

## Gender Ideology in Schools program

1 message

Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Fri, Sep 16, 2022 at 2:27 PM

To: Jack Tregar [REDACTED], Taino Palermo [REDACTED], Diane Schaefer [REDACTED],  
 Regina Spirito [REDACTED], Michael Goldberg [REDACTED], Larry Warner [REDACTED],  
 [REDACTED], Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

I wanted to let the Board know about a private room booking going on at Hall this Monday 9/19. The group hosting this program booked the room for this event. It is not a library sponsored program. Please see attached flyer. The booking complied with our meeting room policy, the library does not endorse the beliefs or content of the program, but per our policy we determined that we had to allow the use of our space. <https://www.cranstonlibrary.org/policies/meeting-room-policy/>.

We have started to receive complaint calls about holding this event. We have concerns of potential protests so we have reached out to the Cranston Police to provide a detail during the event. I am in California but Julie will be in attendance.

We have provided this statement in case you receive any inquiries:  
 This event is not sponsored or endorsed by the Cranston Public Library. As stated in our Meeting Room Policy, meeting rooms are available to civic, cultural, and educational organizations and are available regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members. The use of a meeting room does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs by the Cranston Public Library

If you have any questions please let me know.  
 Thanks  
 Ed

--  
 Edward Garcia  
 Library Director  
 Cranston Public Library  
 140 Sockanosset Cross Road  
 Cranston, RI 02920  
 401.943.9080

Chair, ALA Committee on Legislation  
 ALA Council, Rhode Island Chapter Councilor  
 ALA Constitution & Bylaws Committee  
 Chair, Legislative Action Committee, Rhode Island Library Association  
*My Pronouns are he/him*

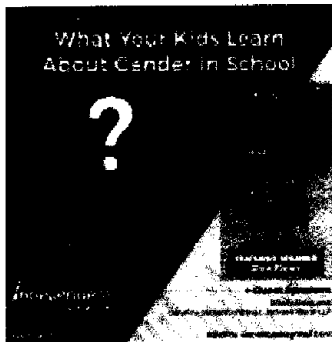


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Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

**Re: Gender Ideology in Schools program**

1 message

Larry Warner [redacted] Fri, Sep 16, 2022 at 10:53 PM  
To: Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>, Jack Tregar [redacted], Taino Palermo [redacted], Diane Schaefer [redacted], Regina Spirito [redacted], Michael Goldberg [redacted], Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

Thanks for the heads up and talking points. I did get a call and message via social media from an acquaintance at Thundermist Health Center about their concerns. It seems that there have been threats of violence directed towards other health centers which care specifically for Transgender patients - threats associated with the host group and speaker in question or resulting from their speeches (Thundermist has a Trans Health program, hence her call and concern). She was looking for contact information for library leadership (sorry).

I think that the library is a unique institution and space where freedoms are protected regardless of ideology, as are materials, but patron and community concerns (and public safety) also have to be balanced. I am curious if other trustees have heard anything from anyone.

Be safe, and I look forward to debriefing soon.

Thanks,  
Larry

Larry O. Warner, DrPH, MPH  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

**From:** Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 16, 2022 2:27 PM  
**To:** Jack Tregar [redacted], Taino Palermo [redacted], Diane Schaefer [redacted], Regina Spirito [redacted], Michael Goldberg [redacted], Larry Warner [redacted], Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>  
**Subject:** Gender Ideology in Schools program

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

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I wanted to let the Board know about a private room booking going on at Hall this Monday 9/19. The group hosting this program booked the room for this event. It is not a library sponsored program. Please see attached flyer. The booking complied with our meeting room policy, the library does not endorse the beliefs or content of the program, but per our policy we determined that we had to allow the use of our space. <https://www.cranstonlibrary.org/policies/meeting-room-policy/>.

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## Re: Gender Ideology in Schools program

1 message

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Michael Goldberg [REDACTED] Sat, Sep 17, 2022 at 8:29 AM  
To: Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>, Jack Tregar [REDACTED], Taino Palermo [REDACTED], Diane Schaefer [REDACTED], Regina Spirito [REDACTED], Larry Warner [REDACTED], Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

Thank you for the warning. If we stick to our position that books by LGBTQ+ and BIPOC authors belong in our collection, and those groups can rent a room for an event, we need to provide the same space to groups that we may disagree with. Goes back to Nat Hentoff's book title Free Speech For Me, But Not For Thee, or my librarian daughter, living in another state, asking school committee candidate why they wouldn't keep a copy of Mein Kampf in the high school library.

Do we add a clause to the contract allowing the cost to get added to the private room rental after the contract is signed if there is an expense to the library for security? Given today's political climate though, the League of Women Voter's holding a candidate debate could have a far left or far right group protest.

