in the branches and when using public computers.
- All public computers have filters in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Parents can see their child's library account and know what their child is checking out
- A challenged materials process whereby citizens can express concerns about library materials and those concerns can be addressed.

# Policy Changes to Address Concerns from 2022-2023

- **Tiered Juvenile Card System:** An updated card system that specifies the level of access their minor child will have for the collection
- **Graphic Novel Resolution:** All Graphic (art) Novels with sexual conduct depicted are placed behind the circulation desk - only available to an Adult or Unrestricted Juvenile Card (requires parent permission)
- **An updated challenged materials process:** The library board makes decisions on challenged items in an open public meeting allowing for greater transparency
- **Challenged Items Moved:** A resolution requiring the library staff to temporarily house all challenged items behind the circulation desk until they can be reviewed.

# Compliance with LA RS 25:225

## The Law Requires

Language that specifies community standards be applied to materials acquired by the library and language that adopts the Act's definition of "sexual conduct."

A library card system that allows parents to select whether the minor can check out sexually explicit material as defined by LA RS 25:225.

This same card system should allow parents to select whether the minor can check out digital content.

A procedure that allows a library patron to request a reconsideration of whether the materials should be included in a collection accessible to minors.

## What We Did

We adopted the changes into the "**Criteria for Selection**" policy - Section 403 of the *LBOC Rules and Regulations* - on October 23rd, 2023. The new policy was implemented immediately.

Our card system - which we developed in fall of 2022, rolled out in November of 2022, and was implemented fully on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. LA RS 25:225 used our card system as a foundational model.

The "**No Digital Access**" option was available to the public on January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024.

We already had a robust "reconsideration process" or "challenged materials" policy. Our policy was further updated to match RS 25:225 at our October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, board meeting.

# Minor Card Options

- ✓ Ages 5 – 17
- ✓ Parents **must** choose a level when creating a card
- ✓ All children's cards expired on Jan. 2023 and required parents to choose a level to reactivate

| Card Type  | Internet Use<br>Ages 10 -17<br>only | Digital<br>Access | Children's<br>Collection | YA<br>Collections | Adult<br>Collections | Rated R<br>Movies |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Juvenile Full<br>Restriction                             | Optional                            |                   |                          |                   |                      |                   |
| Juvenile Full<br>Restriction<br><b>No Digital Access</b> | Optional                            |                   |                          |                   |                      |                   |
| Juvenile Semi<br>Restriction                             | Optional                            |                   |                          |                   |                      |                   |
| Juvenile Semi<br>Restriction<br><b>No Digital Access</b> | Optional                            |                   |                          |                   |                      |                   |
| Juvenile   | Optional                            |                   |                          |                   |                      |                   |
| Juvenile<br>Unrestricted                                 | Optional                            |                   |                          |                   |                      |                   |

# Where in the Library?

## Common misconception of many challenged books:

“This title is shelved in the Children’s section or Teen section!”

Call numbers are read from **left to right** and **top to bottom**

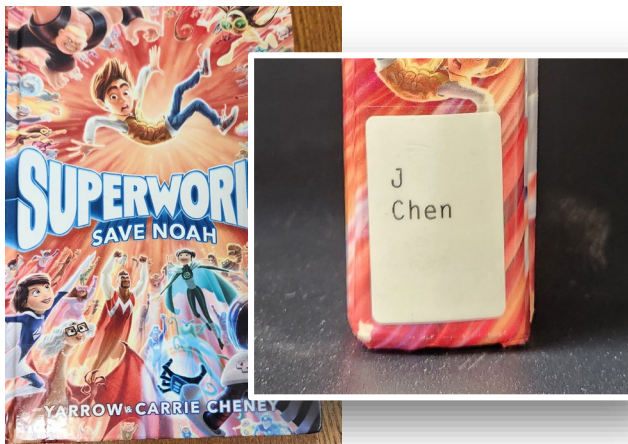
- Call numbers for books that **start with E, ER, or J** are in **Children’s/Juvenile Sections**
- Call numbers that **start with YA** are in the **Teen Collection**
- Call numbers that **start with LP, B, Fic** or a **number** are in **Adult Collection**
- Call numbers that start with **SOC** are in the **Statement of Concern Reference Collection** and are housed at Slidell and Covington behind the desk

