



Executive Director Report  
VLA Council  
September 16, 2022

**Membership**

2022 Membership

- 266 Individual members
- 44 Life Members
- 92 paid Affiliate Members (4465 employees)/5 unpaid (48 members)
- 95 Institutional Members/83 paid so far
- 67 ALA Joint Student Memberships

2021 Membership year closed with:

- 293 Individual members
- 43 Life Members
- 89 Affiliate Members (4493 employees)
- 82 Institutional Members/12 unpaid

**Joblines for 2022:**

164 posted

**ALA Annual Conference**

- VLA Booth was a success, thank you to all who donated Virginia is for Library Lovers Buttons
- Spent significant time in the exhibit hall trying to reconnect with vendors to purchase booths at 2022 VLA
- Co-presented at the Chapter Leaders Forum
- Attended the official launch of the Urban Librarians Unite Urban Trauma Study
- Assisted with the International Council of Library Association Executives meetings

**Intellectual Freedom:**

- VLA has helped with local and national interviews, connecting reporters to librarians and providing background information.
- LRV has been appointed to the Finance Committee of the Freedom to Read Foundation
- VLA has provided support in Washington County, Fairfax, Spotsylvania, Bedford and other locations not named for the sake of privacy.

## **Intellectual Freedom Issues and Virginia Beach lawsuits:**

### Facts:

- Virginia Beach City Public Schools put Gender Queer through reconsideration in October 2021
- In February 2022, the book was deemed appropriate for high school level and was kept on the shelves
- In April 2022, School Board member Victoria Manning requested an appeal. The Chief Academic Officer appointed a 3-person workgroup to evaluate the book. The workgroup met two times and deemed the book inappropriate for libraries. It was pulled from the shelves.
- On April 6, Senate Bill 656 was approved by the Governor, and requires “That the Department of Education shall develop and make available to each school board model policies pursuant to subsection B of § 22.1-16.8 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act, no later than July 31, 2022.”
- On April 28, VA Republican Congressional Candidate filed a lawsuit against the authors and publishers of Gender Queer and A Court of Mist and Fury (written by Maia Kobabe and Sarah J. Maas, respectively.) The suit was filed in VB civil court. All judges in VB recused themselves, and the suit was sent to retired Judge Pamela Baskervill.
- On May 18, Baskervill filed an Order to Show Cause, Pursuant to 18.2-384 of the Virginia Code that there was probable cause to believe the books are obscene for unrestricted viewing by minors. The authors and publishers were given 21 days to respond.
- The next day, Delegate Tim Anderson (who filed the lawsuits for Altman) posted an image to his Facebook account of a FOIA request he made to the school board requesting the names of librarians at the schools where these and other titles could be accessed. He suggested the previous evening at a Meet and Greet for Altman that people could be prosecuted for sharing or selling these titles to minors.
- At a May 24 school board meeting, the policy for opting a child out of lessons or checking out books in the library was clarified; Anderson and Altman took to social media, declaring a win against the school.
- On May 25, Anderson and Altman requested a hearing for a Temporary Restraining Order on the books, sent to the Counsel for the Virginia Beach School Board and General Counsel for Barnes and Noble [sic.] The counselors requested a delay, which was approved by Baskervill and the hearings have been moved to July.
- On June 1, a national coalition (including VLA) released a statement about the lawsuit: <https://ncac.org/news/virginia-legal-threat-freedom-to-read>
- The Virginia Primary Election for the VA-02 was June 21. Jen Kiggans was the winner and will go against Elaine Luria in November.
- August 30, 2022: Hearing in VB Circuit Court. Anderson and Altman appeared. In the audience: additional attorneys for the defense, representatives from amici,

the media, a member of the VB school board (Vicky Manning), representatives from The Family Foundation and the Alliance Defending Freedom

- Both petitions were vacated, Judge Baskervill found in favor of the authors, publishers and booksellers. LRV is trying to get hold of the transcript of the case; copies of filings from the case are linked on the IFC VLA page.