Michael

On 9/16/2022 2:27 PM, Ed Garcia wrote:

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We have started to receive complaint calls about holding this event. We have concerns of potential protests so we have reached out to the Cranston Police to provide a detail during the event. I am in California but Julie will be in attendance.

We have provided this statement in case you receive any inquiries:  
This event is not sponsored or endorsed by the Cranston Public Library. As stated in our Meeting Room Policy, meeting rooms are available to civic, cultural, and educational organizations and are available regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members. The use of a meeting room does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs by the Cranston Public Library

If you have any questions please let me know.

Thanks  
Ed

--  
Edward Garcia  
Library Director  
Cranston Public Library  
140 Sockanosset Cross Road  
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401.943.9080

Chair, ALA Committee on Legislation  
ALA Council, Rhode Island Chapter Councilor  
ALA Constitution & Bylaws Committee  
Chair, Legislative Action Committee, Rhode Island Library Association  
*My Pronouns are ne/him*

**Re: Gender Ideology in Schools program**

1 message

Tue, Sep 20, 2022 at 9:37 AM

Regina [REDACTED]  
To: Diane Schaefer [REDACTED]  
Cc: Jack Tregar [REDACTED], Michael Goldberg [REDACTED], Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>, Taino Palermo [REDACTED], Larry Warner [REDACTED], Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

Ed,

I agree with Diane and Jack. We cannot interfere with first amendment rights and the response from the library was appropriate. The letter from the ACLU was definitely a good move on the library to defend that policy. While we all may agree that this group was not something we espouse, all citizens are protected by 1st amendment rights.

Thank you and Julie for managing this issue. I know it must have been difficult for the entire staff.

Regina

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 20, 2022, at 8:58 AM, Diane Schaefer [REDACTED] wrote:

Ed,  
I believe the way in which the library has handled the situation about the September 19th meeting at Hall was appropriate and supports the 1st Amendment.  
Thank you,  
Diane

On Tue, Sep 20, 2022 at 8:55 AM Jack Tregar [REDACTED] wrote:  
While we all agree that all these types of discrimination are vile, due to the 1st Amendment I doubt we'd have the right to not allow these groups to meet in our facilities. I wish this was not so.

Jack

On Tue, Sep 20, 2022 at 8:28 AM Michael Goldberg [REDACTED] wrote:  
Did not see any coverage on the news show I watched last night.

Going forward, can we revise our rental policy to prohibit groups that "discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, or country of origin (plus any more)? Not sure that had the group not included the photo of the speaker with his sign the title of the program could have defined it as discrimination, so it would not rule out every group we might wish to. It would permit us to refuse future rentals once it becomes obvious what a group promotes.

MHG

On 9/16/2022 2:27 PM, Ed Garcia wrote:

I wanted to let the Board know about a private room booking going on at Hall this Monday 9/19. The group hosting this program booked the room for this event. It is not a library sponsored program. Please see attached flyer. The booking complied with our

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## Gender Ideology in Schools program

1 message

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**Ed Garcia** <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Fri, Sep 16, 2022 at 6:25 PM

To: Jeffrey Lanphear [REDACTED]

Jeff,

I wanted to send this for your information and to send to the Hall Trustees if you deem appropriate. I wanted to let you know about a room booking at Hall this Monday 9/19. The group hosting this program booked the room for this event. It is not a library sponsored program. Please see attached flyer. The booking complied with our meeting room policy, the library does not endorse the beliefs or content of the program, but per our policy we determined that we had to allow the use of our space. <https://www.cranstonlibrary.org/policies/meeting-room-policy/>.

We have started to receive complaint calls about holding this event. We have concerns of potential protests so we have reached out to the Cranston Police to provide a detail during the event. I am in California for a memorial service for my mother-in-law, but our Assistant Director Julie Holden will be at the event.

We have provided this statement in case you receive any inquiries:

This event is not sponsored or endorsed by the Cranston Public Library. As stated in our Meeting Room Policy, meeting rooms are available to civic, cultural, and educational organizations and are available regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members. The use of a meeting room does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's policies or beliefs by the Cranston Public Library. To view the complete policy see: <https://www.cranstonlibrary.org/policies/meeting-room-policy/>.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Thanks

Ed

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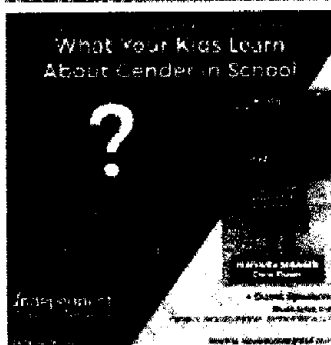


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## Independent Women's Network event

1 message

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Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
To: CPL Staff [REDACTED]

Sun, Sep 18, 2022 at 12:14 PM

I am reaching out to the staff with an update about this event. I know there have been a lot of public concerns being raised about this event on Monday at Hall. Julie and I had a 1.5 hour call on Saturday with the Chair of the Board of Trustees, members of the City Council, The Mayor's office and city legal counsel. After that meeting and a review of the event and our policies it was determined that this private event be allowed to proceed. I have also been in contact with the Cranston Police and we will have a police detail present to ensure the safety of library staff, patrons and any potential protesters. I am also working on a statement to be released on Monday morning to the public with more information about the library's meeting room policy and this event.