It does not matter what codes or letters are at the end of a call number or what stickers might be on the book– **the beginning letters or numbers tell you where the item will be located**

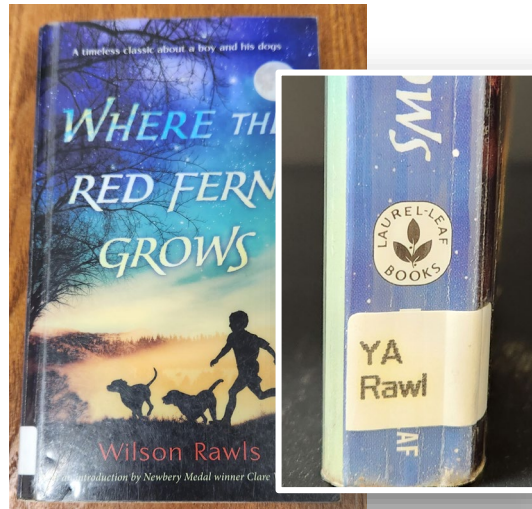


# Card Number Examples

“Save Noah” by Yarrow Cheney,  
has a Call Tag of **J Chen**,  
the book is in the **Juvenile  
Collection**



“Where the Red Fern Grows” by  
Wilson Rawls has a Call Tag of **YA  
Rawl**, the book is in the **Teen  
Collection**



“Louisiana Herb Journal” by  
Corinne C. Martin, has a Call  
Tag of **615.321 Mar**, the book is  
in the **Adult Collection**



# Collection Development Policy

## How we measure community standards

- Usage statistics gathered from the Integrated Library System, including circulation numbers and the number of holds for specific items
- Patron requests
- Feedback from branch staff
- Titles assigned to students in the public and parochial school systems
- Parish demographics

How the “Criteria for Selection” affects what we purchase

**Children**  
0-12

**Teen**  
13-17

**Adult**  
18+

# Collection Development Policy

## How do we measure community standards?

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- **Titles assigned** to students in the public and parochial school systems
- **Parish demographics**

## They consider:

- **Award Winners**
- **Best Seller Lists**
- **Professional Journals and Review Sources**
- **Book of The Month Clubs**
- **National Trends and Discussion**
- **Statistical Demands from Our Circulation System**
- **Age and Relevance of Our Current Collection.**

# Statement of Concern Process

## Why use a form at all?

- Standard practice
- Required by State Law

### *Statement of Concern about Library Resources*

Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Have you read the attached St. Tammany Parish Library Collection Development policy?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read the attached St. Tammany Parish Library's Statements of Concern About Library Resources policy? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Please note that processing a Statement of Concern form entails significant cost and time commitments. Therefore, anyone who has a concern about library resources is encouraged to discuss their concerns with a library staff member before filing a Statement of Concern form.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Library Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Residence Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
If different from Residence Address

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

How would you prefer to receive correspondence about this Statement of Concern?

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Residence/Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Is this complaint related to LA R.S. 25:225 (Access of Materials to Minors)?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you answered Yes, please identify specific page numbers that concern you?

\_\_\_\_\_

# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** The Library is turning over personal information of people who make complaints to the ALA.

**Fact:** The American Library Association collects **STATISTICS** on book and display challenges. The **Library does not turn over private information of patrons to anyone**. In the interest of transparency, and after many public records requests, we now post all challenges on our website with personal information redacted. Forms are available for all to see.

4. Who initiated the challenge or raised the issue? \*

What can you tell us about who actually made the challenge? Was this someone complaining about something on his or her own behalf (a "patron" in our terms), a parent (concerning something that affects his or her child), a teacher, a librarian, a school or library administrator, an elected official, a member of the clergy, or someone else? Was it, do you believe, an individual complaint, or part of a larger and organized group effort?

# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** there are e-mails that prove Kelly reports people to the ALA and takes orders from them

## **Fact:**

- On May 18, 2022, I sought updated **First Amendment** training for Library staff.
- In July of 2022, we were looking for best practices around managing a potentially contentious meeting.
- We did report the first challenges to displays and the first challenged books in 2022 – but none of the nearly 170 challenges received after that were ever reported. **Personal information was not shared.**

# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** the Library takes orders from the ALA

**Fact:**

- The ALA is a professional organization for all librarians – It is similar to the American Medical Association (AMA) for doctors and other health professionals, the American Bar Association (ABA) for attorneys, or the American Accounting Association (AAA) for accountants.
- Currently, **the Library is not an institutional member of the ALA.**  
We **do not** take orders or instructions from them.
- The library does not pay for memberships of its staff
- It is not a requirement of employment to be a member of the ALA

# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** Young children have unfettered access to sexually explicit materials in the adult section of the library and are often found in the adult section looking for sexually explicit material.

