

**NATIONAL
COALITION
AGAINST
CENSORSHIP** **KIDS'
RIGHT
TO READ**

September 28, 2021

Central York School Board
775 Marion Road
York, PA 17406

Re: Diversity resources list

Dear Board members:

The National Coalition Against Censorship is a coalition of national nonprofit groups dedicated to protecting the First Amendment rights of K-12 students, teachers, and staff. We are writing in regard to the recent controversy over the District's diversity resources list.

We note that the Board's September 21, 2021, statement acknowledges the District's difficulty in developing a process for reviewing what resources should be approved for use in the District's classrooms. We have extensive experience advising districts on how to develop procedures which help ensure that all parties believe that their concerns have been considered. We have attached a copy of our guidelines for administrators who are seeking to develop such procedures.

We are concerned that the District might have inadvertently created a hazardous lack of clarity regarding who currently makes the final decision about what materials teachers can use in their classrooms. We certainly applaud your decision to permit teachers to use the materials on the diversity list because we believe that a wide variety of materials should generally be available for classroom use. However, we urge the Board to make its current policy more explicit.

If the Board wishes to defer to the professional judgment of individual teachers regarding the choice of supplemental materials, it should clearly say so, and it should also ask teachers to make sure that they have clear and sound rationales for every resource they use. Doing so will enable the teacher to respond effectively to challenges to materials, including increasing the likelihood that challenges can be resolved informally, to the satisfaction of all parties. The National Council of Teachers of English has guidelines for developing rationales for books, https://cdn.ncte.org/nctefiles/involved/action/rationale_howtowrite.pdf.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Finan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher Finan
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

Co-signed by: The Authors Guild

CC: Dr. Peter J. Aiken, Superintendent

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