Although I am in California, if any staff has any questions or concerns please reach out to me.  
Ed

--

Edward Garcia  
Library Director  
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## Re: Independent Women's Network event

1 message

**Dave Bartos** <davebartos@cranstonlibrary.org>  
To: Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Sun, Sep 18, 2022 at 1:42 PM

That's a shame. It's there in the policy and they didn't follow that. Now we've learned there will be a self proclaimed terrorist here as a featured guest, raising the likelihood of inciting speech (not protected by 1A) and not in keeping with an environment free of harassment and intimidation. If we had known earlier would we have done anything differently?

On Sun, Sep 18, 2022 at 13:24 Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote

I brought that up with the city solicitor unfortunately we don't really follow that portion of the policy strictly. So if there were legal action taken we would have to say we do not stringently follow this with all bookings. We will be moving forward.

Ed

On Sep 18, 2022, at 10:17 AM, Dave Bartos <davebartos@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

Let me ask this, because in our meeting room use policy it states "All press releases & flyers bearing the library name must be sent to the library for approval prior to release." Given that they failed to do this and, knowing the speakers now, would that have changed any mind about booking this event? Does that provide grounds for calling off this event?

On Sun, Sep 18, 2022 at 12:59 Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

Dave,

I completely understand all your concerns. Moving forward the board and administration will be reviewing all of our policies and procedures to clarify use of public spaces. We are also going to review our meeting room forms etc to tighten those up and request additional information. I'm considering a moratorium on room bookings until the review is completed. We were not informed about the speakers at this private event from the organizers but this is also something we don't require right now. When we have the RI financial planners association book the space we don't ask them for their speaker list.

I would also like to explore additional programming to support the LGBTQ community, we will discuss when I get back.

Ed

On Sun, Sep 18, 2022 at 9:40 AM Dave Bartos <davebartos@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

My question is, moving forward what if anything can be done in the future to prohibit groups explicitly fomenting hate and violence from using our rooms? Because frankly there is little difference between this group and a neo nazi group having a rally at our library. Their featured speaker is on a self-described "tour of stochastic terror" - a hallmark of which is dehumanizing and demonizing a group and then denying all violence that occurs as a result of their inciting speech. Today he is protesting at Boston Children's, even as his rhetoric has resulted in death and bomb threats to care providers there.

I recognize that now that this event has been booked it must go on, but at this point I'm concerned about the future. I am also worried it will take a lot for the library to recover and repair its relationships with our LGBTQIA community members.

Thanks for the update.

Dave

On Sun, Sep 18, 2022 at 12:14 Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

I am reaching out to the staff with an update about this event. I know there have been a lot of public concerns being raised about this event on Monday at Hall, Julie and I had a 1.5 hour call on

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**Re: Anti-transgender event tonight**

1 message

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**Steve Ahlquist** [REDACTED]  
To: Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 12:04 PM

Thank you!

On Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 11:58 AM Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:  
Steve

The library released a statement this morning on our website:  
<https://www.cranstonlibrary.org/a-statement-regarding-meeting-room-use-at-the-cranston-public-library>

On Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 8:56 AM Steve Ahlquist [REDACTED] wrote:  
Hi Ed,

This event and a protest against it are on my radar. See: <https://upriseri.com/transgender-people-and-allies-urge-cranston-library-to-cancel-harmful-anti-trans-panel>.

Does the library have a statement about this?

Steve

--

Steve Ahlquist  
UpriseRI.com  
[REDACTED]

--  
Edward Garcia  
Library Director  
Cranston Public Library  
140 Sockanosset Cross Road  
Cranston, RI 02920  
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--

Steve Ahlquist  
UpriseRI.com  
[REDACTED]





## Hall closing at 5pm tonight

1 message

Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 1:20 PM

To: CPL Staff [REDACTED]

Due to security concerns we have decided to close the library portion of Hall at 5pm. The auditorium will be available for the scheduled private meeting. Julie and Robin will remain on site to coordinate with the Cranston Police detail that has been assigned. All other Hall staff will be able to leave at 5pm. Any part-timers that are scheduled will be paid for their full shift. Messaging will be released to the public shortly.