**Fact:**

- We took a **4-day census** for the days where we have the most children in the library. We found **2 unaccompanied minors** wandering in the stacks. **Staff helped direct them to their parents.**
- Library staff shelf-read and shelve materials throughout the day thereby **monitoring who is in the stacks.**
- **We have not received** a statement of concern from a parent whose child found an inappropriate item in the adult collection.



# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** LBOC regularly overrides staff decisions and flaunts state law.

**Fact:**

- The LBOC has decided on **26** titles. They have disagreed with the staff recommendation **3** times.
- No item reviewed has passed the **four-pronged test** that would make the item obscenity or harmful to minors according to state law.
- **LA RS 25:225 only requires a card system that would prevent an item deemed sexually explicit from being checked out.** Parents can choose a card that limits their children to the children's/juvenile collection which staff has reviewed for sexual conduct.

# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** The Library's digital resources have no safeguards and are full of sexually explicit materials

**Fact:**















The Library has worked with its digital vendors to apply the card system where possible and provide parents with other tools to use when applying the card system isn't possible

- Overdrive/Libby – Card system applies
- Cloud Library – Card system applies to our purchases and Pin-lock kids mode
- Hoopla – Moved items with statements of concern to Libby, Card system applies to movies and graphic novels, Pin-lock kids mode
- “No Digital Access” Option

# Digital Resources

- ✓ **Includes:** e-book, e-audiobook, video book, essay, newspaper, magazine, film, or any other library material that is provided in a digital format
- ✓ **No Digital Access** card option restricts children from accessing **ALL DIGITAL RESOURCES**

## Digital Resource Access Chart

| Card Type                                      | Cloud Library   | Hoopla eBooks and eAudioBooks<br>(These items are UNRATED)                          | Hoopla Movies   | Hoopla TV   | Hoopla Comics   | Libby   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Juvenile Full Restriction                      |  | Full Access<br>(Parent must turn on KIDS mode to restrict items)                    | Rated G Only  | Rated TV-Y & Rated TV-G Only  | Rated E Only  | Juv Content Only  |
| Juvenile Full Restriction<br>No Digital Access |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Juvenile Semi Restriction                      |  | Full Access<br>(Parent must turn on KIDS mode to restrict items)                    | Rated G Only  | Rated TV-Y & Rated TV-G Only  | Rated E Only  | Juv and YA Content  |
| Juvenile Semi Restriction<br>No Digital Access |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Juvenile                                       | Full Access   | Full Access<br>(Parent must turn on KIDS mode to restrict items)                    | Rated G Only  | Rated TV-Y & Rated TV-G Only  | Rated E Only  | Full Access   |
| Juvenile Unrestricted                          | Full Access   | Full Access<br>(Parent must turn on KIDS mode to restrict items)                    | Full Access   | Full Access   | Full Access   | Full Access   |

