

November 19,2020

Dear CSLP Member Libraries,

We are writing to address the serious concerns raised over the use of Native American imagery in the 2020 poster art.

CSLP recently became aware that there were serious concerns over the use of Native American imagery being paired with fairytale and fantastic images in the 2020 poster art. These concerns apply to all four posters.

On November 6th the CSLP Board of Directors held their monthly Board meeting and a discussion of the artwork was added to the agenda. Library representatives from twenty-five different states participated in the conversation. It was decided that input from subject experts from the Native American community, as well as others, would be sought and a plan would be developed.

CSLP quickly reached out to tribal libraries, educators, and specialists in the field for their expert opinions. We believe this statement from the Utah Division of Indian Affairs best sums up the feedback we received:

"The Utah Division of Indian Affairs would like to encourage the CSLP Board to edit and remove the Native American imagery from the posters. The imagery is not bad, it just does not belong on a poster with folklore characters where it can be misleading to suggest that Native American beliefs and cultural stories are "fairy tales" or "make believe". We believe the artist's intent was good but it would have negative impacts towards the Native American Community."

Taking this advice to heart, CSLP must take action. The following changes will be enacted for the 2020's "Imagine Your Story" Program:

- Remove and/or replace (if possible) all artwork with Coyote, Raven, and/or a Totem pole image on the online manual
- Remove all posters from the online store.
- Remove product containing Coyote, Raven, and/or a Totem pole image from the online store.
- Update the PDF product catalog.
- Make building and codifying internal processes and procedures the "Strategic focus" for the next two years.
- Commission one poster design, and one "timed reading" record design for the 2020 program.

This has been a very important and hard lesson learned by CSLP. As an organization comprised of library volunteers, we often share the same blindspots that can afflict the profession as a whole. Historic library categories such as “myth”, “folklore” and “legend” are being examined in recent scholarship. CSLP must continue to strive to reach out to experts across all areas of work, and take steps to further develop CSLP processes. We will continue to engage with our libraries, educators and experts in the field to ensure we develop summer programming that is welcoming to all.

We ask that all member libraries consider the message shared above and to use your best judgement when representing cultures outside your own. If you received an early shipment of print materials and would like a refund or replacement, please send your request, along with your order number, to custserv@cslpreads.org. If you have access to the original manual art, CSLP is granting additional flexibility on how the artwork may be used. For the program year 2020, member libraries may modify the CSLP artwork to conform to their personal, or institutional standards of inclusivity.

CSLP looks forward to continuing to serve you as a collaborative and in light of CSLP being a volunteer-driven organization, we encourage you to serve by signing up for committees, offering survey feedback, submitting manual ideas, and continuing to work with us as we empower you to foster community through your summer library programs.

Sincerely,

CSLP Board of Directors and Staff