Any questions please let me know.  
Ed

--  
Edward Garcia  
Library Director  
Cranston Public Library  
140 Sockanosset Cross Road  
Cranston, RI 02920  
401.943.9080

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*My Pronouns are he/him*

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## Hall closing at 5pm tonight 9/19

1 message

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Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 1:21 PM

To: Jack Tregar [REDACTED], Regina Spirito [REDACTED], Diane Schaefer [REDACTED],  
Taino Palermo [REDACTED], Michael Goldberg [REDACTED], Larry Warner  
<[REDACTED]>, Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

After consultation with Col. Winquist, due to security concerns for our staff, we will be closing the library portion of Hall tonight at 5pm. The auditorium will remain open for the scheduled private event. Julie and Robin will remain on site to coordinate with the Cranston Police detail that has been assigned.

Ed

--

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Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

## Hall closing at 5pm tonight

1 message

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To: Jeffrey Lanphear [REDACTED]

Jeff for your information,

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---

**Re: Cranston Library Public Forum controversy**

1 message

**Ed Garcia** <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
To: Steven Brown <sbrown@riaclu.org>

Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 3:30 PM

Thank you!

On Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 12:28 PM Steven Brown <sbrown@riaclu.org> wrote:

Ok - we'll release a copy of the letter in the next half hour or so

Steven Brown  
Executive Director  
ACLU of Rhode Island  
128 Dorrance Street, Suite 400  
Providence, RI 02903  
401-831-7171 (phone)  
401-831-7175 (fax)  
he/him/his

---

**From:** Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 19, 2022 2:12 PM  
**To:** Steven Brown <sbrown@riaclu.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Cranston Library Public Forum controversy

Thanks Steven.  
It would be really helpful to us if your staff was able to release a statement or the letter in support of our decision. It's feeling like we are out there all alone on this and any public support would be helpful  
Ed

On Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 11:09 AM Steven Brown <sbrown@riaclu.org> wrote

Ed -

It's a question of our finding time to do so today; I'm unsure because I'm tied up in meetings. But you and the library should feel free to make use of and release the letter however you see fit.

If we do get to issue a statement, it would probably merely be citing our letter to you. If you think it would be helpful to do so, I can do what I can to have our staff put it together.

Steven Brown  
Executive Director  
ACLU of Rhode Island  
128 Dorrance Street, Suite 400  
Providence, RI 02903  
401-831-7171 (phone)  
401-831-7175 (fax)

he/him/his

**From:** Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 19, 2022 1:31 PM  
**To:** Steven Brown <sbrown@riaclu.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Cranston Library Public Forum controversy

Steven,

Thank you for your letter. We all appreciate it. Are you planning on releasing a public statement in support of our decision? I'm unfortunately in California right now and not on site but if you wish to discuss further please let me know and I can give you a call

Ed

On Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 10:29 AM Steven Brown <sbrown@riaclu.org> wrote:

Dear Mr. Garcia -

Attached please find a letter from our organization in support of the Cranston Public Library's decision to allow a controversial event to take place at the William Hall branch this evening.

If you have any questions about our letter, please feel free to let me know. Thank you.

Steven Brown  
Executive Director  
ACLU of Rhode Island  
128 Dorrance Street, Suite 400  
Providence, RI 02903  
401-831-7171 (phone)  
401-831-7175 (fax)  
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--

Edward Garcia  
Library Director  
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**Re: Letter of support from the ACLU**

1 message

**Larry Warner** [redacted] Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 3:47 PM  
To: Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>, Jack Tregar [redacted], Regina Spirito [redacted], Diane Schaefer <[redacted]>, Taino Palermo [redacted], Michael Goldberg <[redacted]>, Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

Ed.

Thank you for sharing. Please let us know if you have any requests or guidance on responding to media inquiries (from a process perspective). I have not received any inquiries, and I think between the board-approved policy, the ACLU's support, the legal requirements, and the talking points provided, we're in ok shape contentwise with respect to the principle of free speech.

Many thanks to you, Julie, and the entire team for the job that you're doing now, and always, even when it seems thankless.

Larry

Larry O. Warner, DrPH, MPH  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

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**From:** Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 19, 2022 3:29 PM  
**To:** Jack Tregar [redacted], Regina Spirito [redacted], Diane Schaefer [redacted], Taino Palermo [redacted], Michael Goldberg [redacted], Larry Warner [redacted], Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>  
**Subject:** Letter of support from the ACLU

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Please see attached letter of support of the library's decision to move forward with the event tonight.  
Ed

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Edward Garcia  
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**Re: Letter of support from the ACLU**

1 message

**Michael Goldberg** [REDACTED]

Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 5:29 PM

To: Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>, Jack Tregar [REDACTED], Regina Spirito [REDACTED], Diane Schaefer [REDACTED], Taino Palermo [REDACTED], Larry Warner [REDACTED], Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

If nothing else, the cost defending a law suit if the library tried to cancel would have done a number on the budget for the next few years.