# Assertion

# VS

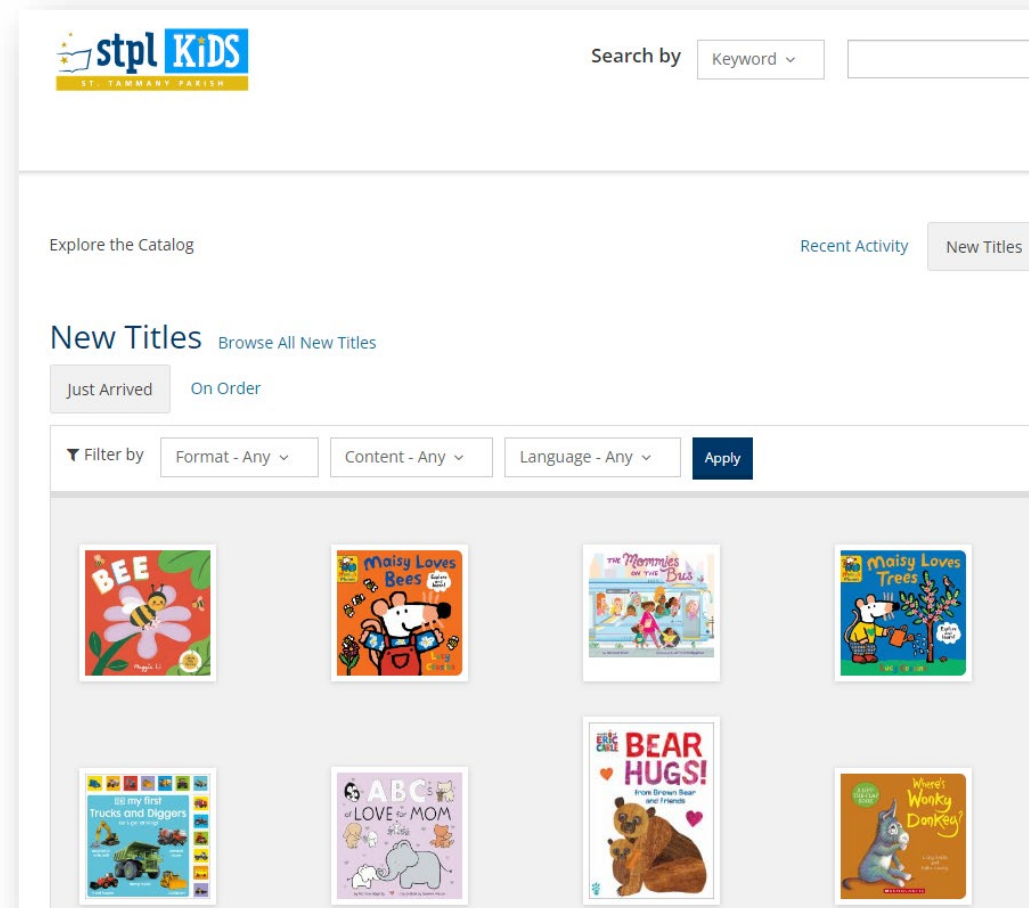
# Fact

**Assertion:** There is no way for a child to just search for items in the children's section. Children searching the catalog can see all of the books in the library.

## Fact:

The new **Kids' Catalog** was rolled out last November (2023) and is on the computers in the children's/juvenile section it's also available on our website.

To date, the children's catalog has been used over **200,000 times**. The Kids' catalog **will only show results from the children's collection**.



# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** The LBOC purposefully is misinterpreting LA RS 25:225 and saying that “access” is the ability to check out an item

**Fact:**

- This interpretation was provided by **Jeff Landy** as **Attorney General** to the State Librarian.
- Although preventing checkout is what was required by the law, the **Library Board of Control went further than required** and directed the Library to move any items with sexual conduct out of the Juvenile/Children’s section - which we did.
- The Board’s policy also states that if they review a book in an open public meeting and find it to be sexually explicit in the Teen/YA section then that book would move as well - again this is beyond what the law requires.

# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** The majority of parents are very concerned about what their children might check out in the library.

