

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

September 8, 2022

Board of Trustees
Grapevine-Colleyville Independent School District
3051 Ira E. Woods Avenue
Grapevine, TX 76051

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees,

The National Coalition Against Censorship is an alliance of nonprofit groups dedicated to protecting freedom of expression, including the rights of K-12 students, teachers, and staff. We are writing in response to recent changes to Board Policy EMB(Local). We urge you to refrain from using this policy as grounds to remove books.

As we understand it, Board Policy EMB(Local) has been amended to restrict the use of instructional materials that advocate certain ideas about race and gender with which the district disagrees. We are concerned because we have been told by district administrators that this policy will be used to remove library books. As you know, removing books from school libraries due to disagreement with the viewpoints therein is improper under *Board of Education v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853, (1982). Therefore, using the new policy as grounds for removing books from libraries raises serious First Amendment concerns.

Moreover, as the Supreme Court noted in *Pico*, "access to ideas...prepares students for active and effective participation in the pluralistic, often contentious society in which they will soon be adult members." In addition, last year in *Mahanoy Area Sch. Dist. v. B. L.*, 594 U.S.____, 141 S. Ct. 2038 (2021), the court stated that schools have an interest in protecting unpopular expression, and that American public schools are "nurseries of democracy," and therefore, are responsible for cultivating and preparing students for their responsibilities to society, including engaging with unpopular ideas. Removing books from school libraries contradicts these values.

Therefore, we strongly urge you to return any library books that may have been removed pursuant to the policy, desist from removing any others, and uphold the First Amendment values of free inquiry and free access to information.

Thank you for your attention and consideration to this matter.

Sincerely,



Christopher Finan
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

Co-signed by: The Authors Guild
National Council of Teachers of English

A project of the National
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