MIIC

On 9/19/2022 3:29 PM, Ed Garcia wrote:

Please see attached letter of support of the library's decision to move forward with the event tonight.  
Ed

--

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---

**Re: Statement regarding Meeting Room Use at the Cranston Public Library**

1 message

---

**Ed Garcia** <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 6:49 PM

To: Alisson Walsh [REDACTED]

Thanks Alisson I appreciate it  
Ed

On Sep 19, 2022, at 2:48 PM, Alisson Walsh [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi, Ed.

I am so sorry to learn of this from your note. (FWIW, I have heard no controversy around room rentals.) Confess my antennae is up to protect our system given what is afoot nationwide. Call on me anytime if needed.

You're on vacation!! Enjoy the remaining moments.

Best,  
Alisson

Sent from my iPad

On Sep 19, 2022, at 11:03, Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

I just wanted to send some info out to the CPLA Board of Directors about a private room booking at William Hall Library tonight that has become very controversial.

We have posted this approved statement on the homepage of our website: [cranstonlibrary.org](http://cranstonlibrary.org)

And also a page with the full statement here: <https://www.cranstonlibrary.org/a-statement-regarding-meeting-room-use-at-the-cranston-public-library>.

I'm in California but if you have any questions please let me know  
Thanks  
Ed

--

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**Re: Statement regarding Meeting Room Use at the Cranston Public Library**

1 message

---

Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 8:35 PM

To: Alisson Walsh [REDACTED]

Cc: Lisa Kirshenbaum [REDACTED], Angela Bucci [REDACTED], Gene Emery

[REDACTED], Jessica David [REDACTED], Michael Goldberg [REDACTED]

This all came to a head over the weekend. The organizers agreed to a police detail and are paying for it.  
Ed

On Sep 19, 2022, at 5:32 PM, Alisson Walsh [REDACTED] wrote:

As always, we walked our old dog around The Hall for his evening post-dinner stroll.

Quite a scene. Wish I knew about it earlier so I could speak intelligently about the facts.

So many police!

Alisson

Sent from my iPad

On Sep 19, 2022, at 19:45, Lisa Kirshenbaum [REDACTED] wrote:

Thank you for keeping us informed. If you need anything, please let me know.

Thank you,

Lisa

On Mon, Sep 19, 2022 at 11:02 AM Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

I just wanted to send some info out to the CPLA Board of Directors about a private room booking at William Hall Library tonight that has become very controversial.

We have posted this approved statement on the homepage of our website: [cranstonlibrary.org](http://cranstonlibrary.org)

And also a page with the full statement here: <https://www.cranstonlibrary.org/a-statement-regarding-meeting-room-use-at-the-cranston-public-library>

I'm in California but if you have any questions please let me know

Thanks

Ed

--  
Edward Garcia  
Library Director  
Cranston Public Library  
140 Sockanosset Cross Road  
Cranston, RI 02920  
401.943.9080

Chair, ALA Committee on Legislation  
ALA Council, Rhode Island Chapter Councilor  
ALA Constitution & Bylaws Committee

## Re: tough times

1 message

**Kris Chin** <director@barringtonlibrary.org>  
To: Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Thu, Sep 22, 2022 at 3:04 PM

Okay, I'll try you then.

*Kris*

Kristen M. Chin  
Director  
Barrington Public Library  
401-247-1920 x 305  
director@barringtonlibrary.org

**From:** Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 22, 2022 3:01 PM  
**To:** Kris Chin <director@barringtonlibrary.org>  
**Subject:** Re: tough times

A bit swamped today but I have time tomorrow after 2p.  
Ed

On Thu, Sep 22, 2022 at 2:32 PM Kris Chin <director@barringtonlibrary.org> wrote:

Hi Ed,

Thanks for getting back to me. I'm available this afternoon for a quick chat if you're available.

Thanks!

*Kris*

Kristen M. Chin  
Director  
Barrington Public Library  
401-247-1920 x 305  
director@barringtonlibrary.org

**From:** Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 21, 2022 11:06 AM  
**To:** Kris Chin <director@barringtonlibrary.org>  
**Subject:** Re: tough times

Thanks Kris.

I appreciate it. I'd be happy to chat when you are available.  
Ed

On Tue, Sep 20, 2022 at 9:27 AM Kris Chin <director@barringtonlibrary.org> wrote:

Hi Ed,

I just wanted to reach out in solidarity with your library's position on that controversial program. We formed a Censorship committee and had a theoretical discussion about exactly what your library went through. When the dust settles, I'd love to ask you a few questions. I'm sorry you had to deal with this, but Cranston's example is really helpful when we, inevitably, experience the same situation.