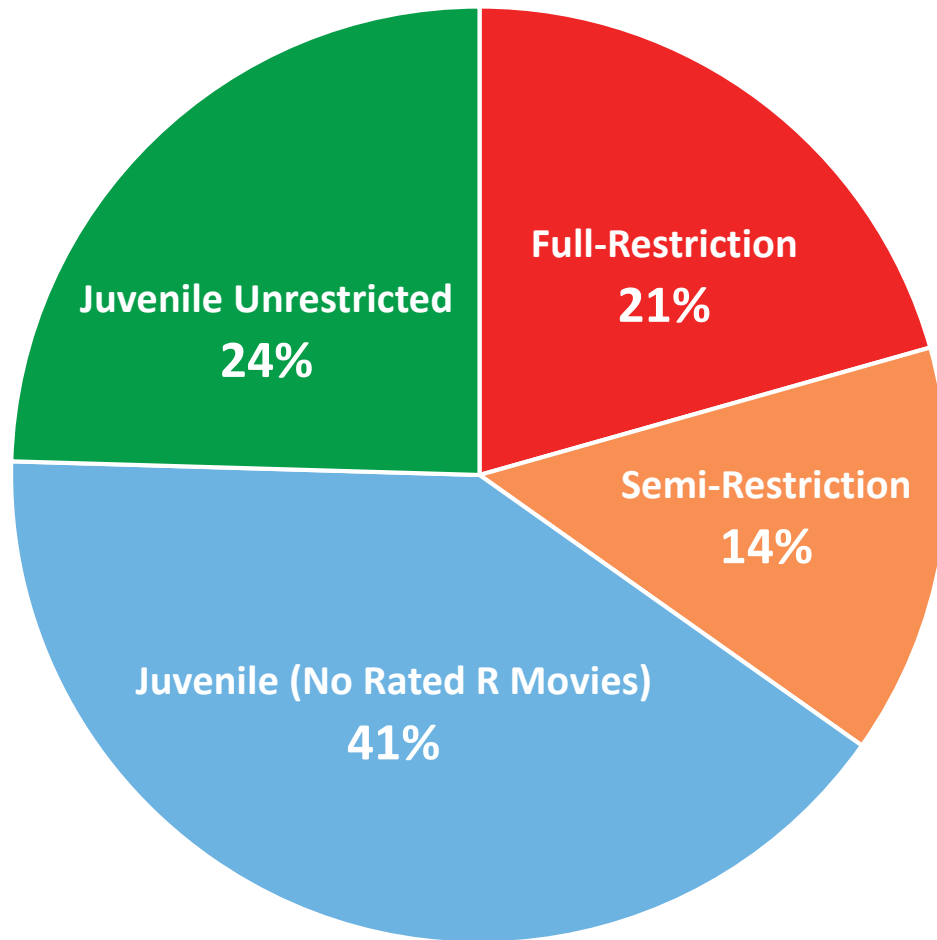
**Fact:**

- What have parents chosen for their children?
  - **21%** or 1,030 out of 4,997 minor cards are the most restrictive card, Juvenile Full Restriction. **1.4%** of all minor cards are Full Restriction with No Digital Access.
  - **66%** have chosen to allow their children to check out books from Juvenile, YA, and Adult Collections.

# Assertion

# VS

# Fact



## ■ Full-Restriction

Access to Children's/Juvenile Collection Only

## ■ Semi-Restriction

Access to Children's/Juvenile and Teen/YA collections Only

## ■ Juvenile (No Rated R Movies)

Access to all materials except Rated-R Movies

## ■ Juvenile Unrestricted

Access to all materials in the Library

# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** The Library Board and library staff is evaluating challenges based on obscenity or pornography not on the new law LA RS 25:225

**Fact:**

- The Library staff and Board are using the new law to evaluate materials for placement when they come up for discussion. However, we still must address the concerns and requested remedies listed in the **original** complaint.



# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** We are/or did waste taxpayer money by getting legal advice as we modified and evaluated policies and procedures to address concerns.

**Fact:**

- We worked hard to ensure that we were able to walk the line between community concerns on all sides, ensure **First Amendment** protections for everyone in the community, and abide by state laws.
- We sought outside legal advice **only when the DA recused** his office due to a conflict of interest.
- I have a **fiduciary responsibility** to the library to ensure that we are handling concerns in a legally responsible way.

# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** It would be so simple if you would just crate a restricted room at each branch. The library refuses to do this.

**Fact:**

- Each branch already has a **Restricted Area** – behind the circulation desk. We currently have **58 graphic novel titles** that are located here.
- Expanding this to include all items that have sexual conduct isn't simple. The Adult Section of the library has items that contain sexual conduct – John Grisham, Stephen King, Diana Gabaldon, Julia Quinn, and biographies.

# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** The Board of Control has returned 22 transgender items to the toddler section. The library has an agenda and is stockpiling transgender books.

