

**NATIONAL
COALITION
AGAINST
CENSORSHIP**

**KIDS'
RIGHT
TO READ**

May 23, 2022

Board of Trustees
Nampa School District
619 S Canyon St.
Nampa, ID 83686

Re: Book challenge procedures

Dear Trustees

The National Coalition Against Censorship is an alliance of national nonprofit groups dedicated to protecting freedom of expression, including the rights of K-12 students, teachers and staff. We are writing because we understand that you are planning to amend your book challenge procedures.

Challenges to educational materials are often emotionally charged, and as a result it is important that districts adjudicate challenges in a manner which ensures that all interested parties feel that their views have been heard and considered. It is also essential that community members feel that decisions about educational material are made in an objective, nonpolitical manner, and that the process makes serving the needs of students the paramount goal of the process. Finally, district procedures should discourage frivolous challenges, since adjudicating challenges can consume large amounts of employee time and attention.

We have almost fifty years of experience advising school districts how to achieve those goals. Attached please find a copy of our guidelines for administrators, which includes sample book challenge procedures from school districts across the country. The guidelines include several key recommendations, including that explicit criteria be set forth to guide the adjudication of challenges; that review committees include representatives of all stakeholders, including teachers, community members, parents, and, when appropriate, students; and that challenged books be considered as a whole, rather than on the basis of isolated passages.

We have found that weak policies tend to engender controversy, since they open the district to accusation of bias or impropriety. Therefore, we urge you to consider amending your policies in the manner suggested in the attached guidelines. Effective book challenge procedures help the district to protect the freedom of expression and information of its students and staff, while ensuring that library and instructional materials serve the needs of all students.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely yours,



Christopher Finan
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

Co-signed by: American Booksellers for Free Expression
 The Authors Guild
 Comic Book Legal Defense Fund
 National Council of Teachers of English
 Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators

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