Kristen M. Chin

Director

Barrington Public Library

401-247-1920 x 305

director@barringtonlibrary.org

--

Edward Garcia

Library Director

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Chair, Legislative Action Committee, Rhode Island Library Association

*My Pronouns are he/him*

--

Edward Garcia

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*My Pronouns are he/him*

---

## An Open Letter to the Cranston Community

1 message

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Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Thu, Sep 22, 2022 at 5:06 PM

To: CPL Staff [REDACTED]

I wanted to share this note with you before it is sent to our full community because I deeply value all of you and your contributions as members of our team. I know this has been a stressful time and I truly appreciate all you have done to support your CPL colleagues and the community.

---

### An Open Letter to the Cranston Community

Libraries are cherished community assets. They are essential institutions that strengthen neighborhoods. Across the nation, libraries are also one of the lasting protectors of the First Amendment, Free Speech and Intellectual Freedom. There is nothing more important to us than your trust.

For more than 100 years, Cranston libraries have served our community.

Throughout our history, we have built (and continue to build) a collection that is representative of our community. We have taken meaningful strides to ensure that every Cranstonian - no matter their race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, immigration status, age, or ability - can be seen in our collections and our programming.

We support inclusive programming for LGBTQ+ communities and have a long history of celebrating LGBTQ+ stories, authors, artists, and organizations. Libraries, as community institutions, have an obligation to stand as allies with members of our community who unfairly face discrimination, barriers, and isolation. I personally take that responsibility to heart and am confident that every member of the Cranston Public Library staff does too.

Earlier this week, an outside group held a private event at the William Hall Library. The Cranston Public Library neither endorsed nor sponsored this event. This group invited a speaker who espouses views that many consider to be anti-trans and homophobic. I understand that this event caused reasonable hurt and confusion in our community.

Neither the Cranston Public Library, myself, nor any member of our team share the values espoused by this outside group or their invited guests.

After several days of reflection, I am inspired, though, that in a free marketplace of ideas, that acceptance, love, and community won the day. While the group's invited speakers gave their remarks to a closed room of only a couple dozen individuals, hundreds of our neighbors rallied peacefully outside the William Hall Library to support our city's LGBTQ+ community and stand against divisive and discriminatory rhetoric.

Following this event, I do recognize that we need to review our policies and procedures pertaining to outside use of our library space. I have directed our staff to temporarily pause the approval of any new requests while we conduct that review and bring recommendations to our Board of Trustees. (Previously scheduled events will go on as planned.)

Our facilities, our board, and our staff will always champion the First Amendment, Free Speech, and Intellectual Freedom, meaning groups with which we may disagree or even seek to condemn are still likely to be free to use our space within our policies. Nevertheless, I have faith in this community and in the marketplace of speech to know that hate, exclusion, and discrimination will always be met more forcefully with vocal opposition and demonstrations of acceptance, love, and community.

I sincerely hope you continue to find comfort, acceptance and community in all of our libraries because those things are core to our mission of bringing people, information and ideas together to enrich lives and strengthen the community.

Most sincerely,



---

**Re: Protest**

1 message

---

Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 9:00 AM

To: Steven Stycos [REDACTED]

Steve,

Thanks for reaching out, I appreciate it. This has been a difficult situation for all of us and I'm hopeful we move forward in a positive direction.

Ed

On Thu, Sep 22, 2022 at 6:03 PM Steven Stycos [REDACTED] wrote:

Ed,

I was one of the protesters at Hall this week. Although some of the speakers criticized the library for allowing the anti-trans people to use meeting space, I do not agree with that position. I was there to protest the anti-trans views.

Quite a few years ago, the Nazis demonstrated in Skokie, Illinois and the ACLU received tremendous criticism for supporting their right to demonstrate. The ACLU took the right position.

I agree with you. Let's support the First Amendment. We are all citizens and should have places to meet, like our libraries.

Steve

Sent from my iPad

--  
Edward Garcia  
Library Director  
Cranston Public Library  
140 Sockanosset Cross Road  
Cranston, RI 02920  
401.943.9080

Chair, ALA Committee on Legislation  
ALA Council, Rhode Island Chapter Councilor  
ALA Constitution & Bylaws Committee  
Chair, Legislative Action Committee, Rhode Island Library Association  
*My Pronouns are he/him*

# Re: An Open Letter to the Cranston Community

1 message

Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
To: Michael Raia [REDACTED]  
Cc: Sarah Bouvier <sbouvier@cranstonlibrary.org>, Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 9:25 AM

I'm assuming you don't need us to forward email responses to the letter to you?  
Ed

On Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 9:23 AM Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:  
I have a call at 11a. Can we do 11:30?

On Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 9:21 AM Michael Raia [REDACTED] wrote:  
Yes, I'm free around 11a. Would that work for you all?