**Fact:**

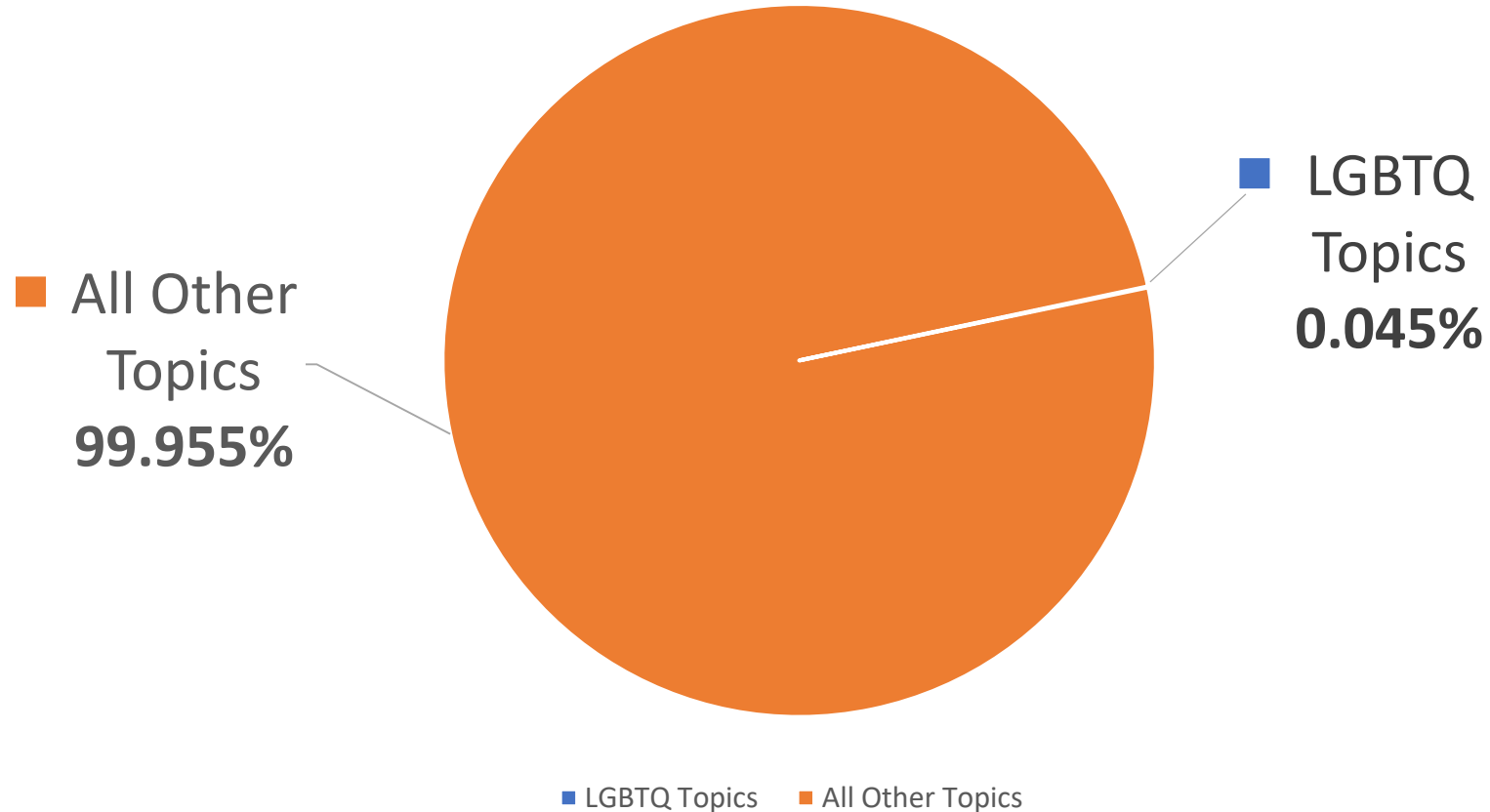
- The Library made reviewing books in the children's collection a priority. The **22 reviewed books** were returned to the shelves because they had no sexual conduct. **Items with sexual conduct will not be included in the children's collection.**
- The library evaluated the children's collection for LGBTQ topics. Of the **159,863 titles**, there were **72** that had an **LGBTQ subject**.

# Assertion

# VS

# Fact

## Children's Books



# Assertion

VS

# Fact

**Assertion:** The Library is promoting and endorsing the views of the groups that use the library's meeting rooms.

**Fact:**

- Use of a meeting room or space by a community group does not equal St. Tammany Parish Library or Library Board of Control endorsement of a group, their viewpoint, or their activities.
- The Library **DOES NOT discriminate against viewpoints.** As long as the group(s) follow the meeting room rules, the meeting rooms are open to everyone.

# Lessons Learned

- YA/Teen items where statements of concern were rescinded
- We have had to be mindful of the **rights of all people** who live in our parish to read and receive information. We have a responsibility to **serve everyone**.
- There is a limit to the number of options we can offer with the card system without causing confusion.
- Making LA RS 25:225 evaluation more prominent in evaluation reports.