

# **CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS**

## **Dramatic Increase in Book Challenges**

According to the American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom, there were "1,269 demands to censor library books and resources in 2022, the highest number of attempted bans since ALA began compiling data about censorship in libraries 20 years ago. The unparalleled number of reported book challenges in 2022 nearly doubles the 729 book challenges reported in 2021. Censors targeted a record 2,571 unique titles in 2022, a 38% increase from the 1,858 unique titles targeted for censorship in 2021. Of those titles, the vast majority were written by or about members of the LGBTQIA+ community or by or about Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color."

## **Who Challenges Books?**

Who initiates challenges to books? According to the American Library Association, "prior to 2020, the vast majority of challenges to library books and resources were brought by a single parent who sought to remove or restrict access to a book their child was reading. However, in 2022, 90% of reported book challenges were demands to censor multiple titles – and, of those demands to censor library books, 40% sought to remove more than 100 books all at once."

## **Where Do Challenges Take Place?**

In 2022, nearly 51% of the demands to censor books targeted books, programs, displays, and other materials in school libraries and schools. Forty-one percent took place in school libraries, with an additional ten percent in schools but not in the school library. Forty-eight percent of book challenges targeted materials in public libraries. One percent of challenges happened in college libraries and other public institutions.