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 23, 2022, at 9:07 AM, Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

Morning Mike,  
I'm adding Sarah our Communications Manager to the email. We are currently at 39.4% open rate. We have had several email responses overwhelmingly positive. One came from the email list of people who originally had concerns and it was a long screed against the library, our position and myself. We did see some factually mistated tweets from Ocean State Current this AM. Did you have a chance to reach out to John Howell? Also can we talk this morning. I'd like some help crafting the statement to the LGBT groups.

Thanks  
Ed

On Thu, Sep 22, 2022 at 7:56 PM Michael Raia [REDACTED] wrote:  
Curious what kind of response and open rate you've been getting on the letter.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mike Raia [REDACTED]  
Date: September 22, 2022 at 5:33:56 PM EDT  
To: Kristin Raia [REDACTED]  
Subject: Fwd: An Open Letter to the Cranston Community

Here's the first phase of what I spent today on with the Cranston Library.

----- Forwarded message -----  
From: **Cranston Public Library** <tech@cranstonlibrary.org>  
Date: Thu, Sep 22, 2022 at 5:30 PM  
Subject: An Open Letter to the Cranston Community  
To: [REDACTED]



## An Open Letter to the Cranston Community

## Media concerning event at Hall

1 message

Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 9:30 AM

To: Jack Tregar <[REDACTED]>, Regina Spirito <[REDACTED]>, Diane Schaefer <[REDACTED]>  
Taino Palermo <[REDACTED]>, Michael Goldberg <[REDACTED]>, Larry Warner <[REDACTED]>  
<[REDACTED]>, Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

I wanted to forward some links to the media coverage about the situation at Hall this past Monday.

### Boston Globe

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/09/19/metro/anti-transgender-group-sparks-anger-protests-event-cranston-library/>

### Providence Journal

<https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/local/2022/09/19/protesters-rally-outside-cranston-library-during-anti-transgender-forum/10427357002>

### Cranston Herald

<https://cranstononline.com/stories/protest-erupts-over-gender-ideology-forum-held-at-william-hall-library/177134>

### WPRI- 12

<https://www.wpri.com/news/local-news/west-bay-cranston-libraries-temporarily-halt-use-of-meeting-spaces-following-protest/>

### ABC6

<https://www.abc6.com/hundreds-protest-outside-gender-ideology-in-school-discussion-panel/>

### WJAR

<https://www.wjar.com/news/local/gender-ideology-panel-sparks-protest/>

### UpriseRI

<https://upriseri.com/trans-community-protests-hate-group-meeting-at-cranston-library/>

--  
Edward Garcia  
Library Director

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*My Pronouns are he/him*



---

## Re: An Open Letter to the Cranston Community

1 message

---

**Ed Garcia** <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
To: Aaron Coutu <acoutu@warwicklibrary.org>

Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 10:18 AM

Aaron,  
I truly appreciate you reaching out, it means a lot!  
Ed

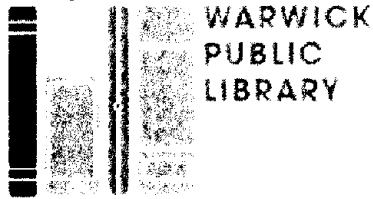
On Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 9:43 AM Aaron Coutu <acoutu@warwicklibrary.org> wrote:  
Hi, Ed,

I thought this was really wonderfully worded. I personally, and we as a staff at Warwick, want to share our support for you and your team in this difficult time. As someone who had a chance to teach some case law relating to meeting room usage, you made the right legal decision, even if it was a very difficult one. I know for a fact (even before your letter), the views were not something you or your staff supported. I know that you have probably faced some pretty harsh communications.

Just know that you are supported by the rest of us.

Thanks,  
Aaron


=====  
Aaron J. Coutu, M.L.I.S. (he/him)  
Library Director



600 Sandy Lane  
Warwick, Rhode Island 02809  
Phone: (401) 739-5440 x9759  
Mobile: (401) 215-3279  
<http://www.warwicklibrary.org>  
*Your Open Door to Learning*

Currently Reading



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--  
Edward Garcia  
Library Director  
Cranston Public Library  
140 Sockanosset Cross Road  
Cranston, RI 02920

**Re: posts for FB and IG**

1 message

**Mike Raia** [REDACTED]

Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 3:23 PM

To: Sarah Bouvier &lt;sbouvier@cranstonlibrary.org&gt;

Cc: Ed Garcia &lt;edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org&gt;, Julie Holden &lt;julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org&gt;

Yes. If Ed and Julie are good with it, we should post and provide a link to the letter on the library website

On Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 3:05 PM Sarah Bouvier <sbouvier@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:  
Just so that I am clear, I should post this now? (upon approval from Ed & Julie)

On Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 3:03 PM Mike Raia [REDACTED] wrote:  
Here are updated graphics

On Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 1:57 PM Mike Raia [REDACTED] wrote:  
Of course.

On Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 1:53 PM Sarah Bouvier <sbouvier@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:  
Mike, Our official brand font is Source Sans Pro. Can we use that font for the graphic text?

Thanks!

On Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 1:28 PM Michael Raia [REDACTED] wrote:  
Yea. Which one are you most comfortable with. I am out of pocket until about 3:30 but I can update the graphic after that.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 23, 2022, at 1:25 PM, Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

Do you think we could pull a different quote to use?

On Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 12:56 PM Mike Raia [REDACTED] wrote:  
Sarah, et al

I've attached graphics for FB and IG. I've also copied, below, recommended text for the posts.

**Instagram**

Libraries are cherished community assets. They are essential institutions that strengthen neighborhoods. There is nothing more important to us than your trust. Read Ed Garcia's open letter to the community. Link in bio.

**Facebook**

Libraries are cherished community assets. They are essential institutions that strengthen neighborhoods. There is nothing more important to us than your trust. Read Ed Garcia's open letter to the community. [add bitly link to post on website]

--  
---

**Mike Raia, President (he/him)**  
[REDACTED]

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## Re: Facebook comments

1 message

Michael Raia [REDACTED]

Fri, Sep 23, 2022 at 7:21 PM

To: Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Cc: Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>, Sarah Bouvier <sbouvier@cranstonlibrary.org>

Let's write it with a focus on programming and commitment to including everyone in the collection and regroup on Monday. Just because we write it doesn't mean we need to submit it.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 23, 2022, at 7:07 PM, Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

I'm now thinking perhaps we don't need to do an oped. I feel like why do we keep explaining ourselves. I'd like to let it slowdown on social media and not release any more statements. Perhaps just focus on our programming  
Ed

On Sep 23, 2022, at 6:52 PM, Michael Raia [REDACTED] wrote:

It's very few comments at the moment and she's not speaking to your audience - she's speaking to her own. Let's keep monitoring. We can turn off comments if it appears to be escalating.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 23, 2022, at 6:16 PM, Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

All the replies are from her supporters so far.

On Fri, Sep 23, 2022, 6:15 PM Sarah Bouvier <sbouvier@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

You may have already seen, but not surprisingly, Nicole Solas (Nicoletta Nicole on Facebook) has commented on our post and shared the letter on her page. She's putting her spin on the story, of course.

Definitely has the potential to get a little problematic in the comments.

---

**Re: Thank you for your open letter**

1 message

---

**Ed Garcia** <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>

Mon, Sep 26, 2022 at 9:42 AM

To: Suzanne Borstein [REDACTED]

Suzanne,

Thank you for reaching out, I appreciate it. Our current policy (which is under review) currently allows for private facility rentals.

Ed

On Thu, Sep 22, 2022 at 9:19 PM Suzanne Borstein [REDACTED] wrote:

Wow, what a wonderfully crafted message, sensitive, thoughtful, thought-provoking without being provocative.

I am writing to show my support, and also to ask a question. I thought library policy was to make space available only to events that are free and open to the public. The way this event was described in your letter, it was not open to the general public. Did I misunderstand?

It's a tough decision to make, whether the purpose or content of an event is contrary to library values, while also valuing freedom of expression. I have confidence that you and your staff will find a way to balance these values.

Thank you for your leadership.

Suzanne Borstein

--

Edward Garcia  
Library Director  
Cranston Public Library  
140 Sockanosset Cross Road  
Cranston, RI 02920  
401.943.9080

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ALA Council, Rhode Island Chapter Councilor  
ALA Constitution & Bylaws Committee  
Chair, Legislative Action Committee, Rhode Island Library Association  
*My Pronouns are he/him*

**Re: checking in**

1 message

**Mike Raia** [REDACTED]  
To: Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
Cc: Julie Holden <julieholden@cranstonlibrary.org>

Fri, Sep 30, 2022 at 10:14 AM

I can send a zoom link

On Fri, Sep 30, 2022 at 10:09 AM Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:  
Are we doing a phone call or Zoom?

On Fri, Sep 30, 2022 at 8:08 AM Michael Raia [REDACTED] wrote:  
Great. I'll call you then.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 30, 2022, at 7:54 AM, Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org> wrote:

That works

On Sep 30, 2022, at 7:48 AM, Michael Raia [REDACTED] wrote:

How's 10:30?

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 30, 2022, at 7:46 AM, Ed Garcia <edgarcia@cranstonlibrary.org>  
wrote:

Do you have a few minutes this morning?  
Ed

On Sep 29, 2022, at 3:15 PM, Mike Raia [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Julie/Ed

Wanted to touch base to see what if anything you all are hearing. It looks like the comments on the social platforms have largely died down. Let me know if you'd like to connect at any point tomorrow or early next week to work through the next steps.

--Mike

--  
---

**Mike Raia, President (he/him)**